

Engendering the Nation:
Women, state oppression and political violence in post-war Greece
(1946-1974)

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I, Katherine Stefatos, declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own.

*To my family,
my parents Mary and Yiannis Stefatos,
my sister Lela and my grandmother Katerina Antonelli
to my partner Dimitris C. Papadopoulos,
with all my love and gratitude*

*In loving memory of my grandparents
Lela and Vassilis Stefatos and Prokopis Antonellis*

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Abstract

The PhD thesis: *Engendering the Nation: Women, state oppression and political violence in post-war Greece (1946-1974)*, addresses the gendered characteristics of political violence during the 1946-1974 period in Greece. The phenomenon of political violence and state oppression against politically active women is analysed through the prism of nationalist ideology, both as a legitimising mechanism for the continuation of abuse and terrorisation, but also as a vehicle for re-appropriating gender roles, power hierarchies, sexual stereotypes and social norms. Research focuses on (1) the gender-specific ways women were persecuted, incarcerated and abused and the causes of this gender-based violence; (2) the ways in which the nationalist, official discourse made use of gender characteristics in order to enact this type of abuse and oppression. Accordingly, the phenomenon of political violence against women dissidents is examined through the main analytical categories of gender and nationalism.

This thesis provides a history and analysis of political violence against women in the Greek Civil War (1946-1949), the period of weak democracy (1950-1967) and the military dictatorship (1967-1974), respectively. The overall aim of the research is to bring forward the downplayed gendered characteristics of state-perpetuated violence and repression, and analyse them within the nationalist ideology and the ascribed traditional gender roles through which the oppressive mechanisms were institutionalised and authorised. In this respect, the experience of women as political detainees is reconstructed through an analysis of the sites and practices of political violence, terror and torture as operated and implemented by the state and its agents. PhD research draws on gender studies and discourse analysis and seeks to situate the Greek case within a feminist critique that emphasises the politics of gender and the dominant discourse of nationalism.

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In any case, I am solely responsible for all the opinions expressed and for any possible errors or oversights.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- Anti-EFEE** *Antidiktatoriki Ethniki Foititiki Enosi Elladas*-Anti-dictatorial National Students' Union of Greece
- AFZE** *Anti-Fashisticke Front na Zenite*-Anti-Fascist Women's Front
- ASKI** *Archeia Sughronis Koinonikis Istorias*-Contemporary Social History Archives
- DSE** *Dimokratikos Stratos Elladas*-Greek Democratic Army
- EAM** *Ethniko Apeleutherotiko Metopo*-National Liberation Front
- EAT/ESA** *Eidiko Anakritiko Tmima Stratiotikis Astynomias*-Special Interrogation Unit of the Greek Military Police
- EDA** *Enomeni Dimokratiki Aristera*-United Democratic Left
- EDES** *Ethnikos Dimokratikos Ellinikos Syndesmos*-National Republican Greek League
- EDIA** *Etaireia Diasosis Istorikon Arheion*-Historical Archives Preservation Company
- ELAS** *Ellinikos Laikos Apeleutherotikos Stratos*-Greek People's Liberation Army
- ELIA** *Elliniko Logotehniko kai Istoriko Arheio*-Greek Literary and Historical Archive
- EMIAN** *Etaireia Meletis Istorias tis Aristeris Neolaias*-Company for the Study of Left Youth History
- EPON** *Eniaia Panelladiki Organosi Neon*-United Pan-hellenic Organisation of Youth
- ERE** *Ethniki Rizospastiki Enosi*-National Radical Union
- ESA** *Ethniki Stratiotiki Astynomia*-Greek Military Police
- ESAG** *Eidiko Sholeio Anamorfosis Gynaikon*-Special School for the Rehabilitation of Women
- EVOP** *Epitropi Voitheias Paidiou*-Committee for Child Assistance
- ICTY** International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
- IDEA** *Ieros Syndesmos Ellinon Axiomatikon*-Sacred Bond of Greek Officers
- KESA** *Kentro Ekpaidefsis Stratiotikis Astynomias*-Military Police Training Centre
- KNE** *Kommounistiki Neolaia Elladas*-Communist Youth of Greece
- KKE** *Kommounistiko Komma Elladas*-Communist Party of Greece
- KYP** *Kentriki Ypiresia Pliroforion*-Central Information Agency

MAD *Monades Asfaleias Dimosyntiritoi*, Municipal Security Units
MAY *Monades Asfaleias Ypaithrou*-Country Security Units
MGA Modern Greek Archives
MRO *Organismos Anamorfofis Makronisou*-Makronisos Rehabilitation Organisation
OSPE *Omada Symviosis Politikon Exoriston*-Political Exiles' Cohabitation Group
PAM *Patriotiko Antidiktatoriko Metopo*-Patriotic Anti-Dictatorship Front
PASOK *Panelladiko Sosialistiko Kinima*-Panhellenic Socialist Movement
PDEG *Panellinia Dimokratiki Enosi Gynaikon*-Panhellenic Democratic Union of Women
PDG *Prosorini Dimokratiki Kivernisi*-Provisional Democratic Government
PEEA *Politiki Epitropi Ethnikis Apeleftherosis*-Political Committee of National Liberation
PEG *Panellinia Enosi Gynaikon*-Panhellenic Union of Women
WIDF Women's International Democratic Federation
SFEA *Syllogos Fylakisthenton Exoristhenton Antistasiakon Agoniston 1967-1974*
Association of Imprisoned and Exiled Resistance-Fighters 1967-1974
STE *Symvoulia tis Epikrateias*-Council of the State
TEA *Tagmata Ethnikis Asfaleias*-National Security Battalions
TRC Truth and Reconciliation Commission

I. Introduction

The PhD thesis: *Engendering the Nation: Women, state oppression and political violence in post-war Greece (1946-1974)* delineates the gendered characteristics of political violence during the 1946-1974 period in Greece. The phenomenon of political violence and state oppression against politically active women¹ is analysed through the prism of nationalist ideology, both as a legitimising mechanism for the continued persecution and abuse, and as a vehicle for reappropriating gender roles, power hierarchies, sexual stereotypes and social norms. This research focuses on: (1) the gender-specific ways women were persecuted, incarcerated and abused and the causes of this gender-based violence; (2) the ways in which the nationalist, official discourse made use of gender characteristics in order to enact this type of abuse and oppression. Accordingly, when examining political violence, the two main analytical categories are gender and nationalism.

This thesis provides a history and analysis of political violence against women in the Greek Civil War (1946-1949), the period of 'weak democracy' (1950-1967) and the military dictatorship (1967-1974), respectively. The overall aim of the research is to highlight the downplayed gendered complications of political violence and examine them within the nationalist ideology and the ascribed traditional gender roles through which the state's repressive mechanisms were institutionalised and authorised. In this respect, the experience of women as political detainees is reconstructed through an analysis of the sites and practices of political violence as operated and implemented by the state and its agents. Therefore, prominence is given to the numerous designated concentration camps and prisons, interrogation and police centres, where women were detained, assaulted and tortured throughout the 1946-1974 period. Furthermore, the lives of women in these sites of confinement and torture, their everyday hardships, their alienation from their families, but also the coping mechanisms and the power dynamics among the detainees, are examined. Secondly, the derogated status of female political activists as the immoral 'enemy' within the Greek nationalist

¹ In this thesis I focus on women who became politically active primarily in the ranks of the Left and were persecuted, imprisoned and abused because of their leftist, communist (or perceived as such) political affiliation and beliefs. I need to underline, however, that women who were linked to traditionally conservative political forces (mainly to the Right), were also politically active and entered the public sphere mostly through charity and put forward a political and social agenda, and in some cases, even a feminist one. For more, see section 2.3.

movement and its significant role in justifying their victimisation is discussed in detail. State oppression and ongoing political violence are analysed within a gendered framework, since it was those gender identities (the strictly defined social roles based on gender) that evoked national fantasies and nationalistic expectations within the envisioned, purified, Christian Orthodox Greek Nation.

Moreover, even though emphasis is placed on the functioning of the state, through state-appointed perpetrators and state-regulated agents and practices as the primary source of power and control of the unrepentant women, the often troubling role of the Greek Communist Party is also examined. The Communist Party, both in terms of practices and rhetoric, proved to be traditionalist with regard to women dissidents, indicating the proper stance for both the 'woman' and the 'dissident', resulting in another type of exclusion.² Thus, the aforementioned re-traditionalisation of women, the control of sexuality and femininity and the instrumentalisation of motherhood were not only vital elements of state rhetoric and nationalist propaganda, but were also intrinsically incorporated into the Communist rhetoric, indicating correct behaviours both within the public sphere and in the private domain or family structure.

This thesis investigates three specific historic contexts in which women were subjected to a series of state-regulated and institutionalised practices of repression and abuse due to their political and gender identity. The three periods of investigation present significant differences, both in terms of socio-political conjunctures, but also regarding the nature and extent of political violence. However, there is a distinct continuum of political persecution, confinement and sexual abuse of female dissidents; thence, the three different political and historical stages present noteworthy similarities that require attention. The continuity of repression, internment and abuse is significant, as are the gendered dimensions and complications resulting from this type of violence that remain largely unexplored. On this ground, this research specifically explores gendered political violence as a continuous phenomenon, across different time periods and types of political regime.

Although the torture and sexual and political degradation of female detainees is highlighted, their traumatising is not only addressed as an exclusively female experience. Therefore, even though the histories of women as political internees and activists are discussed in detail, this thesis draws attention to the gender dimensions of their experiences of persecution, internment and abuse. For this reason, an attempt is made to redefine political violence in gendered terms and accentuate the role of other indirect practices such as psychological pressure, sexual debasement and verbal abuse when examining the

² For more, see Vervenioti (2000a; 2002a) and Poulos (2000; 2009).

phenomenon. Accordingly, even though the gendered nature of abuse is primarily approached through the experience and victimisation of female dissidents, political prisoners and exiles, the assault and terrorisation of men is not ignored. This is especially true when approaching the sexual nature of terror and torture, in which gendered implications are apparent in the victimisation of both women and men. In this respect, gender, as an analytical category of this thesis, is also crucial in the assessment of the sexual, physical and psychological abuse that men underwent during torture, interrogation and detention. The male body was assaulted on the premise of re-inscribing the proper male image in the 'vulnerable' and 'feminised' body of Communist or Leftist men, set in the context of hegemonic masculinity and extreme militarism. In the case of women, their political identity was not only downplayed during their victimisation, but represented a justification for their abuse and torture, restoring them to a socially-prescribed and 'acceptable' position within the hierarchical system of gender relations. In this framework, the shattering of the political identity of women was performed through an assault on their gender identity. Consequently, gender presumptions and nationalist identifications came into effect, through the torture and debasement of female bodies and psyches. Under this premise, the phenomenon of gender and political violence during the 1946-1974 period is not perceived as incidental to civil strife or the junta's authoritarian rule; it is examined through the lens of nationalist ideology that was at its core and prevailed throughout this whole period.

Nationalism, mainly during the Greek Civil War and the seven-year military dictatorship, comprises the second analytical framework underpinning this analysis. Nationalist rhetoric, along with the official state discourse and state-regulated practices, normalised and legitimised violence against women on the grounds that it would enable the recuperating of politically active women who violated their designated gender roles and acted outside the private sphere. Within this analytical context, the phenomenon of gender violence is explored as a structural element of the nationalist and ideological project, both with regard to the institutional foundation and at a rhetorical or symbolic level. Although unsanctioned crimes took place, including sexually-related incidents of abuse perpetrated by members of terrorist bands or paramilitary groups (especially during the Greek Civil War and primarily in the countryside), these cases need to be viewed through the general dominant impunity practiced during the period. By any means, both male and female dissidents were confined, tortured and terrorised within a severe anti-communist propaganda and legal and judicial framework. In the case of women, however, their persecution, imprisonment and abuse was also grounded on a rigid system of power relations and traditional perceptions of femininity and sexuality. Gender norms, sexual stereotypes and inscribed gender roles, comprising fundamental elements of the Greek societal structure, were revived and

offered the foundation for the ideological and cultural articulations within the nationalist and militaristic project, both in the Civil War and the dictatorial regime. Therefore, the normative presumptions of nationalism were materialised on the female bodies, in symbolic, imaginary or corporeal terms.

The thesis concludes with the complex interplay between gender, trauma, memory and reconciliation. It addresses the ways in which women have been excluded from history and public memory and how this silencing and marginality is articulated in their own narratives and life-histories. At the same time, the process of reconciliation, as indicated by state institutions after the fall of the junta in 1974, are approached in relation to the attempts by women to come to terms with their own traumatic past, associated with banishment, deprivation and abuse. This has also been a process initiated 'from above', during which the involvement and suffering of women was once again ignored or excluded from national historiography and public debate. As these women had limited access to power and knowledge, their invisible, marginal and silenced status is interpreted in the context of contemporary gender politics. Therefore, an attempt is made not only to explore how these female narratives of trauma operate in the construction of public and private memory, but also why these stories are being told, or need to be told.

Despite the recent interest in the events of the Civil War in the Greek public discourse, the banishment, internment and abuse of women dissidents and the role of the nationalist and patriarchal discourse are not captured in the contemporary Greek historiography or political and social studies. Even when incidents of violence against women are mentioned, they are not analysed in gendered terms, while the role of the nationalist ideology is also ignored. State oppression and gender-related violence are seen as a by-product of war, resulting in a fractured and one-dimensional understanding, both of the phenomenon of violence and the role of gender markers. Concurrently, the important role played by nationalism, militarism and patriarchy in similar contexts of ongoing conflict and uprising is also unacknowledged. The academic gap within the contemporary debate is even more striking in the examination of the period of weak democracy and the military dictatorship. In reality, it was during the post-civil war period that the complexities of the female experience became apparent. Despite the decrease in internment and sexual abuse, the treatment of women as social and political pariahs, as nationally unfit, was still in effect, resulting in their marginalisation, exclusion and isolation, which was experienced both in the private and public domain. When it comes to the junta period, a time of significant anti-junta female activism, women's bodies became the absolute site of torture and sexual brutality through the enactment of masculinisation, militarisation and the dominant, nationalist articulations of the proper gender roles for women as mothers and wives.

In this context, attention is drawn to women's multiple roles as partisans, guerrilla fighters, political activists and detainees, aspects that are in most cases silenced, minimised or ignored. These female narratives are not only stories of fear, deprivation, sexual assault and social stigmatisation, but also of silencing and trivialisation. This imposed silence was not only directed by state rhetoric and the Communist party directives or women's families, but was also, in many cases, self-imposed in response to the expected gender roles or in an effort to come to terms with their traumatic past. Even after the end of the seven-year military dictatorship (1967-1974), and the promise of transparency heralded by the new state, this politics of silence continued. It is only in recent years that their stories have been told, usually set in the circumstance of the wider political persecution of leftists at the time. However, theirs is not only a story of politics, but also one of physical and symbolic abuse, often excluded from the official narratives of national history and public memory. In the same manner, the imposed silencing and marginalisation in both the public and private domain is presented as being mandatory and unavoidable as soon as the struggle came to an end. Concomitantly, within the imposed system of power relations, when the objectives of the male body politic are achieved, women are silenced and disempowered, while gender conformity is expected and female agency denied.

Hence, this research draws on gender studies and discourse analysis and seeks to situate the Greek case within a feminist critique that emphasises the politics of gender and the dominant discourse of nationalism. Therefore, although the thesis draws notably on earlier work on the Civil War and on the primarily historical studies of the active participation of women in the Greek Resistance and the armed conflict, the aim is firstly to enrich academic debate by presenting new evidence from women's memoirs and interviews, archival research, newspapers and political documents, but most importantly, to link actual practices of political, sexual and psychological violence against women to the nationalist and patriarchal discourse. A feminist theoretical perspective in the analysis of the gendered political violence throughout the 1946-1974 period is also employed, offering a broader understanding and a critical account of the role of both nationalist ideology and patriarchal or traditional rhetoric in the upsurge of gender-related abuse and coercion in recent conflicts. Although this study does not adopt a comparative approach, a broader theoretical discussion based on a feminist and discursive articulation of gender, war and nationalism seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge that addresses the role of women in war and ethnic or nationalist conflicts in Latin America, the former Yugoslavia, Northern Ireland and elsewhere. Gender violence has long been part of an international academic dialogue on the oppression of women. While cognisant of that background, my aim is not only to enrich the insufficient Greek academic dialogue on the role

and victimisation of women in post-war and post-civil war Greece, but also to approach and theorise politically motivated violence against women in connection with the contemporary international theoretical debate on nationalism and gender politics. This also becomes critical in order to illustrate the function of gender political violence as an indispensable factor of nationalist ideology and avoid reducing it to a merely incidental parameter of the armed conflict.

Additionally, a gendered understanding of nationalism through the examination of the importance of gender relations enables a deeper understanding of the various dimensions of national project, not only in terms of evoking nationalist conflicts, but also when it comes to the crucial role of the gender order and power hierarchies in the consolidation of a national culture, citizenship and reproduction (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 3). In a similar way, a gender analysis of war, conflict and unrest also contributes to conflict analyses, since emphasis is placed on the motivations of the various actors, while the interweaving of the personal dimension and the institutional framework is also additionally explored (El-Bushra, 2000: 66; Moser, 2001: 33).

For this purpose, political violence and state oppression against women are discussed and analysed through a gendered framework in which the discourse on gender and nation intersect and are scaffolded by each other (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 4). In this vein, the coalescence of structural relations of power and violence with personal experiences of trauma, victimisation, but also survival, is explored by contrasting official discourses with personal narratives and stories of women dissidents (Sanford, 2003: 181). In a way, I employ what Jarusch describes as 'feminist interdisciplinarity' based on a triple common ground: a postmodern approach to discourse within this context, and a gender historical perspective, in combination with an often anthropological sensitivity to culture (Jarusch, 1989: 438, cited in Hesse-Biber *et al.*, 1999: 2-3). I do this in the condition that feminist research and gender studies have been crucial in analysing political violence and state oppression of women through an interdisciplinary and global perspective, combining theoretical viewpoints (from gender and social studies such as politics, history, anthropology) with empirical evidence analysis.

I.i. Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approaches

At the core of this research project lies a gendered approach to the history of exiled and imprisoned women and the dynamics of state oppression against them, not only in an effort to expand the existent historiographical research agenda in Greece, but primarily in order to reapproach the violent experience of women through the lens of Greek nationalism, within a wider international theorising of gender and nation. Greek gender enquiry lacks a thorough

exploration of the ways in which the silently experienced violence has shaped or nurtured gender biases and stereotypes. By approaching women's political engagement and resulting persecution, internment and suffering during the turbulent years of the Civil War and the dictatorship in this manner, we can trace women's marginalisation in history and public discourse. Such marginalisation has been masterfully executed by state rhetoric with apparent gender neutrality, but the hidden gender biases can easily be discerned.³ The "cultural interpretations and neutralizations" encourage and reinforce this "passive acceptance of violence" and exclusion (Cohen, 2001: 52). What is being witnessed, according to Stanley Cohen, is an entrapment "in a culture" in which "tolerance is a form of social control, discouraging or even forbidding any acknowledgement of the problem" (2001: 52).

Consequently, current research on the Greek Civil War, but also on issues of Modern Greek politics as discussed later, is increasingly adopting comparative and interdisciplinary methods. Despite the interdisciplinarity, both in theory and methodology, and the internationally extensive literature on gender and political violence, Modern Greek Studies tend to remain gender-blind, since women's participation and victimisation, both in the civil and post-civil war periods and during the military dictatorship, are generally not acknowledged. As Cynthia Cockburn argues "gender has a curious way of being simultaneously present and absent in popular perceptions [...] Gender as a relation remains implicit, either taken for granted or altogether overlooked" (2004: 24-25). Similarly, political violence and armed conflict are seen as male domains, executed by men, while female narratives are excluded from the heroic representation of the national past, as their active role during armed conflicts challenges the 'domain' of the exclusive "masculine memorial culture" (Leydesdorff, 2005: xiv). Therefore, female political activism and suffering during the violent incidents of both the Civil War and the military dictatorship have been ignored or downplayed, resulting in the exclusion of women from the official construction of history.

This thesis argues that, although the Greek Civil War and the military junta cannot be characterised as ethnic conflicts, the study of the 1946-1974 period calls for a closer look at the dominant forces and the nationalist ideology that projected a certain type of state and society. In this context, violence against Greek women was motivated by a wish to impose conformity to a

³The conservative press, the religious leaders of the civil war period (e.g. the Bishop of Chios), the committee of the *Makronisos Rehabilitation Organisation* (MRO) headed by Colonel Vassilopoulos, even the Greek Red Cross, at the early stages of the rehabilitation process, employed a sympathetic and neutral tone that was soon abandoned and women were transformed from 'misguided' citizens to whores and unworthy mothers. For more details, see women's memoirs and collections of female testimonies (indicatively see Gavriilidou, 2004, Theodorou, 1976 and Fourtouni, 1986). Also see interviews provided by Nitsa Gavriilidou and Eleni Savatianou from June 1-3rd, 2007 during their annual trip (pilgrimage, as they call it) to the former concentration camp at Trikeri island and the personal notes of the interview with Chrysoula Fitiza, at the island of Ai-Stratis on July 1st, 2007.

larger nationalist project of which gender was a fundamental part. Women were assigned particular roles in this undertaking and were punished, physically and psychologically, when transgressing those roles, while silence or self-censorship was the proper female position. The appropriation of gender roles was primarily projected in the nationalist triptych of 'homeland-religion-family'; while communist discourse in its own respect often employed traditionalist rhetoric.

I.ii. Analysing gender and violence: feminist research and discourse analysis

As previously outlined, the research process draws from the feminist and discourse analytical critique for its theoretical basis in an effort to reveal not only the complex relationships between and multifaceted dimensions of gendered, physical and psychological violence and coercion against women, but also the various structured and institutionalised forms of power that principally generated this violence.⁴ Through this approach I aim to uncover the 'micro' and 'macro' dynamics of violence against women and make visible the political complications and connections between personal experience and the institutionalised discourses of power, dominance and gender relations.

Accordingly, 'gender' comprises the core analytical category of this thesis and is perceived as a social construction that,⁵ among others, includes: sexuality and reproduction, sexual differences, the social constitution of male and female, masculinity and femininity, ideas, discourses, practices and subjectivities (Ramazanoglou and Holland, 2002: 5). In this case, gender refers to the "socially constructed differences between men and women" (El-Bushra, 2000: 66); hence, gender differences are embedded in social relations. I am aware, however, of other variables; for instance, references to class, race, ethnicity and religion in other studies need to be taken into account when examining domination and repression, in order to avoid essentialising.⁶ As gender is also the main analytical category in feminist research, the employed methods, for instance interviewing or archival research must also pay attention to feminist issues and this parameter is equally applicable to this research.⁷

In the context of this research, a gender approach to discourse,⁸ referring primarily to the

⁴ Corcoran (2005: 125-127), in her anthropological analysis of violence and imprisonment in Northern Ireland, describes her theoretical framework as post-structural, feminist and discourse-analytical (Corcoran, 2005: 127).

⁵ See Bloom (1998: 139) and El-Bushra (2000: 66).

⁶ For more details, see Bloom (1998: 140).

⁷ Also see Krook (2009).

⁸ 'Discourse' is examined as a form of social practice, closely connected to the structural and institutional framework that surrounds it (Wodak, 1998: 6). I have adopted a gendered approach to discourse with the aim of analysing and

modifications made to “Foucault’s model of discourse” by feminist theorists, is significant because it enables an analysis of “discourses in conflictual relations rather than in isolation” (Mills, 1997: 99). Teun Van Dijk, in an interesting discussion on the discourse of violence, stresses that discourse and violence are not reciprocally restrictive and that, in fact, “discourse may enact, cause, promote, defend, instigate, and legitimate violence” (1995: 307, cited in DeFrancisco, 1998: 44). As aptly pointed out by Mills, feminist theory has modified the notion of discourse by socially contextualising it and by examining the complicated nature and multitude of the discursive structures (1997: 103). Within this framework, attention is not only paid to overtly violent and oppressive behaviours and tactics, but also to what Henley (1977: 3) describes as ‘micro-politics’: apparently insignificant behaviours, including subtle forms of exclusion that nonetheless remain very effective forms of power and dominance. In this respect, in addition to the institutional framework and the state-regulated practices and agents that persecuted, confined and abused women, the aim is also to examine the ideological, discursive, nationalist framework that prepared the ground for the victimisation and silencing of women. Thus, the outlined theoretical and methodological framework seeks to delineate the interconnectedness between the personal, lived experience of violence and the wider socio-political institutionalised domain that enabled or reinforced female victimisation.⁹ The analysis of oral and written testimonies, unpublished and published memoirs, interviews and archival research have proven to be useful methodological tools that provide valuable information and insights regarding the phenomenon of state violence, institutionalised terror and sexual torture against women, also enabling the examination of the various levels of traumatisation and victimisation, as articulated by nationalist and communist discourse, gender norms and power hierarchies.

Even though discourse analysis and other post-structural approaches are often viewed with distrust among feminist theorists, especially in relation to the original Foucauldian usage of discourse,¹⁰ women’s stories can still be privileged and their experiences acknowledged. Furthermore, a feminist, post-structural perspective is effective because of the “political significance” given to “personal lived experience” (Simpson, 1998: 203). Nevertheless, the articulation and analysis of experience within the genre of feminist research and discourse

making power, gender violence and nationalism, ‘politically visible’ (Wodak, 1998: 13).

⁹ Victoria DeFrancisco, among other feminist scholars, stresses the need for research approaches that make the connection between personal experience and the social context, politically visible (1998: 46).

¹⁰ See Mills (1997: 77-78). This feminist distrust according to Mills is primarily related to the fact that Foucault is not addressing ‘gender issues’ in terms of their relation, impact and effects on women; a ‘clear political agenda’ also seems to be missing (Mills, 1997: 78).

analysis depends on the epistemological stance from which it is approached.¹¹ This is the argument that Corcoran (2005) also makes in her analysis of female political prisoners in Northern Ireland. She argues that it is still possible to use discourse analysis to ‘privilege’ these female stories over others, as well as enable women to play an active role in interpreting their words (Skinner *et al.*, 2005: 14).

Discourse theory has further been criticised by feminists because, although it does not deny the institutional power (namely, the power of the State, the police, the judiciary), it has failed to fully understand patriarchy (Mills, 1997: 93).¹² Nonetheless, discourse theory has been valuable, primarily because of its concern with theorising power (Mills, 1997: 78).¹³ In this regard, a combination of feminist and discourse theory is able to interpret a wider nexus of power relations, hierarchies and discursive practices that are in a position to oppress women, providing, at the same time, grounds for resistance. Accordingly, the scope of the ‘political’ is redefined and reinscribed into the private sphere, thus bringing out into the open the increasingly complex system of power (Mills, 1997: 79-80).¹⁴ In a similar manner, “feminist reconceptualisations of power” are illustrating the implications of male dominance as imposed on women and as consequently “linked to a culture of violence” (DeFrancisco, 1998: 41, 43). DeFrancisco is not claiming that “all power is violence”, but by providing examples of oppressive behaviours, encompassing not only rape, but also sexual harassment, bigotry and sexual degradation, the aim is to unmask the “degree to which power as violence against women permeates culture” (1998: 42, 44).¹⁵

In the context of this thesis, the lived experience of female dissidents and detainees has been of great importance and has determined not only the methodology (theoretical approach), but also the techniques employed.¹⁶ For this reason, and although feminist researchers seem divided on whether there is a distinctive feminist methodology or exclusively feminist methods,¹⁷

¹¹ The argument is made by Skinner *et al.* (2005: 14) and Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002: 126-127). For instance, from the epistemological stance of ‘standpoint feminism’, even though individual experiences of gender violence are acknowledged, they are not depicted as representative of all victims (Skinner *et al.* 2005: 14).

¹² Discourse theory approaches the ‘social’ and the social phenomena as discursive constructions that are not fixed, but rather fluid and open; for more on discourse theory, indicatively see Philips and Jorgensen (2002: 6, 24). For Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory, see pp. 24-59.

¹³ For an interesting discussion on discourse and power, see Wodak (1998) and DeFrancisco (1998).

¹⁴ Sara Mills (1997: 80) is grounding this argument, based on Foucault’s (revised) model of power relations.

¹⁵ What DeFrancisco (1998: 43-45) is emphasising, is the need to examine the manifestations of power in relation to violence, in the sense that the widely acknowledged acts of physical and sexual violence should be linked to subtle forms of oppression (Henley, 1977) and harassment in order to understand how a culture of violence, through sexism, heterosexism, racism and militarism, is being formed and rationalised.

¹⁶ Methodology refers to the theoretical and analytical framework of research; techniques means the methodological tools employed; also see Harding (1987: 2) and Bloom (1998: 138-139).

¹⁷ Sandra Harding argues that there is not a distinctive feminist methodology (1987:1), while Krook (2009), on the other hand, stresses that there is in fact one feminist methodology, but there are no feminist methods; Griffiths and Hanmer also share this viewpoint (2005: 38).

I have found the perspective shared by Ramazanoglou and Holland to be useful; they argue that although “feminist research may not exclusively focus on gender” or necessarily “involve female participants, it is still *grounded in women’s experience*” (2002: 16, original emphasis).

In this analysis, feminist methodology offers the necessary theoretical framework to examine state violence against women through personal experiences of persecution, detention and abuse. Moreover, a gendered perspective is employed analytically to explore the political structures and dominant ideologies that facilitated violence against women, while addressing patriarchy, traditional gender roles and power structures. Similarly, a feminist perspective has been taken, primarily because it offers a platform for women’s voices to be heard, while making visible the female experience, enabling “the relationship between structural oppression and the realities of individual lives” to be addressed (Weiler, 1988: 59, cited in Bloom, 1997: 137). Particularly important is the premise that feminist research is minimising the power imbalance and the academic gap between the researcher and the researched (Skinner *et al.*, 2005: 11); this is a significant function, as will be further discussed, especially when seeking personal disclosures whilst interviewing ‘subjects’ who have undergone a traumatic experience.¹⁸

Equally important are the convergences of feminism and Foucault that have also been useful in the context of this research. Even though this thesis does not provide an in-depth analysis of Foucault’s work or does not employ a Foucauldian perspective *per se*, as this would be beyond its scope, Foucault’s theorising on body and power has been influential in various parts of this thesis, primarily in the exploration of the corporal and psychic punishment and torture of the dissidents. Specifically, Foucault’s analysis of the body of the prisoner in *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison* (1975, 1991) and his reasoning regarding the way that power is enacted and resisted in terms of the body has been of great interest to feminist thinkers and is particularly useful for this study (Butler, 2004: 188). Accordingly, the Foucauldian analysis of the body as a site of power, domination and control, where “docility is accomplished and subjectivity constituted”, is also embedded in feminist research (Diamond and Quinby, 1988: x). In addition, emphasis is placed on discourse as a mechanism of producing hegemonic power, both in feminist research and Foucauldian analyses, integrating at the same time marginalised discourses that are in most cases treated uncritically (Diamond and Quinby, 1988: x). I am aware, however, of the criticisms often expressed by feminists, focusing on two main dimensions. The first is the Foucauldian employment of “the body as a blank, passive page, a neutral ‘medium’” in reference to the docility of bodies (Grosz, 1994: 156; Deveaux, 1999: 236) and the second concentrates on Foucault’s model of power that, according to some feminist

¹⁸ Also see Nikolic-Ristanovic and Stevanovic (2000: 35-39) and Nikolic-Ristanovic (2002: xvi n2).

theorists, "...obscures many important experiences of power specific to women", failing in this way "to provide a sustainable notion of agency" (Deveaux, 1999: 244).¹⁹ For Foucault, according to Sara Mills, in her review of the critique of Foucault's work, resistance is located within power, which she suggests as denying agency to those who oppose oppressive regimes (2003: 123). However, in Foucault's power paradigm, as articulated in *The History of Sexuality* (Vol. I), "where there is power, there is resistance" (1978: 95). In his later work, especially in his essay "The Subject and Power" (1982),²⁰ power can be viewed as "constitutive", since a more complex and inclusive conceptualisation of power and power relations emerges, enabling an analysis not only of women's subordination and victimisation within state and institutional formations, but also allowing the possibility of agency and resistance in their everyday lives (Deveaux, 1999: 242-243). In this framework of analysis, Foucault's emphasis on the 'materiality of power relations' has influenced feminist thinkers such as Judith Butler (1993) to delineate the relationship between gender and power, not only within institutional frameworks, and to examine gender identity not as a possession, but rather as a performance within specific contexts (Mills, 2003: 36).

I.iii. Methodological tools: memoirs, interviews, archives²¹

Interviews and oral testimonies

In this thesis, the lives of female political detainees are revisited and their experiences of internment, banishment and sexual abuse are reconstructed, while the silencing and imposed amnesia that covers these experiences is also addressed. In doing so, techniques such as oral testimonies and life histories are fundamental in the context of this research, since information and knowledge mainly derives from the accounts and experiences of the subjects involved; thus, employing such techniques can minimise the distance and the interference between the researcher and the researched and expose "the power relations in the life-writing act itself" (Corcoran, 2005: 139). As the aim is not only to analyse state-perpetuated violence and repressive mechanisms exercised against women during the civil conflict and the military regime

¹⁹ Also see Grosz (1994: 145-159).

²⁰ This shift in the understanding of power becomes apparent in his later work, meaning after *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison* (first published in France in 1975) and the first volume of the *History of Sexuality* (1978), especially in "The Subject and Power" (1982). Also see Butler (2004: 187-189).

²¹ All quotes or extracts from Greek sources (interviews, memoirs, archives and academic publications) are my own translations, unless otherwise indicated.

or while incarcerated, but also after their release and their socio-political integration, the parameter of 'power', in the sense that gendered power relations enable and constrain what women think, disclose and write, is critical in their life-histories.²² As stated by Ramazanoglou and Holland, "there is a strong case for taking people's accounts of their experiences as a necessary element of knowledge of gendered lives and actual power relations" (2002: 127). Even though the "main objective" of interviewing is to "gather material about women's own responses" to their experiences, the transcripts offer a broader understanding of a number of "constitutive gendered and political" dimensions of interrogation, strip-searching, psychological terrorisation and social stigmatisation (Corcoran, 2005: 140). Thus, within this body of research, the dynamics of power and control not only 'refer' to state apparatus, but also to the numerous correctional practices and disciplinary policies that often extend beyond the period of active political engagement and have severe implications for the future, in both public and private terms.

One of the main difficulties involved in interviewing and employing or analysing oral and written accounts of subjects who have been traumatised or victimised is to enable these silenced voices to be heard, but in a way that is not going to lead to their re-victimisation (Skinner *et al.*, 2005: 12); clearly this issue raises ethical concerns. Therefore, the interviewer should not act as an 'auteur', a detached listener, but rather as an emphatic recipient that aims not only to listen to these traumatic narratives, but possibly to facilitate in making them publicly heard by a wider audience (Corcoran, 2005: 139).

As part of this PhD research, I conducted 30 primarily semi-structured or unstructured, in-depth interviews, along with 11 informal conversations with former partisans, guerrilla fighters, political prisoners and exiles, mostly women (32), but also men (9) who were politically active, persecuted, detained and tortured during the 1946-1974 period.²³ The majority of the political detainees who were interviewed live in Athens, but originate from different regions of Greece, have a basic education and are mostly leftist in terms of their political beliefs (Communist or European Left). The interviews and discussions were conducted primarily in Athens, but in some cases in central and north-western Greece, in the Aegean islands and in former exile islands (Makronisos, Trikeri, Ai Stratis and Yaros) during pilgrimage trips with former political inmates.

Although most interview themes and questions were planned beforehand, additional

²² Also see Bloom (1998, especially p. 64); for more on the issue of 'power' in life-histories, see Corcoran, 2005: 139-140.

²³ Two women whose parents and/or grandparents were political dissidents and detainees were also interviewed. For more information on the interviews, see the Bibliography that contains the complete list with full names, dates and venues of the interviews.

discussion areas were raised through the interaction with the interviewees. The interviews were usually taped with the permission of the political dissidents and detailed notes were written up afterwards. The interviewees were informed about the nature of the research prior to the meeting, and they were also asked if they would like to use a pseudonym; in most cases, the informants wanted to use their actual names and some actually insisted upon it. Hence, the full names of the informants are used unless anonymity or a pseudonym has been requested. It should be noted that there were times when I was asked to stop the tape-recorder and was told that the discussion was off the record. Furthermore, the informants were also given the opportunity to receive a copy of the interview transcript, or of the taped interview.²⁴

Semi-structured or unstructured interview methods were chosen to allow time and space to be given to the interviewees to tell their story without interruption, while in-depth interviewing proved useful due to the complexity of the issues researched that required emphatic listening, face-to face discussion, occasional anonymity, personal disclosure and a climate of mutual trust and respect.²⁵ Although feminist methodology stresses the need to create a relationship through disclosure and encourages empathetic listening (Bloom, 1998: 30), there were times when I interrupted the interviewee or required additional information, often in relation to a subject that was perhaps documented differently or if clarification was required.²⁶

I did not directly raise the issue of violence, especially in relation to its sexual nature, but conversation regarding incidents of sexual assault, including rape, arose during the interview. However, when cases of sexual abuse were narrated, the disclosure usually involved the experiences of other women (acquaintances, co-prisoners) and not those of the narrator. Even though it has been argued by feminist scholars that victims need to narrate their stories in order to heal,²⁷ I made a conscious decision not to directly raise the issue of sexual violence, also keeping in mind the notion of 'shame' which is still dominant in the Greek societal structure, in an effort to avoid further traumatising. Additionally, since time and space was available and a framework of trust and respect was built, female dissidents and former detainees were in a position to renegotiate their experiences on their own terms, as well as to adopt the appropriate coping mechanisms. Furthermore, women, through narrations that often encompassed the

²⁴ Only two copies were requested; the first was by the daughter of a female former political prisoner, who wanted to have her mother's testimony of imprisonment and, in the second case, the request was made by a former political detainee of the junta period, who remains politically active and wanted a draft of my notes in relation to her testimony.

²⁵ Tina Skinner (2005: 49) discusses these advantages with regard to semi-structured interviews.

²⁶ Within the feminist phenomenological domain of interviewing, emphatic listening and personal disclosure are strongly encouraged and a similar stance was also adopted in many cases during the current interviews; however, I would not describe my approach to interviews as a feminist phenomenological one, *per se*; also see Bloom (1998: 18, 30).

²⁷ Bina D' Costa (2004: 227) is among the feminist researchers that put forward this argument. Also see Chapter 5 of the thesis.

dimensions of a life-history, revealed and discussed neglected issues and parameters on demeaning, exclusionary and oppressive practices that were not necessarily perceived by them as such, mainly due to their tendency to define only extreme physical and sexual brutality as violence. Accordingly, parameters that in the early stages of the research, I was not in a position to interpret as repressive for women, for instance the role of the Communist Party in prison and exile camps, emerged as another form of traumatising when I analysed oral and written testimonies.

The informants of the study were identified by other researchers, people who work in archives and organisations for the preservation of historical memory, but also by friends and acquaintances. Also important was the experience I gained while working at the *Museum of Political Exiles-Ai Stratis* in Athens, not only in terms of establishing contacts, but also in achieving a deeper understanding of the period and of the experience of confinement. Among other aspects, such as the issue of trust, what should be revealed and to what degree to an 'outsider', the question of my own political placement also arose as significant in a number of instances during the interviews. The narration of my grandfather's personal story of political incarceration often helped to establish a climate of trust with the informants.

In this regard, a feminist perspective when interviewing is fundamental, since feminist researchers seem to be more aware of power relations during interviews and assume that the participation of the respondents is grounded in a sincere desire to explore their experiences (Bloom, 1998: 18). Although a feminist approach enables the gap between the researcher and the respondent to be diminished, it is difficult to transcend the insider/outsider barrier, which is often amplified due to age difference, class division or a different political affiliation.²⁸ In this way, power is in the hands of the interviewer and thus ethical issues need to be kept in mind, not only when interviewing, but also afterwards during transcription and analysis of the data.²⁹ Victoria Sanford has also emphasised "ethical engagement as a primary responsibility of the researcher rather than an optional mode of dissemination" (2006: 5). With regard to ethical concerns, DeFrancisco puts the issue into perspective by stressing that the ethical objective of a researcher is "to make our research relevant and politically liberating for the participants", while ensuring that the respondents' perspectives are respected (1998: 48). In any case, researchers who investigate issues of violence, oppression and exclusion often develop what Karim describes as 'nativised selves' (1993: 248, cited in Lal, 1999: 107). Concomitantly, the

²⁸ Also, see Skinner *et al.* (2005, especially pp. 11, 13).

²⁹ Bloom (1998: 35) and Ramazanoglou and Holland (2002: 114-115, 160-161) mention that 'power lies with the researcher' and this is apparent not only during interviews, but afterwards as well; also see Skinner *et al.* (2005: 11-13) and Corcoran (2005: 139-140).

phenomenon that is under investigation is explored more from the perspective of those who live the realities rather than from an 'imperialist academic vantage point' (Lal, 1999: 107); this is especially true when these realities comprise victimisation and trauma.

Drawing on Victoria Sanford's (2006: 4) observation of the role of truth and power in field research, this complex relationship is additionally apparent in feminist research, since truth and power issues also emerge both in methodology and in the writing. The complex relationship between truth and power becomes even more evident when the interviewees are the subjects of a particularly traumatic lived experience. It is essential not only to narrate and document these lived experiences and stories of violence and trauma in order to prevent 'academic dismissal', but also to acknowledge the 'unequal power relationships' and our role as researchers in these unequal associations (Sanford, 2006: 6). We are confronted, therefore, with what Hernandez Castillo (2006) describes as the "double challenge" to researchers working on violence, since the "theoretical explanations" need to be developed "without losing the meaning of the experience of violence for social subjects" (cited in Sanford, 2006: 7).

Memoirs and Life-histories

Memoirs and life-histories, especially those written by women, are integral to this analysis of the gendered nature of political violence and state oppression. Written testimonies are treated as political texts of great importance that enable us to not only recognise the defining academic shift, but also to examine the processes of amnesia and silence as imprinted in the private constructions of memory.³⁰

Women have written approximately 80 memoirs focusing on the period of the Resistance and the Greek Civil War; the majority of these texts have been written by leftist women and published in Greece.³¹ In the context of this research, approximately 50 memoirs and testimonies written by women were employed or analysed (numerous written accounts of male detainees were also consulted); however, only three concentrate exclusively on the period of the military junta. The published and unpublished memoirs have proven to be a valuable source of information, but as in the oral testimonies, sexual abuse as a personal experience is rarely mentioned. In fact, when rape cases or sexually-related crimes are reported in women's written accounts, the discussed incidents refer to sexual assaults against their comrades. There are two

³⁰ For an interesting discussion on memories and amnesia in the archives and memoirs of the Greek Civil War, see Vervenioti (2008: 81-102).

³¹ Vervenioti (2008: 81-102) provides information in relation to the memoirs, including the total number and place of publication (only two were published abroad), as well as the political affiliation of the writers.

exceptions, however; the first is that of the author Regina Pagoulatou (1999), who in her memoir *Exile: A Chronicle, 1948-1950* describes her attempted rape at the Trikeri exile camp. It is worth pointing out that her memoir was originally published in 1974 in New York, where Regina permanently resided. The other case is Kitty Arseni's (1975, 2005) account of the extreme sexual torture and terrorisation that she had to undergo as a political detainee of the military regime during her interrogation in the premises of the Athens Security Police. Women's memoirs started to be published after the fall of the military dictatorship and increased significantly in the 1990s, thus following a prolonged period of silencing and marginalisation. However, the silence that covers specific aspects of their narration even today is revealing and is closely connected to the predominant gender norms and roles and to traditional accounts of femininity.

Women's memoirs are not usually acknowledged as historical sources or viewed as forming part of the Greek national history. In addition to their importance in assisting women to overcome and cope with their traumatic experiences, they serve an additional double cause; they ensure that "war is no longer exclusively the domain of masculine memorial culture in which so-called 'acts of war' mute the female violence in the civil population" (Leydesdorff, 2005: xiv). Moreover, the relationship between the individual and the collective, the private and public construction of memory is reassessed as being essential towards an understanding of the impact of the gendering of memory.³² In this respect, oral and life histories, memoirs and interviews should "serve as part of a body of testimonial literature" (Hunt, 2005, cited in Leydesdorff, 2005: xiv).

Feminist researchers have argued that women, by using narrative, may end up reproducing dominant perceptions about gender; thus, a proper alternative to silence is not provided.³³ Despite the often repetitive schemes or similar trends in autobiographical accounts (mostly written) and even when gender stereotypes are reproduced in female memoirs, they still offer a place for women's voices to be heard, experiences to be acknowledged and female multiple subjectivities to be constructed, therefore making agency possible. Personal narratives give the opportunity to both women and researchers to validate these female voices and experiences.³⁴ As highlighted by Victoria Sanford, "the very act of giving a testimony challenges the official silencing of the past, present, and future" (2008a: 234). Furthermore, as a method, personal accounts provide primary data and information (Bloom, 1998: 145), in addition to offering a wider understanding of the ways dominant ideologies, power relations and discursive

³² See Leydesdorff, Passerini and Thompson (2005: 13-14) and Kaplan (2002: 179-199).

³³ Teresa de Lauretis (1987, cited in Bloom, 1998: 62), is among the researchers who have raised concerns with regard to narratives and autobiographies in feminist analyses.

³⁴ For more on the employment of personal narratives in feminist studies, see Harding (1987: 7), Bloom (1998: 63, 71, 144) and Letherby (2003: 73-74, 84-85).

mechanisms are reproduced and maintained, both in the official discourse, but also as imprinted and articulated in the oral and written testimonies of women, hence in traumatic discourse.

Concerns have also been raised regarding the issue of truth, when research is based on autobiographical accounts.³⁵ It is clear that personal narratives are not to be treated uncritically, with transparency assumed in every case (Bloom, 1998: 146). Bloom argues “we must recall that people are invested in maintaining particular identities and forms of cohesion of ‘the self’ are caught in webs of structures that determine particular kinds of storytelling, and have the capacity for managing self-representation” (1998: 146). In any case, the issues raised are understood, since, in the memoirs and testimonies that were employed and analysed, women also disclosed information with which they felt comfortable, while their shared experiences were also mediated. Additionally, in some cases, it was evident that they wanted to protect their political status, their comrades or their family members and therefore personal disclosure had limitations. Consequentially, as pointed out by Bloom, it is necessary to maintain a sceptical viewpoint and keep in mind that narratives are never able to fully represent either ‘absolute truth’ or a ‘lived experience’ (1998: 146). For this reason, when I considered it to be necessary, feasible and useful, I cross examined a memoir or testimony with other memoirs or accounts, historical studies and archival material. However, I should underline that “the relationship between the pursuit of truth and the reality of our biases, experiences, power relations and bodies, is always problematic” (Ramazanoglou and Holland, 2002: 49). Drawing on Foucault, Sanford emphasises the politically ‘transformative potential’ of truth,³⁶ stating “truth is a thing of the world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it has regular effects of power” (Foucault, 2001, cited in Sanford, 2006: 4). In this way, Sanford continues, “truth goes far beyond breaking official silence, because underlying the duty to speak the truth is the belief that there is a corrective quality to truth when it is spoken to power“ (2006: 4).

Nevertheless, the truth of the female dissidents of the Civil War and the military dictatorship cannot be observed, but only told, narrated, written and described. Feminist researchers drawing on Joan Scott’s (1991) “The Evidence of Experience” have argued that when traumatic stories of the past are to be reapproached, writing seems to be the only way to publicise the stories that women want to reveal. Thus, the quest is not solely for the Truth,³⁷ but for the truths and lived experience of these women, keeping in mind that the stories told and

³⁵ I thank Dr. Rajyashree Pandey for posing the issue of truth and referring me to Mary Hawkesworth’s work. Hawkesworth points out the need to bear in mind *some* notion of reality and truth during research (1989: 556); also see Ramazanoglou and Holland (2002: 136).

³⁶ Also see Hackett and Rolston (2009: 357).

³⁷ Postmodernists examine truth in plural; there are many truths that can only be analysed through discourse, primarily see Flax (1987, cited in Letherby, 2003: 52).

revealed are mediated through time and socio-political conjunctures. As Joan Scott opines, “when the evidence offered is the evidence of ‘experience’, what could be truer, after all, than a subject’s own account of what he or she has lived through?” (1991: 777). Similarly, Ramazanoglou and Holland also stress that “feminists do not have any intellectual, moral or other authority to decide for others what their experience really is” (2002: 123).

Archives

As part of this research, the archival resources that were consulted primarily consist of political documents, newspapers, correspondence and photographs.³⁸ The archival organisation *Contemporary Social History Archives* (ASKI) proved to be particularly useful, providing valuable information on the political incarceration and violence against women in Civil and post-civil war Greece. ASKI were founded in 1992 in Athens, and their aim is to preserve and promote archival material of Greek contemporary history. The main archives examined were those of the *United Democratic Left* (EDA), personal archives of former inmates, as well as newspapers and illegal printed material of the junta.

The *League for Democracy in Greece* was a political group founded in 1945 in order to support the Greek political dissidents and their persecuted families. In 1968, the pressure group was expanded through the incorporation of the Greek Relief Fund, adopting a more humanitarian objective. The archive *League for Democracy* was created by Diana Pym and Marion Sarafis organised the material. The Modern Greek Archives of the *League for Democracy* located at King’s College London Archives concentrate on Modern Greek history and contain information on the political persecution, imprisonment and abuse of women (and men), while cases of sexual assaults and torture are also documented. The material, consulted at the *Modern Greek Archives*, to a large extent formed the basis for this archival research and offered valuable information, not only on the period of the Greek Civil War, but mostly on the post-civil war period and the military dictatorship, for which available resources are extremely limited.

In the *Greek Literary and Historical Archive* (ELIA) in Athens, it was possible to research the newspapers of the period (mostly the Greek newspaper, *To Vima*) in order to locate and review recorded incidents of sexual assaults and the way they are described. The rape of the teacher and political dissident, Pepi Karayianni, is one of the few cases that was not only made public, but was also reported in the non leftist press. As mentioned earlier, the *Museum of*

³⁸ For the complete and detailed list of the archives consulted and explored, see the Bibliography.

Political Exiles-Ai Stratis in Athens, which opened to the public in 2006 in an attempt to preserve the historical memory of exile and imprisonment in Greece, consists of valuable archival and visual material, as well as artwork produced by inmates in former exile sites and camps, ranging from the early 1920s until the fall of the military junta in 1974. In addition to access to the library and photographic material, I was given the opportunity to explore the personal archive of Katerina Hariati-Sismani, a political exile and painter, especially her correspondence during her four year internment, which consists of approximately 1,500 letters and cards from family members.

In the context of this research, the archival publications of the *Company for the Study of Left Youth History* (EMIAN) were consulted, in addition to the digital archive of the *Association of Imprisoned and Exiled Resistance-Fighters 1967-1974* (SFEA) for information on women political detainees in the Female Averof Prisons. Besides the aforementioned archival organisations, important information is contained in the personal archives of former political detainees, who shared not only their experiences and memories, but also entrusted their valuable documents and photographic material.

I.iv. Overview of chapters

The first chapter is devoted to a critical examination of the dominant academic approaches in the Greek Civil War historiography; emphasis is thus placed on the examination of the role of women as partisans and guerrilla fighters and on the dimension of violence during the civil conflict. The review of literature concentrates on the period of the Civil War, since the majority of publications emphasise the post-war and civil war period. The incorporation of gender in the Greek historiography, anthropology and social studies is also discussed. Finally, the international scholarly debate on the role of gender and nationalism during war, socio-political turmoil and ethnic or nationalist conflicts is assessed.

The subsequent chapters provide a history and analysis of the phenomenon of political violence against women in the period of 1946-1974. The three chapters cover respectively the Greek Civil War (1946-1949), the period of weak democracy (1950-1967) and the military dictatorship (1967-1974). Chapter 2 begins with an introduction to the historical and political background, starting with the outbreak of the Civil War as an event connected to the Resistance, until the 1974 restoration of democracy. It covers the history of state oppression

and the political persecution and incarceration of women during the Greek Civil War, starting with a redefinition of political violence and state terror against women within the Greek context. The main body of this chapter explores state violence and abuse against female political activists, through the parameters of gender and nationalism. The intention is to explore the ways nationalist ideology and state institutions, through the ascribing of traditional gender roles, reinforced or justified female oppression and victimisation. Chapter 3 concentrates on the period of the weak democracy (1950-1967) and claims that, despite the historical and political changes, there was a remarkable continuity in the institutionalised and gendered nature of persecution and violence against women. The seven-year dictatorship (1967-1974) is analysed in Chapter 4, arguing that, during the junta, the state apparatus reactivated an oppressive and nationalist regime through the imprisonment, persecution and sexual terrorisation of the dissidents (both male and female). The politically active women of the junta period became the main targets of an extensive machinery of violence and terror, with explicit gendered and sexual characteristics, aiming at socio-political and gender conformity. The terrorisation and repression of the individuals throughout the 1946-1974 period took an explicitly gendered form, not only in implemented practices such as sexual abuse, psychological terror, political imprisonment and exile, but also through a repressive gender code as a means of re-traditionalising women and ensuring the national order.

The fifth, concluding chapter of this study provides an analysis of the evolution of discourse on two levels: the official versus the personal. It traces the transformation of both official and unofficial discourses in relation to political violence and oppression against women in post-1974 Greece. The processes of 'imprinting' silencing into the collective and personal (traumatic) memory are also discussed against the background of national reconciliation. Moreover, the conclusion addresses the importance of integrating gender as a neglected concept and as an analytical tool into a broader reassessment of political violence and state oppression; not only as a substantial element in the transformation of discourse and memory, but also as a means of interpreting the gendered dynamics of violent and repressive nationalist regimes.

Chapter 1

Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

In the years that followed the Greek Civil War and up to the democratic shift in 1974, thousands of citizens, among them a great number of women were executed, displaced, imprisoned and exiled in what amounted to continuous political violence and oppression. Yet the suffering of women, in its specific qualities and deep personal and social effects, has been denied, silenced or minimised by the official rhetoric, the public dialogue and by the female victims themselves, even after the end of the seven-year dictatorship.

Current research on the Greek Civil War and Modern Greek politics is increasingly adopting comparative and interdisciplinary methods. This trend, however, has not fully integrated gender within a broader, theoretical discussion of political violence and therefore the diversity of women's experience during this period of political unrest remains de-contextualised. Political and state-perpetuated violence during the 1946-1974 period and the gendered nature of abuse have not been widely recognised in academic or public debate in Greece.

This chapter examines the academic literature produced on the Greek Civil War, the period of weak democracy and the military dictatorship, with two main aspects in mind: gender and political violence. The literature review focuses on the dominant approaches of Greek historiography, including an analysis of contemporary academic trends. The next section outlines contemporary academic contributions, both national and international, with regard to the role of women in the Greek Civil War and the connection of gender violence to war and nationalism. The chapter also discusses the integration of gender in Greek scholarship with an emphasis on historiography and anthropology and reviews the international academic literature, in relation to the role of gender in the analysis of violence against women during warfare or within nationalist movements.

1.2 Historiography of the Greek Civil War³⁹

According to Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003, 2004) and Liakos (2004), the decisive shift in research and publications on the study of the Greek Civil War occurred as the result of a series of mainly international conferences and postgraduate studies by new researchers, but also the publication of memoirs by former resistance-fighters, partisans and political detainees, primarily after the fall of the military dictatorship. It should be pointed out, however, that this academic trend and the resulting public debate and interest in public history and collective memory began fifty years after the end of the civil strife. In a similar way, in the late 1990s, in addition to the noteworthy increase in conferences and workshops held in Greece and abroad, there was also a series of new academic publications and articles in newspapers and print media.⁴⁰

1.2.1 The Traditional Approach

The traditional approach emerged in the 1960s from investigations conducted abroad, based on archival research in foreign archives, since access to the Greek archives was extremely limited.⁴¹ The traditional approach treated the Civil War as a political conflict between the Left and the Right, accentuating at the same time the role of external forces and the impact of international intervention on the outcome of the war. Accordingly, the Greek Civil War was seen as a “single episode of the wider Cold War conflict”, where the determining factor of “internal political developments” was attributed to “the international balance of power” (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2004: 226).

Thirty years after its termination, the Greek Civil War was still treated as an undervalued subject within academic discourse. Despite the one-sided ideological approaches that shaped the political discourse of the period, “the request for oblivion was emerging as the dominant political issue at stake” (Nikolakopoulos *et al.*, 2002: 13). During those politically turbulent and

³⁹ The review of the Greek Civil War academic literature is based mainly on monographs and edited volumes; however, a number of other materials in the form of memoirs (both published and unpublished), conference presentations and proceedings, newspaper articles and academic papers have also been consulted and discussed. The *I Elliniki Vivliografia tou Emfyliou Polemou 1945-1999* [Greek Bibliography of the Civil War 1945-1999] by Nikos Koulouris (2000), a systematic record of the academic and non-academic literature published in the period of 1945-1999, has also been useful. Additionally, Antoniou and Marantzidis' (2003, 2004) papers on the changing trends on the Axis Occupation and Civil War historiography and their historiographical classification has proven to be particularly useful in the context of this chapter.

⁴⁰ The importance of the international conferences on the subject, the first one being the Modern Greek Studies Association symposium held in Washington, D.C in 1978, followed by the Copenhagen conference that took place in 1987 and the four conferences during the 1999-2000 period, are stressed by Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003; 2004: 226) and Liakos (2004). On the changing trends in the Greek Civil War historiography, see Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003, 2004); Liakos (August 28-29th, 2004); Kalyvas and Marantzidis (March 20-21st, 2004); Kalyvas (2003).

⁴¹ Xydis' (1963) and Kofos' (1964) work are typical examples of the milieu of the traditional school.

ideologically charged years, when propagandism and polarisation prevailed, traditional approaches, established as the *Historiography of the Winners*, predominated in academic discussion throughout the dictatorship until the 1974 democratic turn.⁴² Therefore, the academic marginalisation of the Civil War was closely connected to the exclusion from the institutionalised national memory (Panagiotopoulos, June 26-27th, 2004), but also to the political conjunctures and the prevailing ideological attitudes.⁴³

The *Historiography of the Winners*, the Right's interpretation of the events, was the official version of the Resistance and the Civil War until 1974. The winners' version of the 1940s and 1950s was projected by the junta as state rhetoric and official discourse, influencing not only collective memory, but also the academic investigation of the period. The scholarly and non-academic literature was directly influenced by the notion of *ethnikofrosini*. The ideology of *ethnikofrosini* (national-mindedness) that emerged according to the intellectual of the Greek Left, Aggelos Elefantis (2003: 137), as "the only coherent ideology of the postwar state" and divided the citizens into two categories: the 'national-minded' (*ethnikofrones*) and the 'traitors to the nation' (communists), was instrumental for the persecution and banishment of the leftists throughout the 1946-1974 period and, to a large degree, also determined the historiographic discourse.⁴⁴ Despite the intensified political polarisation, closely connected to the post-civil war socio-political categorisations of the 'Greek patriots' and the 'national traitors', the Civil War had to initially pass through the realm of political debate in order to be fully integrated into academic discourse (Sfetas, November 17-18th, 2007).

In assessing the traditional approach of historiography, the role of non-scholarly production, mainly comprising memoirs, is vital since there is a close connection to the political climate of the period (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2004: 224). Moreover, as Mark Mazower has argued, memoirs and life-histories have been decisive in understanding the Civil War historiography (1994, cited in Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2003). The rightist, anti-Communist paradigm that predominated in the publications and comprised the official discourse throughout the 1946-1974 period began to subside after the fall of the junta, enabling leftist production to appear in Greece (not only abroad). Even though the approach of the Right was dominant throughout the post-civil war period (1949-1974), the Left had its own (although limited) share of

⁴² See Liakos (August 28-29th, 2004).

⁴³ For an interesting discussion on the 'silencing' of the Civil War period in the historiographical debate, see Nikolakopoulos *et al.* (2002: 13-14).

⁴⁴ For more on the ideology of *ethnikofrosini* (national-mindedness), see Elefantis (2003: 135-149); for the institutional role of national-mindedness in post-war Greece, see Alivizatos (1995) and for its role in the Civil War historiography, see Nikolakopoulos *et al.* (2002, especially p. 12) and Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003; 2004: 224-226, especially p. 224).

publications, mostly memoirs, published abroad.⁴⁵ The propagandist accounts of both sides provided two distinct points of view; however, in spite of the differences between the two constructs, both employ “a similar methodology, since political identities were considered the basic means of interpreting individual and group strategies” (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2004: 224).

As stated by Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003; 2004: 224), the core of discord between the Left and the Right nationalist agendas was their respective chronological perception of the Civil War; a difference imprinted on the traditional historiographical approach, but lately incorporated into the current academic debate. The leftist account makes a clear distinction between the Resistance and the Civil War, arguing that the Civil War began in 1946, stressing at the same time the resistance against the Axis occupational forces (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2004: 224). The Civil War was attributed to foreign intervention and to the right-wing’s extensive use of violence and terrorism. According to the Right’s perception, the first armed conflicts between the resistance groups mark the beginning of the Civil War in 1943 rather than 1946. The rightist interpretation of the events is also known as the theory of ‘three rounds’, according to which the primary goal of the Communist leadership was the direct seizure of power (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2004: 224; Karydis, 2004: 11).⁴⁶

1.2.2 The Revisionist School of Thought

The restoration of democracy in 1974 was the turning point in the transition from the traditional to the revisionist school of thought. The political changes and the re-establishment of democratic institutions, led to the displacement of the *Historiography of the Winners* as the dominant historiographical paradigm.⁴⁷ During the 1980s, academic investigation overcame ideological standpoints and, albeit hesitantly, moved towards integrating the Greek Civil War into an increasingly expanding research spectrum. The leftist, non-scholarly production emerged after an extensive period of censorship and resulting silence and the decades of the 1940s and 1950s were critically reappraised as the winners’ bloc shifted from “the unchallenged position of prosecutor to the accused” (Papastratis, 1988: 185). The shift from the *Historiography of the*

⁴⁵ See Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003, 2004), Liakos (August 28-29th, 2004) and Papastratis (1988). Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003; 2004: 225) mention that for a short period (1945-1946) there was a significant number of leftist publications; they reemerged in the 1960s, only to reach their peak in the 1980s.

⁴⁶ However, the historian Phillipos Iliou argues the opposite (2002: 25-27). The *problematique* in relation to the commencement of the Greek Civil War remains a controversial issue; it is in fact situated at the core of the contemporary academic and public debate in relation to the new trends in Civil War historiography and is discussed in section 1.2.3. Also see the critiques by Karydis (September 18-19th, 2004), Margaritis (April 9-11th, 2004), Panourgia (2004, 2009).

⁴⁷ See Papastratis (1988: 183), Liakos (August 28-29th, 2004) and Kalyvas (2003).

Winners to the 'version of the defeated' has been described as the 'Revanchism of the Defeated' (Maurogordatos, 1999: 38-40).

The revisionist school emerged and dominated the historiography of the 1940s after the fall of the military junta in 1974, for the first time placing the 1940s into a wider international academic debate. The revisionist approach situated the Greek Civil War within the wider Second World War and Cold War spectrum; at the same time, there was an effort to interpret the events of the period, not only through the prism of foreign intervention, but also by taking into account the role of internal policies and party strategies (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2004: 226; Liakos, 2004: 13).⁴⁸

The revisionist approach treated the Civil War as a product of both internal and external elements that should be studied as a historical event with a series of three distinct, but interconnected, phases of extensive violence (Iatrides, 2002: 17). According to Stathis Kalyvas, both the traditional and the revisionist approaches were serving political necessities and the historical view of the 1940s and 1950s was 'ideologically charged' (2003). Kalyvas, argues that, within the traditional and revisionist school, two myths co-existed: the post-war approach, the winners' interpretation of the events and the post-dictatorship approach that appeared to be the losers' account (2003). He also argues that neither approach succeeded in addressing critical issues of the 1940s, such as the concealment of violence perpetuated by both sides and the avoidance of the demonisation of the rival blocs; hence, the post-war and post-dictatorship myths prevailed (2003). Nevertheless, Kalyvas and other scholars within the contemporary post-revisionist debate stress the need not only to investigate what they describe as the 'red terror', the violence perpetuated by the Left, but also to argue that the leftist violence was calculated and as intense as the violence of the Right. Concomitantly, they reach the conclusion that Civil War historiography is still dominated by the post-dictatorship myth, the leftist account of the 1946-1949 period, thus undermining their own claim about the domination of both myths.⁴⁹ Although civil war violence should be analysed in all its parameters, including the violence of the Left in the research agenda, Kalyvas' investigation, according to Panourgia's (2004, 2009) critique, often demonstrates epistemological and methodological deficiencies. Neni Panourgia (2004, 2009) highlights the inconsistently placed outbreak of the war on 1943 or 1944 (during the Resistance against the occupying forces), as proposed by Kalyvas. In addition, Kalyvas'

⁴⁸ Also see Papastratis (1988) and Liakos (2004). For some typical examples of the revisionist school, see Iatrides (1981) and Baerentzen *et al.* (1987).

⁴⁹ For Kalyvas' analysis of the red terror, see his papers on the edited volumes *After the War was over: reconstructing the family, nation and state (1943-1960)*, by Mazower (2000) and the *Emfyllos Polemos: apo ti Varkiza sto Grammo* [The Civil War: from Varkiza to Grammos], by Nikolakopoulos *et al.* (2002). Also see Kalyvas and Marantzidis (March 20-21st, 2004, *TA NEA*).

analysis of leftist violence, is also problematic in his attempt to equate the right-wing, state violence and paramilitary terrorism with the violence perpetuated by partisans mainly against members of the Security Battalions and paramilitary organisations, Nazi collaborators and in some cases, locals, in the area of Argolida in the Peloponnese. Furthermore, through the case study of Argolida, he draws conclusions and generalisations about the extent and nature of leftist violence across the country (Panourgia, 2004; 2009: 118-119).

Even though history predominated in the Civil War studies, social sciences began to appear, as well as interdisciplinary approaches based on archival research, conducted not only abroad, but also in Greece.⁵⁰ In this respect, an important development for academic research, was the access to domestic archives, after a prolonged period of examining only foreign archival material.⁵¹ On this ground, a separate reference should be ascribed to the Left School of historians⁵² who achieved the opening of the Communist Archives that eventually led to the creation of the *Contemporary Social History Archives* (ASKI) in 1992 (Liakos, August 28-29th, 2004). Nevertheless, both the traditional and revisionist approaches promoted Civil War academic research by preparing the ground for the development of new research questions, methodological and analytical tools. However, there were still marginalised or taboo themes within the official historiography that were transferred to the 1990s academic debate in order to be critically addressed, such as the issue of ethnic minorities, and the parameter of gender and violence during the Greek Civil War.⁵³

1.2.3 'Post-revisionism' and the 'new' trends in Civil War historiography⁵⁴

The shift in academic research on the 1940s began in the late 1990s and was marked by the 50th anniversary of the official end of the Civil War, which was accompanied by a series of conferences, the appearance of new interdisciplinary studies,⁵⁵ and the publication of the

⁵⁰ For historical, but also interdisciplinary analyses of the 1940s within the revisionist approach, see Fleischer (1988), Mazower (1994), Close (1993), Vervenioti (1994) and Van Boeschoten (1991, 1997).

⁵¹ See Liakos (August 28-29th, 2004), Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003), Kalyvas (2003).

⁵² Namely Asdrahas, Svoronos and Iliou.

⁵³ Also see Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003, 2004: 227-228), Kalyvas and Marantzidis (March 20-21st, 2004) and Liakos (2004).

⁵⁴ This section is devoted to the new academic debate in the Greek Civil War historiography, often described as the postrevisionist approach. However within the Greek public and scholarly discussion, postrevisionism has often been (rightly) criticised in relation to reproducing conservative and outdated theoretical standpoints and for methodological insufficiency. In this section, based on Antoniou and Marantzidis' (2003, 2004) classification, I employ the term post revisionism or new academic debate often interchangeably in reference to the historiographical changing trends. Even though I discuss the contributions of this new scheme in terms of interdisciplinary studies, new archival material and methodological tools, I also critique (in this section and in 1.2.2) a number of these new approaches and trends both in terms of theory and methodology.

⁵⁵ For interdisciplinary studies, indicatively, see Vervenioti (1994, 2003); Van Boeschoten (1992, 1997); Marantzidis (1997, 2001); Kalyvas (2000); Voglis (2002a,b); Lambropoulou (1999); Vidali (1999a,b); Margaritis (2002).

Military Archives of the Civil War.⁵⁶ As Nikolakopoulos, Rigos and Psallidas (2002: 13-14) aptly point out, today, fifty years after the end of the civil conflict, the Greek Civil War has been transferred from public discourse to historiography and constitutes an established subject for academic research and study (2002: 13-14).

Within the new academic debate, often referred to as 'postrevisionist', Civil War is examined as being connected not only to the Cold War, but also to the Second World War, the Occupation period and the Resistance Movement (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2003). This new academic trend is attempting to move away from grand narratives and previous holistic accounts of the period, focusing on the everyday experience of the Occupation and the civil strife, the local and ethnic dimensions and social setting of the conflict, based on oral history and fieldwork.⁵⁷ History predominates once again in the academic investigation, but political and social sciences, such as social psychology, anthropology and political sociology are also producing influential studies, setting the basis for interdisciplinary and comparative approaches (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2003).

The role of internal political conflicts and dynamics reemerges as an instrumental factor in the interpretation of the period; however, the basis for the new paradigm is an attempt to examine not only the socio-political relations during the conflict, but also the formation of subjectivities.⁵⁸ With regard to the integration of previously unexplored issues, such as the female experience, the role of ethnic and gender identities and traumatic memory into contemporary academic discussion, the employment of innovative techniques, interviews, life-histories and access to previously unexplored archival material was decisive. Greek scholarly work has developed in tandem with a notable exploration of national and local archives. Important national archives such as the *Contemporary Social History Archives* (ASKI) and the local branches of the General State Archives are now available to new scholars. Moreover, personal diaries, memoirs, autobiographical accounts and oral sources are promoting 'from below'⁵⁹ and a combination of macro and micro approaches, enabling scholars to emphasise the construction of subjectivities of marginalised or under-represented groups and their

⁵⁶ For more, see Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003, 2004) and Liakos (2004). The first e-list on the subject –the Network for the Study of the Civil Wars– founded in 2001 and the recently gained access to the Directorship of Military History should also be mentioned.

⁵⁷ For more, see Antoniou and Marantzidis (2004: 228), Vervenioti (2002c: 157-181) and Liakos (August 28-29th, 2004).

⁵⁸ See Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003). The research of Voglis (2002a,b; 2004) and Lambropoulou (1999) are among the few but important studies on the creation of subjectivities through the experience of political incarceration.

⁵⁹ The term has been used, among others, by Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003) and Kalyvas (2003), referring to local studies and oral history that have enabled the "shift of focus from the elites to the masses", but also to the emphasis placed "on the correlation between the individual experience and political and social developments" (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2003).

contextualisation within the political and social structures (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2003).

Many of these recent works are not only interdisciplinary, but also locally-oriented and expand the interplay between micro and macro levels and the 'from below' and 'from above' approaches (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2003; 2004: 228). The studies of Nikos Marantzidis (1997, 2001), Riki Van Boeschoten (1997, 1998) and Tasoula Vervenioti (1994, 2003), whose work is discussed later on, are noteworthy examples of this intersection, since their research –although respectively based on the theoretical frameworks of political science, anthropology and history– draws on the local study approach and oral history in order to highlight the multifaceted aspects of both the conflict itself and the involved subjectivities. Additionally, it manages to emphasise the role of ethnic and political identities among marginalised ethnic groups such as the Slavic-speakers of Western Macedonia and the Turkish-speaking Pontian Greek population (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2003; 2004: 228; Liakos, 2004).⁶⁰ Riki Van Boeschoten's (1997, 1998) research is especially influential, since it is among the first that, through the investigation of everyday life in a Greek village, denotes grass-roots dynamics as instrumental. Her work is also important in terms of addressing the ways memory, both private and collective, is constructed through history and trauma. Moreover, Van Boeschoten's research is based on methodological techniques and sources that only recently became popular, such as oral testimonies and memoirs, in an effort to encompass the hidden stories and silent subjects of the historiography through the analysis of life-stories and micro-narratives.

Influential publications that are driving forward two new approaches within the post-revisionist tradition, the 'sociological' and the 'social history' methodologies (Kalyvas, 2003), include but are not limited to the work of Mazower, Van Boeschoten, Vervenioti, Margaritis, Marantzidis, Voglis and Lambropoulou.⁶¹ According to Stathis Kalyvas, the 'sociological' approach emphasises the analysis of political and social dynamics, whereas the 'social history' viewpoint is interested in the experiences, mediations and reminiscences of the events (2003). The latter aims to examine neglected themes such as women, political prisoners, ethnic

⁶⁰ In relation to ethnic and political identities during the Greek Civil War see the edited volume *O Emfylios Polemos: apo ti Varkiza sto Grammo* [The Civil War: from Varkiza to Grammos] by Nikolakopoulos *et al.* (2002). Also see Van Boeschoten's (2000: 28-46) paper in the volume *Macedonia: The Politics of Identity and Difference*, edited by Cowan (2000).

⁶¹ See Mazower (1994, 2000, 2004), Van Boeschoten (1991, 1997, 2003), Vervenioti (1994, 2003), Margaritis (2002), Marantzidis (1997, 2001), Voglis (2002a,b) and Lambropoulou (1999). Besides the aforementioned monographs, there is also a number of edited volumes and conference proceedings, such as *Meletes gia ton Emfylio Polemo, 1945-1949* [Studies in the History of the Greek Civil War, 1945-1949], edited by Baerentzen, Iatrides and Smith (1992), *The Greek Civil War, 1943-1950: Studies of Polarization*, edited by Close (1993), *To Emfylio Drama* [The Civil Drama], edited by Kotaridis (1997), *After the War was over: reconstructing the family, nation and state (1943-1960)*, edited by Mazower (2000), *O Emfylios Polemos: apo ti Varkiza sto Grammo* [The Civil War: from Varkiza to Grammos], edited by Nikolakopoulos *et al.* (2002), *The Greek Civil War: Essays on a conflict of Exceptionalism and Silences*, edited by Carabott and Sfikas (2004) and *Peninta Hronia meta ton Emfylio* [Fifty Years after the Civil War], (1999), Newspaper *To Vima* and Ermis Publications.

minorities and political refugees and often analyse them in relation to discourse and memory, both private and collective. Both approaches have given rise to new research subjects such as political violence and its impact on women and children⁶² or on the local communities, therefore situating violence outside the front, while stressing the interconnection of the private and the political, the local and the national, within a prolonged period of socio-political unrest and turmoil (Kalyvas, 2003).

The studies of Margaritis (2002), Van Boeschoten (1997, 1998), Voglis (2002a,b) and Vervenioti (1994, 2003), mark an academic shift, not only by approaching history from the losers' perspective (Left), but primarily because of the employment of innovative techniques and the integration of neglected research subjects.⁶³ Their research as historians and anthropologists remains a cornerstone in the development of the approach 'from below', since they provide analyses that are based on locally-oriented empirical investigation, thus allowing for an alternative understanding of the Civil War (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2003; 2004: 228-229). At the same time, the emphasis on the social and local level of the conflict, through the analysis and investigation of the local communities and archives that were previously ignored by the historians, sheds light on the versatility and multi-level nature of the war.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the study of political refugees, and the children of the war, as well as the articulation of memory and oblivion of the traumatic past, has gradually appeared on the academic 'scene' with interesting and useful analyses.⁶⁵ However, the integration of a broader theoretical and comparative framework is lacking from the analysis of memory, both private and public, personal and official.⁶⁶

According to Kotaridis and Sideris, the Civil War should be seen, not only as two distinct and conflicting political blocs, but as two non-compatible cognitive systems of discourse, an ideological and psychological contest with subjective dimensions (Nikolakopoulos *et al.* 2002: 18). In this respect, the groundbreaking work of Voglis (2002a,b) and Lambropoulou (1999) on

⁶² On the topic of the children of the Civil War, indicatively, see Lagani (1996, 2005), Vervenioti (2005), Gagoulas (2004) and Gritzonas (1998).

⁶³ See Kalyvas and Marantzidis (March 20-21st, 2004), Kalyvas (2003), Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003, 2004), Vervenioti (2002c: 157-181) and Liakos (August 28-29th, 2004).

⁶⁴ Also see Kalyvas and Marantzidis (March 20-21st, 2004).

⁶⁵ On the subject of the political refugees of the Civil War, see the edited volume "*To oplo para poda.*" *Oi politikoi prosfyges tou ellinikou emfyliou polemou stin Anatoliki Europi* ["Ground arms" The political refugees of the Greek Civil War in Eastern Europe] by Voutyra *et al.* (2005). For the study of memory, see the first edited volume on the subject, *Mnimes kai Lithi tou Ellinikou Emfyliou Polemou* [Memories and Oblivion of the Greek Civil War] by Van Boeschoten *et al.* (2008). Anna Vidali (1999a,b) is employing social psychology to discuss the issue of traumatic memory among four generations who were affected by the Greek Civil War. Also see Van Boeschoten (1997). For the memory of the 'Right' in relation to national-mindedness, see Kostopoulos (2005). For more on the existent studies on the social memory of the Greek Civil War, see Van Boeschoten *et al.* (2008: 9-41). For an alternative historical analysis of the 1940s, see Elefantis (2003) *Mas piran tin Athina: xanadiavazontas tin istoria 1941-1950* [They took Athens from us: rereading the history of 1941-1950].

⁶⁶ For a review of the studies related to the memory of the Greek Civil War, see Van Boeschoten *et al.* (2008: 9-41).

the traumatic experiences and the construction subjectivities of the Greek Civil War dissidents and detainees offers a useful analytical framework regarding political incarceration. Even though a gendered parameter in the construction of the subjectivities of the political inmates, both male and female, is not adopted, their research on the political subjectivities, defines the new academic scheme. In a similar way, women political detainees and dissidents have not been fully incorporated into the scope of historical research, despite the fact that, as Voglis (2002b) himself mentions, historiography of the prison has flourished since the 1970s.

Polymeris Voglis belongs to a younger generation of scholars, who has traced the social dimensions of the Civil War based on interviews with former prisoners and exiles and on unpublished material from the *Contemporary Social History Archives* and the Archives of Averof and Aegina Prisons. Voglis with *Becoming a Subject: Political Prisoners in the Greek Civil War* (2002a) undoubtedly contributes to a 'from below' approach, while his research is fundamental to the current academic scheme. The multidimensional and complex traumatic experiences of both men and women who were treated as traitors and aberrants because of their political beliefs, both during and after the Civil War, need to be examined from the inside and 'from below'.⁶⁷ Concomitantly, the deconstruction of subjectivity takes place not only through physical and mental endeavours in terms of the insecurity, fear and terror and the multiple hardships imposed by state mechanisms in order to rehabilitate exiles and prisoners, it also occurs through gender norms and power hierarchies that need to be further articulated. The experiences of both men and women call for an analysis through the lens of gender, since the 'tools' that were used to transcend the male and female body and psyche were also gendered.

The new trends in the Greek Civil War historiography have not only redefined academic investigation since the late 1990s, but also public dialogue, while the Civil War is also incorporated in literature and the media. From the mid-1990s there has been a noticeable increase in literary texts, newspaper articles, television programmes, films and documentaries dealing with the 1940s.⁶⁸ An effort is also made to avoid reproducing ideologically-charged and

⁶⁷ Voglis briefly discusses the traumatic experiences of the detained women in two short subchapters, on pp. 163-168 and pp. 204-210 (2004, Greek edition); for the English edition (2002a), see pp. 106-108 and pp. 136-138.

⁶⁸ Within the contemporary academic and public debate, the first few novels to deal with the 1940s include *Orthokostia* by Thanasis Valtinos (1994) and Dimitris Gionis (1994) *Tora tha deis...* [Now you will see...]; for more recent writing, see *Diplomena Ftera* [Folded Wings] by Giannis Atzakas (2007), *Porfyra Gelia* [Purple Laughs] by Michel Fais (2010) and Maro Douka's (2010) *To dikio einai zoriko polu* [Justice is something very hard]. It is worth noting that literary production has followed the example of academic and non-academic paradigms of Civil War historiography and acted within similar chronological and thematic contexts. It has also been argued that it was fiction that set the paradigm for the investigation of taboo themes and history then followed; see Marantzidis' (June 27th, 2010, *To Vima*) book review of Venetia Apostolidou's (2010) *Travma kai Mnimi: I pezografia ton politikon prosfygon* [Trauma and Memory: the fiction of political refugees]; also see Vasilakos (2000) *O Ellinikos Emfylios Polemos stin metapolemiki pezografia (1946-1958)* [The Greek Civil War in postwar fiction (1946-1958)] and Kastrinaki (2005) *I logotehnia stin tarahodi dekaetia, 1941-1950* [Literature in the turbulent decade, 1941-1950]. For television

anachronistic viewpoints, and official party rhetoric, by focusing on regional histories, everyday people and personal experiences during the Greek Civil War. Although issues such as political refugees, traumatic memories and violence are also discussed, the inclusion of women in literary texts appears to be greatly lacking; the female experience, however, is belatedly incorporated into television and film documentaries.⁶⁹

Within this framework, Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003) point out that traditional and revisionist research has failed to explore major research gaps, the closing of which was expected to shed light on unknown aspects of the Civil War. Following this argument, there is a range of issues and parameters that were expected to be critically addressed in the contemporary theoretical debate, but which remain largely disregarded; for instance, the issue of participation, closely linked to gender, ethnic and political identities, as well as the dynamics of violence (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2003; 2004: 227-228).⁷⁰ Ethnic and national classifications and gender differences were in fact the two main components within the nationalist and state mechanisms that legitimised the persecution and abuse of the politically active population, especially women.

As mentioned earlier, the new academic approach seeks to avoid an intense ideological discourse concerning which side should be blamed for the war, thus enabling a widening of the research spectrum in order to encompass themes that were previously seen as taboo, such as the issue of political violence.⁷¹ However, the proclaimed distance from ideologically charged analytical frameworks and the wish to avoid demonising the opposing political poles is not always apparent. A noteworthy example, inherited by the revisionist scheme and integrated into the post-revisionist research, is yet again the challenging of the chronological outbreak of the Greek Civil War, placing it from 1946 to 1944 (the Resistance period). A considerable proportion of the academic community has voiced its objection when it comes to the three-round theory,

programmes, see *I Mihani tou Hronou* [The Time Machine] and *Thematiki Vradia* [Thematic Evening]; for documentaries, see *The Greek Civil War* by Roviros Manthoulis (1997), *Makronisos* by Ilias Giannakakis and Evi Karampatsou (2008) and *Kapetan Kemal: o syntrofos* [Captain Kemal: the comrade] by Fotos Lamprinos (2008) and the recently released film *Psychi Vathia* [Deep Soul] by Pantelis Voulgaris (2009). This list is only indicative; there is a significant number of influential documentaries, films and novels that need to be further analysed and which have erupted public and academic interest.

⁶⁹ I am referring to Alinda Dimitriou's trilogy on female partisans and political detainees, the first documentary on female guerrilla-fighters during the Greek Resistance and Civil War. The first part is entitled *Poulia sto Valto* [Birds in the Mire] (2008), the second part is named *I Zoi stous Vrahous* [Life on the Rocks] (2009) and concentrates on women who joined the Democratic Army and were later exiled; the third part, which was released in 2012, is *Ta Koritisia tis Vrohis* [The Girls of the Rain]. The television programmes that dealt with the exiled women were *I Mihani tou Hronou* [The Time Machine] "Women in Exile" (2007) and *Alithina Senaria* [True Scripts] "Exiled women at Trikeri island" (2007).

⁷⁰ Also see Kalyvas (2003).

⁷¹ This need has been stressed by Kalyvas, Marantzidis and Mazower (March 20-21st, 2004), Kalyvas (2003), Antoniou and Marantzidis (2003, 2004: 226, 227, 229); also see Liakos (2004).

characterising it as an outdated and conservative theoretical construct.⁷² The historian, Philippos Iliou (2002) and the anthropologist, Neni Panourgia (2009), have expressed objections regarding the re-emergence of the anachronistic ‘three rounds’ scheme initially instituted by nationalist discourse that, in the long run, downgrades the political complexity of the 1940s.⁷³ In fact, Philippos Iliou argues that systematic research could only prove that the Communist Party was not planning a frontal conflict and that the Civil War was not the outcome of calculated discord, characterising the ‘three round’ approach as a ‘rightist construct’ (2002: 25). Neni Panourgia also refers to work conducted by moderate researchers who are on the same wavelength as Iliou and other historians of the Left; thus, even though this analytical framework is placed within a wider ‘postmodern’ academic critique, it seems highly problematic and outdated (Panourgia, 2009: 118-119).

The battles that took place during the Occupation, the Resistance period and the phenomenon known as the ‘white-terror’⁷⁴ are closely connected to the Civil War and post-civil war processes and, should be examined as such. Therefore, reviewing the 1940s as a single, unvarying period and equating guerrilla violent practices in the context of Resistance and the civil strife with the state organised, rightist violence, is at least problematic.⁷⁵ State violence and extreme terrorism by paramilitary and state agents not only took place on the battlefield, but were extended to the local communities, to women, children and the elderly, and took the form of extreme terrorisation, persecution, abuse and murder for a period ranging from the mid-1940s until the fall of the military junta.

Despite the importance of integrating violence within the contemporary research agenda, concerns have been raised that the systematic categorisation and quantification of the political conflict and its complex dynamics might eventually subvert historical knowledge. As Panagis Panagiotopoulos (June 26-27th, 2004) stresses, since the Greek Civil War cannot be examined as a genocide (like, for example, the case of Rwanda), “counting the dead has very little to offer”.⁷⁶ On the same ground, he argues that even though Communist violence holds grains of “primary violence, the guilt of the Right will not be softened by providing proof of the red terror” (Panagiotopoulos, June 26-27th, 2004). Within this framework and in relation to gender violence,

⁷² See Panourgia (2004, 2009: 13, 85, 118-120), Iliou (2002: 25) and the interviews included in the column *Vivliodromio* of the Greek newspaper *TA NEA* (July 31-August 1st, 2004 and September 18-19th, 2004) by Professors Alexiou and Karydis. The historian Dimitra Lambropoulou, in the insert magazine *Vivliothiki* of the Greek newspaper *Eleftherotypia* (May 28th, 2004), also raises her concerns.

⁷³ See Panourgia (2004; 2009: 13, 85, 118-120).

⁷⁴ ‘White-terrorism’ refers to right-wing violence against the supporters (or perceived as sympathetic) of the Left that took place primarily between 1945 and 1946.

⁷⁵ Indicatively, see Kalyvas (2002: 188-207, especially, pp. 196-206; 2000: 142-183).

⁷⁶ In Nikolic-Ristanovic’s (2000) edited volume, the ‘numbers game’ when it comes to the counting of cases of sexual violence against women, is critiqued as participating in the ‘male game of war’.

no attempt has been made to interpret sexual degradation and militarised rape in terms of gender power relations and as a means of political repression and national purification. Consequently, analyses that exclusively reflect professional disciplines are perpetuating a fragmented understanding of gender and political violence.

1.3 Weak Democracy and the Military Dictatorship: the ‘black hole’ of Greek scholarship

The period ranging from the official termination of the Civil War until the establishment of the military regime (1950-1967) has been characterised as ‘weak democracy’,⁷⁷ mainly due to the troubling coexistence of democracy in pretence and the *parakratos* (para-state), but also due to the proclaimed parliamentarism combining a series of *paraconstitutional* practices (Tsoukalas, 2008: 41). Even though the period is extremely important, primarily because the persecution, repression and incarceration of leftists continued as during the Civil War (although not to the same degree and intensity), it remains largely unexplored. The gap is apparent not only in scholarly literature, but also at the level of public debate. Moreover, published memoirs, historical or social studies and conferences on the period are also lacking.

The lack of academic research concentrating on the periods of ‘weak democracy’ and the military dictatorship (1967-1974) has been described as the ‘black hole’ of Greek historiography.⁷⁸ Historians and political scientists argue that academia has focused only on ‘easy’ or neutral subjects such as the anti-junta resistance, foreign intervention and the causes that led to the establishment of the military regime.⁷⁹ Similarly, the sociologist, Konstantinos Tsoukalas, points out that the post-civil war period is a particularly dark phase of historiography (April 22nd, 2005); there are a series of issues that need to be examined in order to shed light on the political and social context of the 1960s and 1970s.

Although forty-five years have passed since the 1967 *coup d'état*, a balanced and thorough analysis has not yet emerged in the existent research. The research gap is apparent, especially when it comes to the unstable years of the 1960s and 1970s and the extent of political violence and state oppression of both men and women. The electoral sociologist, Ilias

⁷⁷ The term ‘weak democracy’ is used to characterise the unstable political system of the 1950-1967 period and is, in fact, accurate, since throughout the 1950s and 1960s, hundreds of women and men were still politically persecuted and detained in camps and prisons. The term is attributed to the electoral sociologist, Ilias Nikolakopoulos. For more, see his monograph *I kahektiki dimokratia, kommata kai ekloges, 1946-1967* [Weak democracy, parties and elections, 1946-1967] (2001) and his analysis in the Greek Newspaper *TA NEA* (April 22nd, 2005).

⁷⁸ This characterisation is attributed to a number of scholars and journalists, for instance, Ilias Nikolakopoulos, Kostantinos Tsoukalas, Manolis Pimplis (April 22nd, 2005).

⁷⁹ See the views expressed primarily by Koulouri and Nikolakopoulos in Pimplis’ article (April 22nd, 2005).

Nikolakopoulos, attributes the reasons for this academic silence and perplexity to the associated traumas of a dark and tumultuous period, placed by academic and public dialogue in the sphere of oblivion (April 22nd, 2005). Accordingly, national reasons, in the sense of the ‘imposed’ reconciliation of the post-1974 democratic turn,⁸⁰ have encouraged this silence (Tsoukalas, April 22nd, 2005). Concomitantly, when it comes to the historical analysis of the 1950-1974 period, a similar trend to that observed in Greek Civil War historiography is being witnessed, in the sense that academic investigation had to wait fifty years in order to integrate the Civil War into the research agenda (Tsoukalas and Alivizatos, April 22nd, 2005).

The need to analyse the phenomenon of political persecution and terror in its totality, and therefore examine the 1946-1974 period as a whole, has also been expressed by Neni Panourgia, who stresses that the term post civil-war, “is not a term of closure”...but rather “a term that has participated in the production of a political reality” that did not end with the communist defeat in 1949, “but continued to exist until and including the junta” (February, 21st, 2007, Re-public).⁸¹ In this regard, her recently published study, *Dangerous citizens: the Greek Left and the Terror of the State* (2009), is also significant because it focuses on the discursive, institutional and political characteristics of the articulation of leftist citizens as dangerous, going back to 1929 until the early 2000s. Panourgia’s groundbreaking analysis, with an emphasis on the micro-stories and narratives of the period (1929-1974),⁸² lays the foundation for a comprehensive and multi-level analysis of the phenomenon of political violence against male and female dissidents.

In any case, some interest has recently been displayed in the period of weak democracy that is reflected in the edited volume *The “short” 1960s: institutional framework, party strategies, social conflicts, cultural processes* (2008).⁸³ While, the 1960s have not been integrated –at least, not decisively– into the contemporary historiographical or public debate, a shift is nevertheless taking place as a result of the increasingly easier access of scholars to archives and digitised archival resources. However, since the historical conjunctures, the ideological and institutional settings remain largely unexplored, emphasis is placed on more generic accounts of the period at the expense of the equally important micro-stories, meta-narratives and invisible subjects. Therefore, the inclusion of women who were persecuted, detained, or abused is not

⁸⁰ The transition to multi-party democracy after the fall of the junta in 1974 is known as *metapolitefsi*.

⁸¹ Also see the influential *I Elliniki Tragodia: apo tin apeleutherosi stous Syntagmatarhes* [The Greek Tragedy: from the liberation until the Colonels] by Kostantinos Tsoukalas (1981) that examines the socio-economic and political context of the 1944-1967 period.

⁸² See Dimitris Pananikolaou’s book review of the *Dangerous citizens: the Greek Left and the Terror of the State* (2009), in the newspaper *TA NEA* (April 2nd, 2010).

⁸³ The volume, edited by Rigos *et al.*, is based on the conference of the *Hellenic Political Science Association*, held at the Panteion University in Athens, in December 2005.

considered a priority of the academic debate, as has been the case in the civil war historiography.

Besides the lack of scholarly and non-scholarly output regarding the post civil-war period, there has also been a corresponding trend in the study of the military dictatorship. Most of the existent publications cluster around two main poles (Koulouri, April 22nd, 2005). The first standpoint has developed through the written memoirs of the active participants, especially those who took part in the Students' Movement.⁸⁴ The second stance has evolved around the analysis of the regime through the lens of political science,⁸⁵ primarily as a comparative study of the military dictatorships in Latin America and Southern Europe or in an effort to interpret the socio-political framework, the causes and consequences of the 1967 *coup d'etat*.⁸⁶ Paradoxically, historiographical accounts of the junta are also limited, despite the fact that historians predominated in the Civil War academic scholarship.⁸⁷ Furthermore, it is worth pointing out the absence of relevant conferences or workshops; in fact, the only conference exclusively concentrating on the Greek military dictatorship was organised by the *Hellenic Political Science Association* and took place in December 1997.⁸⁸ This conference resulted in a useful edited volume *The Dictatorship 1967-1974: Political practices-Ideological discourse-Resistance* (1999, in Greek) that, in addition to the political contextualisation, the socio-economic consequences and the analysis of the anti-junta movement, encompasses an interesting discussion of the cultural framework, ideological discourse and nationalist propaganda of the junta regime. Concomitantly, literary texts, documentaries and television programmes that not only deal with the period but also attempt to touch upon a number of

⁸⁴ Referring to publications such as Kritikos (1996) *Antistasi kata tis dikatorias: 1967-1974* [Resistance against the Dictatorship: 1967-1974]; Papazoglou (1975) *Foititiko Kinima kai diktatoria* [Student's Movement and the dictatorship]; Demertzis and Armenakis (2000) "I politiki kouloura kai ta mesa epikoininias. I periptosi ton foititon tis Athinas" [The political culture and the mass media. The case of students in Athens].

⁸⁵ For instance, see Bermeo (1995).

⁸⁶ See in particular Paraskevopoulos (1974) *Martyria 1963-1967, Pos ftasame sti diktatoria* [Memoir 1963-1967, How we've reached to the dictatorship] and Sakellaropoulos (1998) *Ta Aitia tou Aprilianou Kathestotos* [The reasons of April coup]; Also see Poulantzas (1976) *The Crisis of the Dictatorships. Portugal, Greece, Spain*; Mouzelis, N. (1986) "On the Rise of Postwar Military Dictatorships: Argentina, Chile, Greece"; Meletopoulos (1996) *I Diktatoria ton Syntagmatarhon. Koinonia, Ideologia, Oikonomia* [The Colonels Dictatorship. Society, Ideology, Economy].

⁸⁷ See Panagiotopoulos and Koulouri (April 22nd, 2005). For historical accounts of the period, see "Athenian" (1972) *Inside the Colonels Greece*, translated by Clogg and the edited volume by Yannopoulos and Clogg (1976) *Greece under the military subjection*; Psiroukis (1983), *Istoria tis Sighronis Elladas (1967-1974)-To kathestos tis 21hs Apriliou* [History of Contemporary Greece (1967-1974)-The 21st April regime]. Also see Vournas (1997) *Istoria tis Syghronis Elladas 1967-1974 Hounta-Fakelos Kyprou* [History of Contemporary Greece 1967-1974 Junta-Cyprus File] and the recent special edition of the newspaper *TA NEA, I stratiotiki Diktatoria 1967-1974* [The Military Dictatorship 1967-1974], edited by Karamanolakis (2010).

⁸⁸ See Nikolakopoulos and Koulouri (April 22nd, 2005).

issues began to appear; for instance, the extensive employment of violence and torture, women as political activists and the issue of political incarceration.⁸⁹

The overall lack of published studies addressing the military junta is also related to the inadequate analysis of archival sources and the sometimes limited access to archives. Although there are several significant archives covering post-civil war Greece, their resources have not been fully explored and incorporated into academic investigation since the material is not always made available to researchers.⁹⁰ A gap is also identified in relation to the published testimonies, especially in comparison to the civil war period; this is mainly reflected by the lack of women's testimonies. The memoirs of female junta activists are only a few; among them is Amalia Fleming's (1995) testimony, initially published abroad in 1973, in which she discusses her political persecution, interrogation and imprisonment. Amalia Fleming's memoir falls into the general category of memoirs by well-known dissidents, since she was a political activist who later became an MP of the Socialist Party. Similarly, Maria Karagiorgi's (2007) memoir falls into the same category, since she was also politically active in the ranks of the Communist Party and the *United Democratic Left* (EDA), and was incarcerated for a long period lasting from the Metaxas Dictatorship (1936) to the military junta.⁹¹

The silencing of the female experience and the downplaying of the gendered and sexual nature of torture and terror is not only evident in academic literature, but it is also reflected in the published personal accounts and memoirs. In fact, there is only one memoir of a female junta dissident, that of Kitty Arseni (2005), which discusses not only her experience as a dissident and political detainee, but also the sexual nature of her torture.⁹² Kitty Arseni's memoir

⁸⁹ Indicatively, see Alinda Dimitriou's documentary on women in the junta *Ta Koritsia tis Vrohis* [The Girls of the Rain] that was released in 2012 and Maro Douka's novel *I arhaia skouria* [Fool's Gold] (2008) and the short story *I Pigada* [The Cauldron] (2009), that were first published in 1979 and 1974. Within this framework, the research of two scholars, namely Karen Van Dyck (1994, 1998) and Gonda Van Steen (2001 and her forthcoming book), who analyse the artistic activity and mechanisms of propaganda and censorship during the military dictatorship, should also be mentioned.

⁹⁰ There are, however, important archival bodies in Greece, such as the *Contemporary Social History Archives* (ASKI), or the *Company for the Study of Left Youth History* (EMIAN), where valuable material concentrating on the 1950-1974 period is available to researchers; this is also the case in the Modern Greek Archives, at the *League for Democracy*, King's College, London.

⁹¹ In addition to the aforementioned memoirs, information in relation to the female experience can be found in the written testimonies of women who were exiled throughout the 1946-1974 period and whom briefly discussed their internment during the military dictatorship. Indicatively, see the memoirs of Margarita Kotsaki (1987), Fani Manolkidou-Vetta (1997), Anna Teriaki-Solomou (2004) and Iro Hatzi (2002). Also see Eleni Faliaga-Papanikolaou's (1989) account which includes important information on the Yaros concentration camp.

⁹² In addition to Kitty Arseni's (2005) memoir, the sexual nature of torture is also included in Pericles Korovessis' (2007) memoir that was published abroad in 1969 and is based on his testimony at the European Court. Also see the recently published memoir of Petros Vlassis (2009), who testified at the Council of Europe, which contains important archival material, photographs, correspondence and information on the torture and abuse that took place in Colonels' Greece. There was also a workshop on the women who participated in the anti-dictatorship struggle, organised by the *Company of Historical Archives Preservation* (EDIA) on April 12th, 2006 that resulted in a short edition that includes testimonies of women who were imprisoned and tortured.

was initially written in 1968 and she was among the first to testify in the Human Rights Committee of the Council of Europe against the Colonels' regime.

The existing published memoirs concentrate on the student revolts in the Polytechnic and Law School and on the heroic, usually male participants of the anti-junta struggles, ignoring difficult aspects of everyday life and the victimisation during imprisonment, torture and sexual violence.⁹³ Recently, there has been some public and journalistic interest, with television programmes, newspaper articles and literary texts dealing with the issue of torture and the male and female victims of abuse, but also with the perpetrators of violence.⁹⁴ A distinct reference needs to be made to Mika Haritos-Fatouros' (2003) study *The Psychological Origins of the Institutionalized Nature of Torture*, which employs a social psychology perspective in her analysis of the ideological and military structures that facilitated the transformation of the Greek Military Police (ESA) servicemen into official torturers. Furthermore, an album was published in 2009, *The Bouboulinas' Terrace*, containing visual and archival material and testimonies dealing with detention, interrogation and torture in the Security Police Station in Athens, mainly based on the research of James Becket, the *Amnesty International* attorney investigating cases of torture during the Greek junta.⁹⁵ This new direction, reflected so far in a few publications, lays the foundation for a comprehensive study and analysis of the regime, integrating the anonymous activists and participants in the anti-junta movement, the personal micro-stories and narratives of trauma. Similarly, the mechanisms of violence and repression must be interpreted primarily in relation to the nationalist context, but also within the broader gendered and hierarchical power structures that promoted them, in order to study both the phenomenon itself and the gender characteristics of this type of abuse.

Consequently, the gap is even more apparent in relation to the gender-specific analysis of the period.⁹⁶ Following the post-civil war rationale, the oppressive tactics and mechanisms of

⁹³ Also see Koulouri, Nikolakopoulos and Alivizatos (April 22nd, 2005). The memoirs of male junta dissidents are also few in numbers, especially in comparison to the written testimonies, concentrating on the Civil War period; see Laskaridis (2006) and Benas (2007); for the Polytechnic uprisings and Student Movement, see Dafermos (2009) and the study of the journalist Giorgos Gatos (2004). Also see the special edition on the Polytechnic School revolts of the newspaper *TA NEA* (November 17th, 2007).

⁹⁴ See the television programme *I Mihani tou Hronou* [The Time Machine], on the torture that took place during the junta, November 19th and 26th, 2010; for the junta torturers see *Thematiki Vradia* [Thematic Evening] "The torturers of the EAT-ESA", June 21st, 2010. Indicatively, see the articles "Gynaikes ston Anti-diktatoriko Agona" [Women in the Anti-dictatorship Struggle], April 22nd, 2010, Newspaper *Avgi*, "Imerologio Fylakis pano se harti sokolatas" [Prison Diary on a chocolate paper], November 17th, 1997 and "Vasanizan, alla ohi epitides" [They were torturing, but not on purpose], November 29th, 2005; for literary texts, see Manthoulis' (2002) *Lilly's Story* and Maglinis' (2008) *I anakrissi* [The Interrogation].

⁹⁵ The title refers to the terrace of the Security Police Station in Bouboulinas street, where, along with the Greek Military Police Station in Athens, the majority of torturous acts took place.

⁹⁶ There is not even a single academic publication that deals with the female experience of political persecution, repression and incarceration or that analyses the gendered dynamics of violence, torture and sexual abuse during the military dictatorship.

terror were based on the retraditionalisation and instrumentalisation of gender roles and power relations. Traditional assumptions concerning family, gender and sexuality remained unchallenged, while a veil of silence covers especially rape, sexual abuse and torture during the dictatorship. Documentation and accounts of the junta period, especially in relation to gender and/or sexual violence, are few and have remained so even after the 1974 democratic turn. The silencing and lack of testimonials and academic literature is closely connected to the officially nurtured socio-political amnesia, but also to the social and family structures and the prevailing gender expectations in terms of reporting or discussing incidents of sexual abuse, regardless of the context in which they were committed.

1.4 Women in the Greek Civil War historiography

This section concentrates on the historical and political studies on women in the 1940s historiography; emphasis is placed on the Resistance Movement and the Greek Civil War, due to the lack of academic publications on political persecution, incarceration and violence against women in post-civil war Greece, largely in the 1950s and 1960s, but also with regard to the military dictatorship.⁹⁷ Despite the previously discussed positive, interdisciplinary trends in the Greek Civil War historiography, there are still important issues which remain social or political taboos and are poorly examined. Violence and gender are probably two of the most underestimated and neglected issues (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2003; 2004: 227), both in the Civil War and post-civil war academic literature, but also in the public dialogue and collective memory.

As aptly pointed out by Antoniou and Marantzidis, “the narration of the war takes place without its respective violence, while both sides refer mainly to rival atrocities. Historiographically, violence is also underestimated since it is examined as a natural outcome of strife, not as a qualitatively different level of conflict” (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2004: 227; Brubaker and Laitin, 1998). Gender has also been neglected, since:

its representation remains minimal in both scholarly literature and memoirs (very few were written by women). We do not know about basic things such as the policy of the resistance movement towards women, the issue of female imprisonments, executions, rapes, the issue of female cadres and officers of the resistance and their social origins and status, the mechanisms of women’s participation, and more (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2003).

Violence against women, both in terms of its physical actuality and its psycho-social effects, has

⁹⁷ Because of the lack of academic publications on political persecution, detention and abuse of women dissidents during the 1950-1967 period and the military dictatorship, this section focuses on the period of Resistance and the Greek Civil War; monographs, texts and papers that have contributed significantly to this thesis, are analysed.

been historically, socially and politically 'invisible', in the sense that "the victim has no legal corpus or physical body" and "there is no evidence to prosecute, not even a sign of a crime" (Cohen, 2001: 105).⁹⁸ It is notable that only recently has there been a public interest in women's socio-political participation in various resistance organisations, but also an attempt to document the collective memory of female enrolment and suffering.⁹⁹

Concurrently, the two themes that are marginalised within the contemporary academic debate, namely gender and violence, are still poorly examined. In the case of violence (against women), the produced studies are few, and concentrate primarily on the participation of women in the Resistance Movement and the Democratic Army as partisans and guerrilla fighters.¹⁰⁰ Although recently there has been some academic and public¹⁰¹ interest in women political exiles and prisoners, thus far, academic research has examined the experience of women in political incarceration as a primarily female experience and not through the analytical framework of gender. On this ground, the role of gender and social demarcations, sexual difference, motherhood and the control of sexuality, are not fully assessed as instrumental components of state propaganda, materialised primarily by the state apparatus – but also on some occasions by the Communist Party and the family structure – against women dissidents. Furthermore, the stigmatisation of politically active women, not only during their persecution and incarceration, but also afterwards, resulting to repression, silencing, socio-political marginalisation and unemployment, along with the shattered family and personal relations, remains largely unexplored. The gap is even more apparent in relation to the sexual nature of terror and the gender dimension of their abuse. In any case, even when incidents of violence against women are mentioned, they are not analysed through the decisive role of the nationalist ideology; neither are the rigid power hierarchies and gender norms acknowledged as integral to the terrorisation and abuse.

Riki Van Boeschoten's (2003) paper on the trauma of war rape provides a powerful argument about the conditions that have led to the under-representation of war rapes in the Greek case. Her account remains the only published work so far explicitly linking sexual

⁹⁸ Stanley Cohen (2001: 105) is referring to the phenomenon of 'disappearances', however, when it comes to gender violence, and especially sexually-related assaults, the female body and psyche is oppressed and abused due to its docility and invisibility. For more, see Chapters 2 and 4 of the current thesis.

⁹⁹ Indicatively, see the newspapers *Rizospastis* (February 3rd, 2008) and *Avgi* (January 21st, 2010). Also see Alinda Dimitriou's documentaries *Poullia sto Valto* [Birds in the Mire] (2008) and *Zoi stous Vrahous* [Life on the Rocks] (2009) on the women partisans, guerrilla fighters, and political exiles. Also see the television programmes *I Mihani tou Hronou* [The Time Machine] "Gynaikes stin Exoria" [Women in Exile] (2007) and *Alithina Senaria* [True Scripts] "Exoristes Gynaikes sto Trikeri" [Exiled Women at Trikeri Island] (2007).

¹⁰⁰ Referring primarily to the influential work of Vervenioti (1994, 2002a) and Poulos (2000, 2009). Also see Gritzonas' (2001) account of women guerrilla-fighters of the Greek Democratic Army.

¹⁰¹ Besides Vervenioti's work (2000b, 2003), see the aforementioned newspaper articles and documentaries.

violence to the experience of women as guerrilla fighters of the Democratic Army, situated within the political context of war rapes in the former Yugoslavia (1992-1995) and in the Greek Civil War (1946-1949). Van Boeschoten states that when it comes to gender violence during war or conflict in the contemporary Greek setting, “we are faced with an almost complete void” (2003: 43). She attributes this void not only to the prevailing puritan attitudes of Greek society that reinforce the silencing of sexual victimisation, but to the male dominance in historiography as well (2003: 43).¹⁰²

At this point it is necessary to mention the greatly influential work of Tasoula Vervenioti, who has extensively and in great depth explored the participation of women in the Greek Resistance and Civil War, mainly as partisans and guerrilla fighters. She was the first to analyse the role of the Resistance Movement and the Greek civil conflict in relation to the women who actively participated. Moreover, Vervenioti (1994, 2000a,b, 2002a, 2003) provides the history of women in the 1940s, based mostly on oral and written testimonies, emphasising the relationship between the personal experience and the socio-political framework and the interplay between the micro and macro levels (Antoniou and Marantzidis, 2004: 228). She chiefly focuses on the military and everyday tasks that women had to fulfil, mainly as partisans and combatants. Vervenioti, in the articles (2000a, 2002a) that followed her monograph, *The woman of the Resistance* (1994), provides a particularly useful account of women’s participation in the Resistance Movement, including an interesting discussion on the political and social dynamics that led to women’s mobilisation and incorporation (voluntary or forced) into the Greek Democratic Army. In her paper on women partisans, she stresses the contradiction in the negotiation of the female role and that of the female combatant (Vervenioti, 2002a: 130). The argument that women had to struggle between their traditional role as supporters of peace and their active role in the Resistance and the Democratic Army was vital, not only in the nationalist state project, but also with regard to the Communist objectives. Additionally, Tasoula Vervenioti, in the *Double Book* (2003), provides a historical analysis through a female testimony, while employing prison memoirs by former detainees, in which she discusses the political framework of prison memoir publications and the articulation of the Resistance and Civil War memory in the published testimonies. At the same time, she provides useful information on the living conditions in the Female Averof Prisons and on the social and geographical origin of female political

¹⁰² In support of Van Boeschoten’s latter argument is the example of the work of Giorgos Margaritis, the influential Greek historian who, in his well-known double-volume, *The History of the Greek Civil War* (2002), a political and military history, discusses the participation of women in the Greek Democratic Army (DSE) in only four pages out of the 640 that the second volume covers; see pp. 255-259. At the same time, while the impact of the war on children is discussed in ten pages, women’s experience is to a large extent left out. Moreover, in Margaritis’s study, out of the 147 memoirs employed, only ten are written by women.

prisoners.¹⁰³

These marginalised female experiences need to be discussed however, in terms of a distinct gendered terrorisation and victimisation, on the Mountain, in rural areas, in the women's villages and communities, both before and after the termination of the war, and during their political persecution and incarceration or while going underground; highlighting at the same time, the role of power hierarchies and formulated gender relations within a nationalist and militaristic regime, which was deeply patriarchal and repressive. Accordingly, emphasis must be placed on the demobilisation period, on the traumatisation, labelling and stigmatisation that often resulted in the sexual victimisation of women who had actively participated in the Democratic Army or were considered sympathetic towards the guerrillas. Women in northern and north-western Greece, as Vervenioti (2000a, 2002a) and Poulos (2000, 2009) have shown, had to face a unique dilemma that itself constituted a violent aspect of the conflict and was used by both sides, not only as a means of controlling the population, but also in an effort to establish a 'nationalist cause' (Poulos, 2000). The recruitment of women and the rounding-up of children (known as the *paidomazoma* or *paidofylagma*)¹⁰⁴ were used by the state apparatus as a means to justify the displacement and recuperation of the population's patriotic sentiments.¹⁰⁵ The Left has argued that the participation of women was a voluntary action, based on the fear of being terrorised and sexually assaulted by the paramilitary organisations; these were common practices during the 'white terror' period (1945-1946) and the Civil War.

In addition to Vervenioti's work, Janet Hart's (1996) *New Voices in the Nation: Women and the Greek Resistance, 1941-1964* is an important study of the women's active engagement in the Resistance Movement and the role of gender in social and political movements. The author situates the Greek Resistance in an international context and within a wider theoretical discussion and examines it as a political phenomenon through the analytical framework of 'the culture of modernity'. Hart historicises social transformation and mobilisation in Greece through the narratives of former female partisans, employing a Gramscian approach. Moreover, Hart discusses the Resistance Movement in terms of the ways it primarily affected women who actively participated in the various resistance organisations, while the role of gender and nationalism in social mobilisation and political participation is also touched upon. However,

¹⁰³ For the aesthetics of political prison culture, also see Hart (1999).

¹⁰⁴ The Communist leadership, responding to the government-led evacuation of the highland population, decided to send children from the areas they still controlled across the border into communist Albania and Yugoslavia. On the other hand, the government accused the communists of abducting children and proclaimed that the Royal Welfare Foundation, established by Queen Frederica, could save the children from the danger of being turned into communists.

¹⁰⁵ See Poulos (2000).

prominence should be given to the dynamics of violence and its impact on women's lives both during their active participation as fighters and afterwards as political inmates, as well as on a second level, on the reconstruction of gender roles as a vital component of the nationalist project. Although female mobilisation through partisanship enabled and encouraged active participation and political engagement on the part of women, the strictly defined gender roles of the prewar period were reintroduced in the post-war period, resulting in social and political marginalisation, stigmatisation and ultimately, repression. Thus, the gendered constructions of nationalism closely connected with the revival of traditional assumptions that project a trivialised gender identity, need to be taken into account in order to challenge contemporary academic trends.

Margaret Poulos, in her monograph *Arms and the Woman: Just Warriors and Greek Feminist Identity* (2009), has provided an interesting analysis of the symbolic representations of female warriors in the 1821 Greek Revolution, the 1941-1944 Resistance to the Occupation forces, but also during the Greek Civil War (1946-1949).¹⁰⁶ Poulos emphasises the symbolism of female warriors and their employment by both the nationalist and feminist discourse in order to investigate the construction of a feminist identity and female agency. In this respect, she has attempted to connect the experiences of female warriors in the Greek Revolution of 1821 and the Partisan women during the Resistance and the Civil War to the notions of citizenship and national identity.¹⁰⁷

Partisan literature has produced images of heroic, self-sacrificing 'Amazons', while the government and the conservative press portrayed women guerrilla fighters as hyenas, degenerates and national traitors (Poulos, 2000: 420; 2009: 108). The imagery of armed women was exploited by the Communist Party, in order to link the emancipation of women in the post-war nation state to their incorporation into the partisan movement and the combat units. Concurrently, the official state rhetoric was stressing the importance of reintegrating these 'misguided' and unworthy women into the Greek Nation. The symbolic parameter of the female partisan and guerrilla fighter enables a deeper understanding of the period and the nature of the conflict and, in that respect, Poulos' historical account is important. In addition, she has succeeded in elucidating the role of the female warrior in both the nationalist and communist discourse that utilised the imagery of the 1821 revolutionary women, on the one hand to stress the Greek national heroic tradition, and on the other to signal female agency. Nonetheless,

¹⁰⁶ Also see her paper, "Gender, Civil War and National Identity: Women Partisans during the Greek Civil War 1946-1949" (2000).

¹⁰⁷ Also see Kenna's (2001: 1-32) particularly interesting paper on the representations of women political exiles on the island of Anafi under the Metaxas dictatorship (1936-1941), in men's memoirs and photographs of the period.

these apparently contrasting narratives served primarily as a means of reappropriating gender roles and reinstating women where they belonged, namely the private sphere. Accordingly, the stereotypical female representations, lying at the core of Poulos' analysis, comprise strong components of political propaganda, that need to be explored as indispensable elements of the nationalist ideology, rationalising or justifying the trivialisation, degradation and, in some cases, the abuse of the politically active women.

Consequently, despite the fact that incidents of physical and sexual violence are mentioned in several historical studies or memoirs, the phenomenon of political and gender violence remains largely uncontextualised and underexplored. Political persecution, incarceration, physical and psychological abuse, sexual terror, rape or attempted rape need to be integrated into a wider discussion of nationalism and the imposed system of power relations in order to fully understand the dynamics, causes and consequences of gender violence. Therefore, emphasis needs to be placed on the revival of nationalist and militaristic ideology, through which the rigid patriarchal structures and power hierarchies of gender enabled the banishment, abuse and marginalisation of women, not only during the strife or while detained, but even after their release. Accordingly, the mechanisms of gender violence, political and sexual terror were not symptomatic expressions of state power and control, within a generalised climate of leftist persecution, but instrumental components of nationalist ideology. By examining these issues, I attempt to highlight the gender-specific characteristics of political persecution, imprisonment and sexual terrorisation of female dissidents, as exercised by state and para-state mechanisms and reinforced by a nationalist and patriarchal framework, which was based on gender binaries and traditional assumptions regarding sexuality and femininity. In this way, devalued social categories and marginalised aspects of the unstable and tumultuous 1946-1974 period will be integrated into the contemporary historiographical discussion, contributing to a wider understanding of the role of both nationalism and gender demarcation in the perpetuation of political violence.

1.5 Gender studies in Greece: gender in historiography and anthropology¹⁰⁸

1.5.1 The historiography of women and gender

In the context of Greek historiography, gender emerged as a concept in the mid-1980s, while in most cases, as argued by the historian, Efi Avdela (2003, 2010) the studies of the history of women also coincide with studies of the history of gender.¹⁰⁹ Accordingly, in current research on the history of women or gender, the two focus areas are: class and the civil, social and political rights of women; namely, the gendering of citizenship (Avdela, 2003, 2010: 96).

On these grounds, when it comes to the studies of gender and class, prominence was given to the gender dimension of the social construction of middle class and the important role of family and motherhood for women, further consolidating the dichotomies of public/private spheres (Avdela, 2003; 2010: 97). Through the analysis of the interconnectedness of gender and class, attention was paid to the role of employment in interpreting the multilevel inferiority of women, while the hierarchical structure of gender relations became apparent in the domain of family, primarily in the context of the first half of the 20th century (Avdela, 2003; 2010: 98).

In a similar way, the second focus area, namely gendered citizenship and the demands for political rights for women, was placed in a wider discussion of social equality in work, family and education,¹¹⁰ not only in the context of the 19th century, but also during later years, especially the interwar period.¹¹¹ Accordingly, the 'subjects' of research have been primarily the educated women of the Greek capital, while the majority of studies focused on the history and role of middle-class women, who demonstrated a public presence, usually through artistic activities and educational and social concerns, such as charity.¹¹² Concurrently, these concerns are often articulated through a not only female, but also feminist discourse, claiming equality and rights for women.¹¹³ These early-raised feminist contestations are fundamental to the subsequent demands, which emerged in a more decisive form in the war and post-war context, as women actively participated in the resistance organisations against the

¹⁰⁸ Women's and gender studies were eventually incorporated in Greek higher education in 2003, see Kantsa and Papataxiarchis (2010). This section focuses on historiography and anthropology, as these two disciplinary fields were the ones to decisively incorporate 'gender' into their research agendas. In addition, the current discussion in these fields is considered more useful to the approach adopted by this research.

¹⁰⁹ Also see Avdela and Psarra (1997: 15-119).

¹¹⁰ See Avdela (2003, 2010).

¹¹¹ See Varikas (1987) and Avdela (2003, 2005, 2010); for the feminist contestations in the interwar period, see the anthology of feminist publications of the period, edited by Avdela and Psarra (1985). Also see Kyriakidou (2002), in relation to women workers in the interwar period.

¹¹² See Avdela (2010: 99-102). For a review of these studies, see Avdela (2003, 2010) and Tzanaki (*fylopedia*).

¹¹³ Also see Avdela (2003, 2010) and Tzanaki (*fylopedia*).

occupying forces and then in the Civil War.

In this vein, Efi Avdela (2010) argues that the history of political rights through the scope of gender remains largely unexplored.¹¹⁴ It also became clear, especially in relation to the post-war political confrontations regarding the incorporation of women in the notion of citizenship, that to a large extent the symbolic equation of women with nature and the gendered dichotomies and binaries (private/public, nature/reason) appointed women as second-class citizens (Avdela, 2003; 2010: 100-101).

The investiture of women as second-class citizens becomes evident primarily through the lens of the Greek Civil War and later during the military dictatorship in the context of their oppression, terrorisation and abuse, as a result of their political activism and entrance to the public realm as dissidents.¹¹⁵ As discussed in the previous sections of this chapter, in relation to the incorporation of women and gender in the 1940s historiography, Avdela (2003, 2010: 101) further confirms that, even though women's enrolment and political engagement during the 1940s has recently attracted academic and public interest, current studies concentrate on the active political participation of women mostly as partisans and guerrilla fighters.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, these studies, Avdela (2010: 101) continues, do not fully address the fact that women's enrolment and political activism in the 1940s was combined with a re-inscription to traditional gender roles and normative constructions of femininity.

However, new dimensions have emerged in the last decade in the history of women and gender, dealing with issues of identity and subjectivity, mostly reflected in recent dissertations, in which the research agenda has gradually expanded to include a gender dimension in the (historical) analysis of immigration, the body and motherhood (Avdela, 2010: 101-102).¹¹⁷ Accordingly, gender and nation¹¹⁸ have also been increasingly, but still quite hesitantly, integrated as a new field of research, following however, the trends of the historiography of women, thus focusing on civil society and the formation of the Greek Nation-State (1833-1897),

¹¹⁴ Indicatively see, *The Gender of Democracy: Citizenship and gendered subjectivity*, by Pantelidou-Malouta (2002, Greek edition; 2006, English edition). The work of the political scientist Maro Pantelidou-Malouta (2002, 2006, 2010) is one of the few and important exceptions, situated in the field of political science and political theory, that has investigated in depth the notion of citizenship through the lens of gender.

¹¹⁵ For more, see Chapters 2 and 4 of the current thesis.

¹¹⁶ Avdela (2003; 2010: 101) refers primarily to the studies of Vervenioti (1994, 2000a, 2002a, 2003), Hart (1996) and Poulos (2000).

¹¹⁷ Avdela (2003, 2010) lists a number of these studies, also see Tzanaki (*fylopedia*), Samiou (2006) and Kantsa and Papataxiarchis (2010).

¹¹⁸ Traditional scholarship on Greek nationalism has been reluctant in incorporating gender, and for this reason, attention is paid here to the work of feminist scholars and to primarily historiographical and anthropological research, where as previously discussed, gender and nation are becoming growing research fields. For Greek nationalism in general, indicatively, see the essays in Veremis (ed.) (1997) and Blinkhorn and Veremis (1990); also see Kitromilides (1994, 1983) who has in fact investigated in one paper, the Enlightenment in relation to Greek womanhood in the context of the 18th and 19th century (Poulos, 2009: xii). For more, see Poulos' critique on "the absences of gender from mainstream analyses of nationalism" (2009: xii).

in attempting to delineate the construction of gender identity and gender differentiation in relation to the nation (Tzanaki, *fylopedia*; Avdela, 2003, 2010).¹¹⁹

There are still, however, neglected areas that need to be explored: gender and power relations in the private sphere, including the abuse of women within the family domain; the construction of masculinities in relation to traditional accounts of femininity; comparative analyses between urban centres and rural areas.¹²⁰ There is also a need to widen the time frame, as certain historic periods remain poorly examined.¹²¹ In regard to this, the post-civil war period up to *metapolitefsi* (1974) has been so far largely neglected and needs to be particularly addressed since it was within this historic and political framework that the nationalist, anticommunist and patriarchal discourse was dominant, effectively imposing and re-appropriating gender roles and hierarchies, but most importantly legitimating the oppression, subordination and abuse of women.

The gap in relation to men as historical subjects is also critiqued by the social anthropologist, Jane Cowan (1990), who argues that “it is only when gender is examined as a relational reality, when ‘being/becoming a woman’ and ‘being/becoming a man’ are recognised as mutually constitutive processes, that a feminist perspective generates its most powerful critical insights” (1990: 8). The gendered complications in the construction of hegemonic masculinities have been gradually integrated into the international academic debate; this has been particularly useful, especially regarding studies dealing with war and nationalist or ethnic conflicts and the interplay between militarism, masculinisation and gender violence.¹²² This power and gender paradigm regarding the appropriation of hegemonic masculinities has emerged as a crucial parameter in this research, especially in the analysis of torture during the military junta and the role of militaristic and nationalist ideology and discourse, in terms of creating, promoting and normalising a culture of gender violence.

Moreover, Avdela (2003, 2010: 103-104) points out the methodological insufficiency of reducing gender merely to an analytical tool in the Greek historiography of women. Additionally, the social anthropologists, Venetia Kantsa and Akis Papataxiarchis (2010: 25), referring to Avdela’s critique (2003, 2010), also point out that, despite the multitude of historical studies on women, the history of gender and women has not surpassed the typical Greek-centred approach, thus comprising just another version of historiography. They also

¹¹⁹ Indicatively, see Tzanaki (2007); Varikas (1987, 1992, 2000); Avdela (2005).

¹²⁰ See Avdela (2010: 101-105; 2003) and Tzanaki (*fylopedia*).

¹²¹ Avdela (2003) stresses the need to examine the periods before the 19th century; however, the research gap on post-civil and post-junta Greece is even more striking.

¹²² Indicatively, see Connell’s (1987) classic text *Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics*; Peterson (1999); Bracewell (2000); also see section 1.6 of this chapter and Chapter 4 of the current thesis.

argue that the academic hesitance in terms of incorporating a gendered parameter is further apparent in the field of psychology and sociology (Kantsa and Papataxiarchis, 2010: 38-39).¹²³ The political scientist, Maro Pantelidou-Malouta, additionally underlines that contemporary political analysis and political theory usually refer to gender in rather simplistic terms, ignoring at the same time, the important findings of social anthropology and feminist theory (2010: 269-270). Consequently, Avdela (2003, 2010: 104) rightly points out that the historiographical production has only partially benefited from the important anthropological research, primarily in relation to rural Greece and with an emphasis on gender roles and social relations and their cultural demarcations.¹²⁴

1.5.2 Gender in anthropology and ethnography

In contrast to historiography, the incorporation of gender in anthropology and especially ethnography began early on; in fact, as argued by Kantsa and Papataxiarchis (2010: 24-25), gender was a central theme of analysis in the 1960s, primarily in relation to the value system of 'honour and shame' as featured in studies focusing on the Mediterranean region.¹²⁵ In early studies, but also in later anthropological work, gender is primarily approached as "a set of essential and relatively fixed meanings, out of which a fairly rigid set of gender roles arises" (Cowan, 1990: 9).

One of the first classic anthropological studies that dealt with the notion of male honour as a prerequisite and dependant of female shame is that of John Campbell (1964).¹²⁶ In a similar approach, but with a more 'sensitive' perspective in comparison to Campbell's intellectual followers (Papataxiarchis, 1998: 47), Juliet du Boulay's (1986) ethnographical study of a Greek village in Euboea emphasises the control of female sexuality as a constituent of male honour. However, she highlights the important role of marriage as a socially acceptable institutional framework, since it allows women to transcend their pre-inscribed immorality and thus approach the purified version of femininity as embodied through the image of Virgin Mary (Bakalaki, 2010: 61). Even though both Campbell and du Boulay do not adopt gender as an analytical category, the emphasis on the cultural significance of masculinity and femininity can be perceived as an early approach to gender as a cultural symbol (Bakalaki, 2010: 61; Papataxiarchis, 1998: 49).

Similarly, Ernestine Friedl (1962, 1975) analysed the notion of shame (*dropsi*) in relation to the equation of women with the household and 'private' domain, in this way excluding them

¹²³ However, there have been notable exceptions; see Halkias (2004), for a sociological perspective.

¹²⁴ Indicatively, see Papataxiarchis and Paradellis (1992); Cowan (1990); Dubisch (2000); Skouteri-Didaskalou (1991).

¹²⁵ Indicatively, see Peristiany (ed.) (1965) and Dubisch (ed.) (1986).

¹²⁶ See Bakalaki's (2010) critique, based on Papataxiarchis (1992); also see Papataxiarchis (1998).

from the public realm, but underlining the influential role women can play in private life.¹²⁷ According to Papataxiarchis (1998: 54), it was the analyses provided by Campbell and Friedl that to a large extent shaped the anthropology of women in Greece.

Accordingly, the American anthropologist, Jill Dubisch (1983, 1986), was among the first few researchers to employ an anthropology of women. Influenced by the work of Friedl, she further elaborated and critiqued the particularly dominant dichotomous approaches to gender roles within Greek ethnography and the female symbolical connotations within these binaries, especially in terms of equating women with impurity and profanity (Papataxiarchis, 1998: 56-57, 62-63; Dubisch, 1986: 26), underlining at the same time that “women are viewed as polluted because of their bodily functions, and as dangerous by virtue of their sexuality” (Dubisch, 1983: 196, cited in Loizos and Papataxiarchis, 1991: 11). It is therefore on these grounds that women’s sociopolitical marginalisation was naturalised and justified.¹²⁸ Concomitantly, when women fulfil their destined, sacred role as wives and, most importantly, as mothers they become disciples of the *Panayia*; within this symbolic order, however, they can also easily turn into Eves by denying these roles or by stepping outside the gender and social demarcations.¹²⁹ This symbolic duality was materialised in the repression, imprisonment and, primarily, the sexual terrorisation and torture of women during the Civil War and the military dictatorship, on the basis that they had stepped outside the religious, social and national embodiments of femininity, within a repressive and often misogynistic paradigm of power and gender relations. In this framework of analysis, Greek women are constructed as equivalent to the home and motherhood, but their femininity and their relationship with the nation are at the same time structured around the image of the Virgin Mary. According to Martin (2000), through this mimetic model, women not only embody femininity, but also the nation (Mayer, 2000: 17).¹³⁰

In consequence, as stated in *Gender and Power in Rural Greece*, edited by Dubisch (1986), although Greek ethnography was still preoccupied with women, the concept of gender was decisively incorporated into the analyses of social relations (Papataxiarchis, 1998: 62-63). Accordingly, male identity and the cultural construction of masculinity was also gradually integrated into the ethnographic research agenda as a distinct enquiry (Papataxiarchis, 1998:

¹²⁷ See Bakalaki (2010: 61-62) and Papataxiarchis (1998: 50-51). Also see Loizos’ and Papataxiarchis’ domestic model of gender (1991: 5-8, 222-225) and Friedl (1986: 42-52).

¹²⁸ See Loizos and Papataxiarchis (1991: 11-13), further elaborating Dubisch’s (1986) and du Boulay’s (1986) analyses; particularly useful is also Kenna’s (2001: 2-3) analysis.

¹²⁹ See Dubisch (1986: 23) and du Boulay (1986: 139-141, 161-162).

¹³⁰ For more, see Chapters 2 and 4 of the current thesis. Tamara Mayer (2000: 17) refers to Martin’s work in the Introduction (pp. 1-22) of her edited volume, in which Martin’s paper is included. Angela Martin (2000: 65-86) has analysed the construction of femininity in relation to the Virgin Mary ideal within the Irish nationalist and transnationalist context.

63).¹³¹ Even though the notions of inside and outside are important according to Jill Dubisch (1986: 36), women and men move across the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion in Herzfeld's terms. Therefore, she concludes, the dual role women play, both as symbols and mediators between symbolic realms, needs to be acknowledged to avoid disregarding "the significance of gender as a powerful organizer of life at the social, psychological, and symbolic levels" (Dubisch, 1986: 37). In this framework of analysis, women begin to negotiate autonomy in the previously restricted public sphere.¹³² In this way, as the boundaries between the public and private begin to blur, women's demands for economic, political and personal autonomy, but also the negotiation of their femininity, take the form of acts of resistance (Bakalaki, 2010: 65).¹³³

Consequently, the honour/shame value system, based on the concept of honour (*timi*), has been a central element in the ethnographies and anthropological studies of contemporary Greek rural communities and the investigation of gender roles. Recent work by Efi Avdela (2002, 2006), dealing with honour crimes in Greece, provides a historical analysis, focusing on the role of *timi*, and contributes in addressing gender violence, a research theme not adequately integrated into Greek scholarship. The honour crimes that Avdela (2006) investigates took place in post-civil war Greece, primarily throughout the 1949-1967 period. Her work concentrates on the ways that these crimes were covered by the Athenian newspapers of that period and comprises the main publication on honour crimes in the Greek context.¹³⁴

However, additional research is required regarding any quantitative or qualitative differentiations in the honour crimes committed in urban centres with those in rural areas, as well as to a further exploration of the political context of the period, namely anticommunism and propaganda, nationalist and religious narratives, in terms of normalising the persecution, repression and abuse of the leftists. This was especially the case in the countryside, as the existence of paramilitary groups was significant and a para-state machinery that was acting in collaboration with the official state authorities continued to terrorise, suppress and harass the leftists and their families, often committing acts of sexual harassment and abuse such as rape or even murder.¹³⁵ Avdela concludes, based on three cases of honour crimes committed by leftists,

¹³¹ A classic example of this shift is Herzfeld's (1985) study of the poetics of manhood in Crete, an ethnographic exploration of the performance of masculinity; see Papataxiarchis (1998: 64-65).

¹³² For a review of these later anthropological and ethnographical studies, see Bakalaki (2010: 65-71).

¹³³ Along these lines, Loizos and Papataxiarchis, discuss the work of Zinovieff (1991: 203-220) and especially Cowan (1991: 180-202), in terms of capturing the "emerging ideology of woman as autonomous being, in control of her body", challenging in this way, the "household-focused representations of womanhood", thus attempting to enter the public realm (not only through religion) as autonomous beings in a quest for personhood and visibility (Loizos and Papataxiarchis, 1991: 22-23). Also Bakalaki's (2010: 65) review of works that deal with companionship, dance and alcohol in the Greek context.

¹³⁴ The first paper on honour crimes in contemporary Greece, was that of Safilios-Rothschild in 1969.

¹³⁵ The honour crimes committed by paramilitary groups are briefly discussed by Avdela (2006: 110). The violence

that the political affiliation of either the perpetrator or the victim should be perceived as an 'interpretative element' of the honour killings; the only association that can be made, is in relation to the "violent male nature" (2006: 111).¹³⁶ Given that the morality of both men and women who belonged to the Left was always at stake, especially that of women who were depicted as degenerate, promiscuous and the destroyers of the family and a national threat, the perpetuated crimes also need to be situated within the patriarchal and traditional rhetoric regarding femininity and gender roles, whereby the honour of the female members is equated with the honour of the family as a whole and is thus dependent on male honour and the proof of masculinity.¹³⁷ However, the protection of the honour of the family is an objective for all males, not only the leftists. Therefore, I agree with Avdela (2006: 14) that, regardless of the climate of impunity and the de-legitimation of violence that was established in the post-civil war context, male domination and the need to preserve the honour of the family was prevalent in Greek society, regardless of the political affiliation and political beliefs of the perpetrators or the victims.

1.6 Gender, state violence and nationalism: the international academic scholarship

The 20th Century saw a series of atrocities and incidents of extensive violence against women; the unprecedented state terror that took the form of what Victoria Sanford (2008b) describes as *femicide*, the ethnic cleansing and *gendercide* (Jones, 2004) in former Yugoslavia and the inter-ethnic atrocities in Rwanda and Burundi are only some of the recent examples.¹³⁸ Following the developments in the international political arena, the feminist academic dialogue produced a significant body of theory concerned with political violence and armed conflict that was examined however, until the late 1980s as a male function.¹³⁹ In the same manner, later analysis tended to provide essentialist and simplistic accounts, where men were cast as

perpetuated by the paramilitary groups in the civil and post-civil war Greece, is further discussed in Chapter 2 of the current thesis.

¹³⁶ Avdela (2006: 111) notes, however, that the sample is particularly small.

¹³⁷ In the honour killings that Avdela explores, the honour of the family is decisive and comprises the 'reference context' for the Greek case (2006: 12-13, 122, 125, 212-213).

¹³⁸ 'Gendercide', is the deliberate extermination of persons of a particular gender, according to Mary Ann Warren (1985), who first used the term or, in Adam Jones' (2004: 2) words, a 'gender-selective mass killing'. Gendercide is a sex-neutral term, including the possibility of male and female victimisation that emphasises gender roles in terms of their lethal consequences (Warren, 1985; Jones, 2004: 2-3). 'Femicide' on the other hand (should not be confused with 'femicide': the killing of women by men, because they are women), is according to Sanford, a 'political term'... "It holds responsible not only the male perpetrators, but also the State and judicial structures that normalize misogyny" (2008b: 112).

¹³⁹ Cynthia Enloe (1989, 1993) was among the first scholars who emphasised on the role of women in international politics, situating the oppression of women within gender hierarchies, power structures and militaristic settings.

perpetrators and women as victims (Jacobson *et al.*, 2000). Similar to this notion was the parallel academic coincidence of equating women with peace and men with war.

A distinct reference should be made to feminist studies that from an early stage (late 1980s-early 1990s) paid increased interest to sexualised abuse and terror during war. Feminist studies have stressed the need to make visible the connection between violence and women in times of political and social turmoil, as well as the fact that the designation of women as gatekeepers of the race and the nation intensified gender vulnerability during war (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1989).¹⁴⁰ Notwithstanding that the feminist paradigm acknowledged the capability of women to perpetrate abuse against male and female subjects, research produced in the 1990s theorised male violence as the principal factor in women's subordination, directly linked to the patriarchal societal settings (Jacobson *et al.*, 2000: 11). However, Lentin recognises that "viewing women as homogeneously powerless and as implicit victims does not allow us to theorize women as the benefactors of oppression, or the perpetrators of catastrophes" (1997: 12). This assumption entails a closer look at the linkages between masculinity and violence and the integration of the male experience of war and nationalism, in order to interpret the gendered politics of nationalism and war.¹⁴¹

In this framework, in the early 2000s, the relationship between nationalism and masculinisation in terms of retraditionalising gender roles and reinforcing gender hierarchies,¹⁴² often leading to violence and sexual abuse, began to appear. Moreover, the cultural beliefs and social norms that classify and depict the proper male image as hypermasculine and aggressive emerged as instrumental to the construction and articulation of the interconnectedness of militarism and masculinisation.¹⁴³ On this view, the prewar conditions, hyper-masculinisation, extreme militarism, and the revival of nationalist discourses should be examined from the

¹⁴⁰ Jacobson *et al.* (2000: 1-23) discuss the changing parameters in the examination of women in violent conflicts; see pp. 10-11.

¹⁴¹ Also see, Jacobson *et al.* (2000: 11-12) and Enloe (1998: 51-52). Enloe (1998: 51-52) notes that feminist researchers have emphasised on the female experience (and this also made possible to incorporate men in the feminist research agenda), and stresses the need to further examine the (nationalist) politics of both masculinity and femininity in ethnic and nationalist conflicts. There have been however, noteworthy exceptions in the discussion of state nationalism in relation to men as an equally constructed category; in this respect, Mayer (2000: 5, 19n7) cites among other, the work of Herzfeld (1997).

¹⁴² Wendy Bracewell (2000: 563-590) in her paper "Rape in Kosovo: masculinity and Serbian nationalism" explores the hysteria over 'nationalist' rape in Kosovo and the construction of masculinity in the context of Serbian nationalism in the 1980s.

¹⁴³ Bourke (1999) for instance, has examined the pleasure men felt when killing during World War I and II. For militarism and 'militarisation', also see Cockburn (2007: 237-239); for the interconnectedness between nationalism and masculinity, see Enloe (1989) and for the role of masculinity and sexuality in nationalist ideology, see Nagel (1998: 242-269) and of course, Mosse's (1985) classic text, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Middle-Class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe*. Also see Mosse's *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (1996), where he emphasises the construction of modern masculinity as a crucial element of the 19th century nationalist movements.

viewpoint of their decisive contribution to the outbreak of war.¹⁴⁴ Additionally, in terms of gender-based violence, especially the sexual dimension of violence, sexual slavery, assault and impregnation are closely connected to the preexisting power hierarchies and gender relations.¹⁴⁵ State-based war and nationalist conflict has been built upon long-standing traditional gender roles, where men are associated with violence and women with peace (Pettman, 1996: 93).¹⁴⁶ The role of the state, through state-regulated practices, has reappropriated femininity and masculinity and strengthened masculinisation in order to justify militarisation, resulting in the oppression, persecution and subordination of women.

In this context, one of the most important contributions of contemporary international literature on gender and political violence is its emphasis on analysing violence during conflict and war as a 'gender-sensitive process',¹⁴⁷ a parameter that has provided useful theoretical insights to this research project as well. The feminist perspective of the late 1990s-early 2000s integrated the complex relationship between gender and conflict. Moser and Clark (2001: 10) argue that the official political process of decision-making ignores gender dimensions, not only in times of conflict, but mostly afterwards during the peace negotiations and the building of amity. Despite the considerable body of literature on women's capacity for resistance as a form of mobilisation against oppression, there are significant complexities in women's roles in the peace process that need further elaboration.¹⁴⁸ Recently, the analysis has expanded in order to include the violation of women's human rights during conflict and in peacetime, not only through their active participation and political activism, but often as wives and mothers; thus, gradually integrating the experiences of the displaced and refugee women and their testimonies into the expanding research agenda.¹⁴⁹

During the same period, the academic examination of women's agency (not only men's) in both creating and resisting conflict emerged in an effort "to examine the totality of gender relations" (Jacobson *et al.*, 2000: 11). The changing parameters are challenging essentialist

¹⁴⁴ With regard to gender relations, primarily in relation to heterosexist masculinity within nationalist and militarist frameworks, see Peterson (1999: 34-65).

¹⁴⁵ See Lentin (ed.) (1997) and Nikolic-Ristanovic (2000: 41-77).

¹⁴⁶ Also see, Enloe's (1998: 50-62) paper, where she emphasises the construction of femininity and masculinity, in order to explore the gendering of nationalism.

¹⁴⁷ Indicatively, see Moser and Clark (2001), Jacobs *et al.* (2000), Giles and Hyndman (2004) that approach war and conflict in gendered terms.

¹⁴⁸ Cynthia Cockburn (2004) provides a powerful argument on the continuum of violence that is extended to the processes of peace making and reconciliation. She argues that the line between the war and postwar period is blurred and traumatised and vulnerability (social and economical) can still take place during displacement (refugee camps) and reconstruction; for the issue of gender violence against women in the post-Yugoslav context, see Korac (2004: 249-272). For more on the complex relationship between women and peace, see Giles and Hyndman (2004) and Jacobs *et al.* (2000). The argument that is made in the two edited volumes concentrates on the troubling equation of women with pacifism and non-agency.

¹⁴⁹ For this new expansion of the academic spectrum, indicatively, see Sanford (2003). In the context of this discussion, Sanford's (2003) articulation of the 'phenomenology of terror' is particularly useful.

assertions that link women to motherhood and peace, “often referred to as the maternalist position” (Ruddick, 1992; Jacobson *et al.*, 2000: 13). Similarly, the possibility of women exercising violence or actively participating in the military or nationalist movements has been recently recognised and incorporated into a feminist critique (D’ Amico, 1998, 2000).¹⁵⁰ Moser and Clark (2001: 9) interpret the lack of acknowledgment of the active role that women could adopt during armed conflict and political violence as a double victimisation due to the complexities of demobilisation and reintegration into civil society and local communities. In this regard, within the state-formulated gender system, along with the power hierarchies that prescribe the ‘proper’ gender roles, women are expected to abandon their previously engaged active roles as combatants or activists. When the war, the conflict or the guerrilla warfare is over, the return of women to their communities and to their previous invisible and silent status in the civil society and the public realm is anticipated.¹⁵¹ Thus, their reintegration is inherent with socio-political exclusion, carrying gender-specific complexities.

Furthermore, in post-conflict settings, female guerrillas, political detainees, victims of state violence and oppression must deal with social, economic and political marginalisation, alienation from family and children, guilt and trauma. In this respect, there is a remarkable gender continuity in terms of the long-standing oppression and subjugation of women, not only during social and political upheaval and turmoil, but also in the preconflict period and afterwards.¹⁵² On that ground, violence against women during times of conflict does not end with the cease-fire. Therefore, the aim is to examine the conditions that led to or permitted this type of violence to emerge; equally, the post-conflict situation that in many cases emerges as an equally traumatic period for women must also be assessed since, as argued by Galtung (1969: 167), “the absence of war does not mean peace”.

The experiences of victimisation of women should not be perceived as homogeneous and undifferentiated; the different roles of women as former militants, activists and political prisoners need to be emphasised, as well as the ethnic, religious and political markers that legitimise their brutalisation and persecution. Sexual victimisation must be highlighted, not only as an isolated incident of guerrilla warfare, ethnic conflict or a dictatorial regime, but also as a method of causing social chaos and disintegration of the community; a parameter that also

¹⁵⁰ The work of Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland: Women, the Family and Nazi Politics* (1987), should not be ignored. Also see Elshtain’s (1987, 1998) *Women and War* and Lentin (1997), West (1997), Pettman (1996).

¹⁵¹ For a particularly valuable discussion of women’s exclusion, silencing and forced return to the private sphere when the war or struggle is over, indicatively, see Enloe (1989), Jayawardena (1986) and Sharoni (1996).

¹⁵² For the gender continuum of violence during war and peace, see Cockburn (2004). Caroline Moser also discusses the gendered range of conflict and violence, classifying violence in terms of a threefold continuum of political, economic and social violence (2001: 31).

emerged in my research of sexual abuse, primarily in the context of the Greek Civil War. Sexual violence against women has been previously documented and approached, especially as an instrument of war strategy, in the Vietnam War, in the former Yugoslavia, in Burma and elsewhere.¹⁵³ However, emphasis needs to be placed not only on the preconflict conditions, social upheaval, economic despair, political tensions and general impunity that often ‘facilitate’ incidents of sexual abuse of women, but also on the impact of rape and sexual crimes on families and local communities and the cultural, religious and ethnic groups of the victims. Hence, the role of the state is crucial in terms of legitimising these actions through impunity and immunity to gender violence, and by ‘rationalising’ the resulting social stigmatisation and marginalisation.¹⁵⁴

Equally important to this research are the feminist analyses of nationalism and nationalist movements in gendered terms.¹⁵⁵ Feminists, according to Giles and Hyndman challenge the nationalist constructions of ‘us’/‘them’, ‘either/or’ binaries and distinctions that exclude the ‘other’¹⁵⁶ and “efface political choices under conditions of war” and conflict (2004: 11). Nationalist movements have used gender relations as a means of retraditionalising notions of the nation as family, and women as the reproducers of the nation (primarily as mothers) and the protectors of male honour.¹⁵⁷ Nationalism provides powerful constructs of the traditional and ‘correct’ gender identity that eventually legitimises coercion and violence against women who do not fit into the appointed types of identity. When it comes to analysing the relationship between gender identities and nationalism, Peterson argues that “discourses, institutions and dynamics need to be placed *in context*, in order to provide non-essentialist critiques” (1996: 13, original emphasis). Periods of major political change and turbulence are usually accompanied by a revival of propagandistic official rhetoric, a shift in discourse and a retraditionalisation of gender relations.¹⁵⁸ Yuval-Davis and Anthias outline the ways in which women and gender are involved in national processes as ‘signifiers’ of national differences and biological reproducers of the race and the nation; in other words, women as differently positioned in relation to men in post-war

¹⁵³ With regard to sexual violence in warfare, indicatively see, Kelly (2000), Turshen (2001), Copelon (1998), Crawley (2000) and Nikolic-Ristanovic’s (2000) edited volume.

¹⁵⁴ Also see Sanford’s (2008b) emphasis on the role of impunity and state structures in legitimating gender violence and femicide.

¹⁵⁵ Indicatively see, Jayawardena (1986), Yuval-Davis and Anthias (1989), Enloe (1989, 1993), Yuval-Davis (1997), Sutton (1995), Nagel (1998), Peterson (1999), Taylor (1997), West (1997), Jacobs *et al.* (2000), Mayer (ed.) (2000).

¹⁵⁶ See Mayer (2000: 12-14, 17).

¹⁵⁷ Besides Yuval-Davis and Anthias (1989) and Yuval-Davis (1997), see Wilford and Miller (1998), Mayer (2000), Ivekovic and Mostov (2004), Bracewell (1996).

¹⁵⁸ In relation to the shift in discourse and ideology in nationalist or war-affected frameworks, see Cockburn (2001: 19; 2004: 32-33) and Bracewell (1996: 25-33; 2000: 563-90). Also see Nikolic-Ristanovic (2002).

society and deeply affected by militarism and war (1989).¹⁵⁹ This framework is further materialised in the state regularisation of femininity, sexuality and reproduction, which is intensified during a nationalist conflict or a sociopolitical upheaval, but also after the official termination of the warfare.¹⁶⁰

Lately, research has been produced in relation to reconciliation with a traumatic past in post-conflict societies or post-socialist countries.¹⁶¹ Reconciliation is a long-term traumatic process, which entails dispensation of justice, coming to terms with a painful past and, most importantly, healing (Simic, 2007: 1).¹⁶² According to Olivera Simic (2007: 1) the reconciliation process should be engendered, since women and men experience war differently or, in Cynthia Cockburn's (2004: 35) words, even die different deaths. Moreover, during the official hearings, peace negotiations, the building of amity and reconstruction of the war-affected communities, women rarely participate or publicly express their interests, expectations or fears (Simic, 2007: 1, 3-4). Similarly, as Simic (2007: 3) argues, "amnesty does not mean the same for men and for women"; for men, it is associated with a 'welcomed' lack of responsibility, whereas for women, amnesty results in immunity for the perpetrated crimes against them. Furthermore, there is a gender-specific vulnerability in sexually related crimes, where the need for genuine reconciliation and justice becomes more apparent. The resultant continuous invisibility and silencing of women, along with the exclusion of the female experience, are crucial, not only in the construction of the patriarchal and militaristic apparatuses, but also in revealing the gender-based organisation of power within the nationalist projects, ethnic conflicts and military regimes.

The international academic investigation is aiming to provide a wider theorising of the gendered nature of political violence.¹⁶³ The academic disciplines researching the subject, include anthropology, history, political and social sciences (Moser and Clark, 2001: 6); moving into the 2000s, an interdisciplinary dialogue between psychoanalysis, social psychology and

¹⁵⁹ Besides Yuval-Davis and Anthias (1989), Ivekovic and Mostov (2004) have also explored women as the signifiers of national boundaries and ethnic markers.

¹⁶⁰ Also see Kesic (2004) and Bracewell (1996). Useful are also the papers by Martin (2000: 65-86) and Mostov (2000: 89-110) in Mayer's edited volume (2000), primarily in relation to the analysis of the female body as a boundary of the nation. In a similar vein, the interplay of gender, power and sexuality is captured in Aretxaga's (1997) groundbreaking analysis of the nationalist constructions of gender and sexual difference and the politicisation of the female body; while emphasis is placed on sexuality and hegemonic images of femininity during women's dirty protests in the Armagh Prisons in Northern Ireland (Aretxaga, 1997: 108-112, 122-142, 146-163). Also, see Tsagarousianou (1995: 283-295). For the 're-traditionalisation' and 'renaturalisation' of gender roles in war-affected and post-communist societies, see Nikolic-Ristanovic (2002, especially, p. 54).

¹⁶¹ For research in relation to truth and reconciliation, indicatively see, for the truth process in Latin America, Sanford (2003), for South-Africa, see Wilson (2001), for Serbia, see Nikolic-Ristanovic (2003), and for the post-Yugoslav context, see Dragovic-Soso (2010).

¹⁶² Krog (2001) and Sanford (2003) have also discussed the importance of truth and reconciliation in order for women to come to terms with a traumatic past.

¹⁶³ The broader theme of the relationship between women and war or violent conflicts has been explored in the past; in particular see Pettman (1996), Vickers (1993) and Elshtain (1987; 1998).

anthropology emerged (Robben and Suarez-Orozco, 2000: 1-3, 11). The methodological tools of this body of literature include the review of secondary data source and analyses of media representations, personal testimonies and, more recently, autobiographical accounts, field research and forensics (Moser and Clark, 2001: 11). The academic investigation is focusing on a set of empirical and theoretical issues around the study of violence and trauma, often using a comparative perspective. Current interdisciplinary approaches are in a position to enrich both disciplines and, at the same time, provide multi-dimensional analyses on the dynamics of collective violence. Collective forms of violence require a more complex understanding, since the target is not only the body, but also the social order and the consequences of extensive traumatisation that extend not only to the individual, but also to the social group (Robben and Suarez-Orozco, 2000: 1).

The aim of this research is not only to confirm the existing international body of theory by adding just another case study, namely that of the Greek Civil War and the military dictatorship, but also to apply a gender perspective to a nationalist ideological project. Through this thesis, I attempt not only to theorise nation and nationalism in terms of gender, but also to contextualise the institutionalised nature of gender violence as a key component of the Greek nationalist project. Women within the patriarchal and nationalistic movement were not only marginalised and silenced; in fact, during the Greek Civil War and the military junta, the correctional policies and the rehabilitation programme included a 'bureaucracy of terror',¹⁶⁴ consisting of explicit violent acts, indirect practices and oppressive tactics, but also extreme torture and sexual terrorisation, which were essential in generating forms of power. By reducing the physical, social and political violence against women to mere isolated incidents of the persecution, which took place during the 1946-1974 period, the role of the nationalist ideology and the long-term social and political effects are minimised. The gendered nature of such violence does not merely result from the specificities of its implementation, and the fact that the machinery and instruments employed for the abuse of female body in warfare or political terror are 'gender differentiated' and explicitly 'sexualised' (Cockburn, 2004: 36), but also in the premise that gender is embedded in social relations of power (Moser, 2001: 37).

The *problematique* of this thesis is situated within a wider theoretical debate on the interconnectedness of gender, political violence and nationalism. Therefore, it is a gender

¹⁶⁴ The term is used by Robben and Suarez-Orozco (2000: 9). This allusion is primarily linked to state terror, a term that is difficult to define, but generally refers to violence against civilians perpetrated by the state or governmental apparatuses through their own forces and organisations, such as the army, the police and paramilitary groups. For more on the definitions of terror see Sluka (2000). For more on war and state torture, see Scarry (1985) and Taussig (1992).

analysis of political violence, in which emphasis is placed on the role of nationalist ideology and power structures, in all their manifestations, as articulated and enforced in state-regulated practices and institutions, nationalist discourse and traditionalist rhetoric. It also brings together interdisciplinary theoretical insights and methodological contributions from political science, history and gender studies. The overall objective of the project is twofold: to reapproach the Greek case by introducing a gender-based and discursive analysis of the phenomenon of political violence and to contribute to the international body of scholarly literature on the critique of state and nationalist politics and gender violence.

1.7 Conclusion

Current civil war historiography and Modern Greek Studies, responding to the advanced and interdisciplinary academic trends, are incorporating innovative approaches and marginalised issues into their research agenda. This development must be combined with the employment of various disciplines and analytical tools, but primarily with a widening of the research spectrum in order to integrate gender into a broader discussion of political violence.

Academic literature in Greece and the official discourse of both sides, the Right and the Left, rearticulate and often reproduce iconic war images (mainly male) and stereotypical representations of women. Simplistic assumptions that approach both women's political activism and the resulting traumatisation and suffering as symptomatic war incidents, are underestimating a dominant political culture. Female imagery and enrolment were instrumental, not only to the nationalist cause, but also in interpreting a complex and turbulent political and historical era. Traditional gender codes and relations have been deployed extensively in order to fuel violence, particularly in the context of war and socio-political turmoil. Historical invisibility and the exclusion of the female experience are crucial, not only in the construction of the patriarchal and militaristic apparatus, but also in revealing the gender-based organisation of power within this nationalist project.

Throughout the 1946-1974 period, but primarily during the armed conflict and the military dictatorship, a number of strategies and nationalistic tactics employed by the state and other institutional frameworks, resurfaced. This enabled the re-emergence of a nationalist agenda that inscribed a retraditionalisation of gender roles and eventually aggravated gender violence. Consequently, the Greek case offers a wider understanding on the ways similar ideological and national projects, employ women and gender demarcations in order to impose a system of gender relations through punishment.

Chapter 2

Reconstructing the experience of women: state oppression and nationalism during the Greek Civil War

2.1 Introduction

The second chapter reconstructs the experiences of female political detainees through their imprisonment, exile and torture during the Civil War and the years immediately following. Throughout this politically turbulent phase of major social unrest, nationalist and militaristic narratives were revived and became part of the official rhetoric. Concurrently, a highly patriarchal regime was in place that relegated women into the private sphere and was eager to ensure national purity through the punishment and national rehabilitation of those who had violated the existing system of power relations. Therefore, political exclusion and coercion was not merely aimed at suppressing the Left; it was primarily a state-operated and nationalist project of appropriated 'Greekness' that set the premise for the punishment of nonconformist women through a repressive gender code.

This chapter first examines the rigid patriarchal structure of Greek society in the pre-war period and the ways in which it was challenged by women's activism during the Greek Civil War. The ambiguous stance of the Greek Communist Party towards gender equality and emancipation is also analysed. Secondly, it focuses on the forms of repression that the Greek state employed against female partisans and activists in an attempt to reassert traditional hierarchies and norms, highlighting not only the physical violence, but also the psychological torture to which these women were subjected. It should be pointed out that one of the main objectives of this thesis is to stress the importance of expanding the categories of political violence in order to include oppressive techniques and mental abuse as equally disturbing parameters of state terror. Hence, a section is devoted to the redefinition of political violence and state oppression in a more inclusive way, arguing that indirect practices and sexual and moral degradation constitute meaningful political acts, leading to the traumatising of female political prisoners and exiles.

The second chapter also investigates the labelling of former female partisans and activists as impure and misguided, and the attempts made to rehabilitate them through imprisonment, psychological torture and physical violence. The lives of these women are

revisited through an analysis of the structure of exiles and prisons and their everyday hardships in the detention centres. Banishment and deprivation was enacted through repressive legislation and national and religious re-education. Particular attention is paid to the role played by the Makronisos camp as the most notorious site of political violence in the Greek Civil War, both because of the extreme forms of abuse that took place there and because of its symbolic value in the state project of nationalist indoctrination.¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, political dissidents, women and men, in some cases underage, were subjected to an imposed 'hellenisation' through a series of degrading political practices and primarily through sexual assault and harassment, which targeted their gender and political identities. The political awareness of female underage dissidents was deliberately equated with promiscuity in order to further legitimise their brutalisation.

In this context, the resulting discreditable political and social *locus* provided the basis for the relegation and oppression of women in an effort not only to politically dishonour them, but also to ensure national purification. Concomitantly, through the designated gender roles and the derogated status of partisans and activists as the immoral enemy, women were transformed into the ethnic and political 'other' within the 'imagined' Greek Nation.

2.2 Historical and political background (1946-1949): contextualising women in post-war Greece

The Greek Civil War officially began in 1946 and was fought between the Greek Democratic Army (DSE) officially formed in December 1946 under the auspices of the Communist Party and the National (governmental) Army.¹⁶⁶ The Greek Civil War, considered one of the first episodes of the Cold War, was the outcome of a highly polarised, socially and politically unstable period, closely connected to the brutal German, Italian and Bulgarian Occupation (1941–1944). The struggle and tensions between the different resistance groups, the leftist and the rightist, started in 1943 and escalated into a fratricidal civil conflict. Governmental forces, supported by the United Kingdom and the United States, created an anti-Communist apparatus facilitated by paramilitary rightist bands. This phenomenon of terrorisation, sexual intimidation and abuse, torture and murder assumed vast proportions between February 1945 and February 1946, a period that was subsequently characterised as the 'white-terror'. The last act of the Civil War drama played out at the end of August 1949, with the Communist defeat in the mountains of

¹⁶⁵ Indicatively see Bournazos (2000), Panagiotopoulos (2000) and Hamilakis (2002).

¹⁶⁶ As previously discussed, the official commencement of the Civil War is still a contested issue within the Greek academic and public debate; for more, see section 1.2.3.

north-western Greece, Grammos and Vitsi, leading the country into a long period of turmoil and instability. The end of the Civil War resulted in widespread persecution, repression, abuse, banishment and incarceration for the leftist citizens; the Greek Communist Party (KKE) remained outlawed until 1974 and its members and sympathisers were treated as social and political pariahs. This was especially true for women perceived as communists or leftists, who were politically persecuted, exiled, imprisoned and in many cases sexually assaulted as a punishment or correctional practice for holding 'incorrect' or 'suspicious' political beliefs.

2.2.1 Patriarchy and political engagement during the Greek Resistance and the Civil War

Throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, women, especially in the rural areas of Greece, were restricted to the private sphere as a means of ensuring family structure, continuity and stability. Modesty and virginity, but especially the moral code of honour, were the means of this restriction. The concept of *timi* (honour) was particularly pivotal within Greece's family and societal milieu and served as a mechanism for the exclusion of women from the social and political arena.¹⁶⁷ Until 1952, when women gained the right to vote, their political status as citizens was literally non-existent.¹⁶⁸ Prior to that, the Resistance Movement and the subsequent civil war political conditions gave women the opportunity to become actively engaged within the political realm, through their participation in political organisations, without, however, violating the pre-existing gender hierarchies (Vervenioti, 2000a).¹⁶⁹ Margarita Kotsaki, a former political detainee, best summarises this newfound political voice in her memoir *A Life Full of Struggles* (1987). The Greek woman, she says, before her participation in the Resistance movement "was neglected, an inferior gender in relation to men— persuaded that she was destined only for the house, the household, the closed life, that she has no rights" (Kotsaki, 1987: 40). The communist-led Resistance organisations, the National Liberation Front (EAM) and the United Pan-hellenic Organization of Youth (EPON) offered grounds for claims of equality and emancipation.¹⁷⁰ Youlia Linardatou, one of the women interviewed for this thesis, argues that, through their participation in EPON, women were given the unique opportunity to get out of their houses and struggle socially and politically (Interview, March 11th, 2010). She suggests, however, that although the Movement proclaimed equality, in reality it was never implemented.

Under these circumstances, women undoubtedly gained relative autonomy and, to some

¹⁶⁷ For more information with regard to the concept of honour in the Greek case, indicatively see Herzfeld (1986); du Boulay (1986); Hart (1996: 152-156); Kenna (2001: 2-3) and Chapter 1 (section 1.5) of the current thesis.

¹⁶⁸ For more, see Vervenioti (2000a) and Hart (1996).

¹⁶⁹ Also, see Hart (1996).

¹⁷⁰ For more, see Vervenioti (2000a; 2002a), Hart (1996), Poulos (2000; 2009).

extent, equality, albeit for a short period and under conditions of extreme hardship and fear.¹⁷¹ The complexity and difficulties involved in women's participation and mobilisation became evident, especially in the context of the Greek Democratic Army (DSE). Women's participation was remarkable both in terms of numbers and contribution, especially in the last phases of the civil strife. The historian, Margaret Poulos (2000), argues that the Democratic Army considered the recruitment of women as instrumental due to a substantial lack of human resources and that women joined the Democratic Army as a reaction to the brutal violence perpetuated by the rightist groups.¹⁷² This is clearly confirmed by Eleni Bourboula, a former DSE guerrilla fighter, in her interview. As her family was already politically labelled, since her father was a partisan who was killed during the Occupation, she said that she joined the DSE in order to escape from the rightist terrorist bands that roamed the villages. She states characteristically “the paramilitaries raped, sheared women, murdered. My mother was informed by the villagers that they would come after me, so I decided to flee to the mountain with the guerrillas” (Interview, April 9th, 2009). In any case, as the historian, Tasoula Vervenioti (2002a: 137), argues, the line between coercion and consent, voluntary participation and recruitment is blurred and, since the Communist leadership aimed at female mobilisation without challenging social consensus and gender hierarchies, consequentially the Communist Party adopted a conservative rhetoric on gender relations.¹⁷³

2.2.2 Female dissidents between the family and the Party

Women constituted 10% of the Greek People's Liberation Army (ELAS) during the Resistance and 50% (30% in the combat units and 70% in the services) of the Greek Democratic Army (DSE) in the most critical phase of the Civil War, in 1949 (Vervenioti, 2002a: 126).¹⁷⁴ ELAS and especially DSE relied on public consent and sentiment in recruiting women to the combat units (Poulos, 2000).¹⁷⁵ On those grounds, traditional gender roles and puritan rhetoric were incorporated into the agenda of the Communist organisations in order to validate the enlistment of women.¹⁷⁶ Accordingly, the official 'line' of the Communist Party mainly towards the ELAS and

¹⁷¹ See Vervenioti (2000a; 2002a) and Poulos (2000; 2009).

¹⁷² This is also argued by Vervenioti (2000a; 2002a: 140) and Van Boeschoten (2003).

¹⁷³ Poulos (2000) also addresses the blurred lines between recruitment and voluntary participation in the DSE. The Colombian case, as discussed by Meertens (2001: 139), gives the opportunity for interesting comparisons.

¹⁷⁴ For more on the participation of women in the Resistance and the Civil War as partisans in ELAS and DSE, see Vervenioti (1994, 2000a, 2002a) and the account of Gritzonas (2001), who was also a guerrilla fighter and, after the Communist defeat, a political refugee.

¹⁷⁵ See Poulos (2009) and Vervenioti (2000a; 2002a).

¹⁷⁶ Also see Poulos (2000) and Vervenioti (2000a, 2009; 2002a: 130-132, 133); both have analysed the role of PDEG in the mobilisation of women (Poulos, 2000 and 2009; Vervenioti, 2003). For more in relation to female mobilisation, see Hart (1996).

to a lesser extent to the DSE, was that sexual innuendo, harassment in any form and personal relationships, even by mutual consent, were strictly forbidden among the comrades (Vervenioti, 2000a: 109). The sentence for offenders was usually death, especially during the Resistance; however, this practice weakened during the civil war period.¹⁷⁷ Under this premise, the honour of the female partisans was projected as the symbol of their struggle and coincided with the honour of the Party and ultimately with that of the nation (Vervenioti, 2000a: 106-108, 111-112).

Hence, the Communist Party did not challenge the prevailing structure of power relations and rearticulated gender biases, partly out of self-preservation, but also due to its structural puritan tendencies. The following examples clearly make a case for this argument. In one illustration, pregnant female guerrilla fighters were sent to Eastern bloc countries to give birth and left their children behind, since the mothers were expected to return to the mountains (Vervenioti, 2002: 138). Similarly, a conservative rhetoric, often exclusionary, was also adopted by the Left and was illustrated by the communist pamphlets of the period, but also in later historical and personal accounts.¹⁷⁸ A typical example is the 1947 DSE Memorandum to the United Nations (1987), where the term actually employed for sexually abused women was 'dishonoured' instead of raped.¹⁷⁹ However, women themselves, in their memoirs or oral testimonies, often adopt the recommended female attitude. Elisavet, when commenting on the fear of rape during our interview, avoided using the actual word 'rape' and instead used the term 'dishonour'.¹⁸⁰

The Communist political organisations did actually give women the opportunity to become politically involved in the Resistance and the Civil War, even for a short period, on many occasions out of necessity.¹⁸¹ In March 1944, the National Liberation Front (EAM) established the Political Committee of National Liberation (PEEA), also known as the 'Mountain Government'. A month later, on April 23rd, 1944, in the secretly organised elections in the areas occupied and liberated by the Communist forces (also known as 'Free Greece'¹⁸²), women had a chance not only to vote for the first time, but also to be elected to the National Council; in fact,

¹⁷⁷ See Vervenioti (2002a: 138) and Beikou (2010: 40). Also see the interviews and discussions with the former guerrilla fighter and political exile, Plousia Liakata, June 1-3rd, 2007 and March 5th, 2008.

¹⁷⁸ A typical example is the account of Gritzonas (2001) on women guerrilla fighters, where he uses the word 'dishonour' in a number of instances.

¹⁷⁹ This is also commented on by Riki Van Boeschoten (2003: 49) and Tasoula Vervenioti (2000a: 113).

¹⁸⁰ Interview with Elisavet Kehagia-Mihailari, granted July 17th, 2008, Livadeia, Greece. When the name of the interviewee is mentioned for the first time, I use the full name (both family and maiden name) or the name, they indicated as preferred; in the subsequent sections (references), however, usually only the first name is employed. The same applies to the authors of the memoirs. In any case, the Bibliography contains all the information from the interviews, informal discussions and memoirs.

¹⁸¹ See Vervenioti (2002a, especially p. 130), Poulos (2000) and Hart (1996).

¹⁸² 'Free Greece' refers to the areas liberated by the Resistance organisations, mainly the EAM and ELAS, from the Occupation forces, extending from the Ionian to the Aegean Sea and the borders of the German-controlled areas in Macedonia to Boeotia.

they actually were. Article 5 of the Resolution of the Mountain Government granted equal political and civil rights to men and women. Accordingly, the PEEA set the basis for the protection of the political rights of women and the Provisional Democratic Government (PDG),¹⁸³ formed in December 1947 by the Communist Party, pushed forward their struggle for equality.

Despite the initiatives of the communist-led organisations with regard to equality and emancipation, in reality the extant system of power relations and societal norms prevailed. In fact, the traditional gender roles were not only nurtured by the male leadership, but also by the female activists and partisans who formed the Panhellenic Democratic Union of Women (PDEG), operating under the auspices of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) (Vervenioti, 2002: 130-132; Poulos, 2000: 423).¹⁸⁴ Although PDEG gave the opportunity to its female members and the women of 'Free Greece' to become actively engaged within the political realm, the primary goal of the leadership was to mobilise women without jeopardising social cohesion. As argued by Vervenioti (2002a: 130), the PDEG was established primarily in order to ensure the political objectives of the Communist Party; hence, the employment of a conservative rhetoric was inevitable. On many occasions, female representatives themselves employed a similar traditionalist language, "struggling to maintain a balance between their traditional gender role" and their active participation as guerrilla fighters (Vervenioti, 2002a: 130). As stated by Thaleia Kolyva (1979), the former president of the Panhellenic Union of Women (PEG), a transformation of PDEG, regarding the demands of the politically active women of the period, the agenda was set on two levels. The first was traditional, concerning the family structure, motherhood and the household, and a second, more contemporary dimension, dealt with employment, socioeconomic development and political engagement (Kolyva, 1979: 69). Even in the post-civil war period, namely the mid-1960s when PEG was founded, the rhetoric and the agendas of women's organisations, affiliated with the Left, were still centralised around the family and what were considered to be private, female matters; thus, women were struggling between patriarchy and feminism. Therefore, traditional accounts of femininity, biological differences and gender biases were not put aside by the Party and the female members, but rather were emphasised. Besides the 'politics of balance'¹⁸⁵ and the struggle for emancipation and equality, the fear of being raped, exiled or executed by the oppressive regime of the Right was the driving force urging them to flee to the mountains.¹⁸⁶ In any case, at the

¹⁸³ As the armed conflict was coming to an end, PDG was dissolved in April 1949.

¹⁸⁴ PDEG was founded on October 25th, 1948, with the collaboration of the Antifascist Women's Front (AFZE), the organisation for slavophone women. For more on the PDEG, see Vervenioti (2002a: 129-132) and Poulos (2000, 2009).

¹⁸⁵ Vervenioti uses the term the 'politics of balance' (2002a: 133).

¹⁸⁶ See Vervenioti (2000a; 2002a: 140), Poulos (2000; 2009) and Van Boeschoten (2003).

final stage of the armed conflict (spring and summer of 1949), owing to the number of casualties, the incorporation of women into the Democratic Army was based primarily on recruitment from the northern and north-western parts of Greece (Poulos, 2000: 422).

The 'Declarations of Repentance' is another issue that remains taboo, in scholarship and collective memory, but also in the official Communist Party discourse. The Declarations of Repentance, "the renunciation of prohibited political beliefs", as defined by Voglis, demonstrated that "political ideas rather than acts were under persecution and revealed an often neglected side of political exclusion" (2002a: 74). The Declarations of Repentance were initially introduced in 1933, but it was during the Metaxas dictatorship (1936-1941) that they proved to be an effective method for the political extermination of the Communist Party through the dishonouring of its members; the statements of Communist renouncement re-emerged as a state strategy at the beginning of the Civil War. Nevertheless, the recantation of their political views was only the first step of the inmates' redemption (Voglis, 2002a: 76). In fact, the declarations were sent to the public prosecutor, the Ministry of Justice, the church and the municipality and sometimes were also published in the local newspapers (Voglis, 2002a: 76).¹⁸⁷ Moreover, the signing of the statements had a direct impact on the principles of the dissidents, at both a personal and political level. The signing of the *dilosias* was followed by the social degradation experienced in the detention centres and also in local communities. Even though the Declarations of Repentance were in most cases products of extreme torture, terrorisation and fear, *dilosias* (those who signed the declarations) were often expelled from the Communist Party in an effort to ensure unity and solidity. In fact, the official 'line' (decision) of the Communist Party was that the *dilosias* was a traitor and should be alienated from the rest of the prison community. Besides the political and social degradation with which the 'repentees' had to cope, they were also alienated from their own spouses and sometimes forced to divorce under coercion or under the threat (especially for women) of losing their children.¹⁸⁸

The story of Roxani, a young woman from Macedonia imprisoned in the Kallithea prison, is striking. Roxani lost her voice as a result of psychological pressure after receiving a letter from her parents demanding that she sign the Declaration of Repentance.¹⁸⁹ Within this

¹⁸⁷ Voglis provides an analysis of the system of 'Declarations of Repentance' and its significant role in political exclusion, both by the state and the Greek Communist Party (2002a: 74-88).

¹⁸⁸ This becomes apparent during my interviews and conversations with former political detainees, see Zozo Petropoulou (June 2nd, 2007, Trikeri Island; October 6th, 2009 and February 10th, 2010, Athens), Elisavet Kehagia-Mihailari (July 17th, 2008, Livadeia), Elli Protogerelli-Lazou (November 20th, 2006, Athens), S.R (July 16th, 2007, Athens), Patra Potamianou-Hatzisava (February 7th, 2009, Athens), Chrysoula Fitiza (July 1st, 2007, Ai Stratis Island) and Elli Nikolaou (June 2nd, 2007, Trikeri Island); also see the memoir of the political prisoner Pagona Stefanou (1998: 49-50).

¹⁸⁹ Pagona Stefanou (1998: 100), a co-prisoner of Roxani in the Kallithea Prison, recalls the incident in her memoir.

framework, the nationalist project of rehabilitation was both internal and external; it was operated internally based on a patriarchal gender and family structure and, at the same time, was state-operated and institutionalised from above. Female activists had to choose between their family and the Party; the sacred role of motherhood was predominant within the ideology of the patriarchal family, rather than the image of a warrior. In informal conversations with former political detainees, women recall a number of instances where fellow political exiles and prisoners were forced to sign a Declaration of Repentance, not by the State, but by their own family.¹⁹⁰ The most common argument was that it was not proper for a woman to abandon her family; if she refused to return, the family structure and the morals of the children were placed in danger.

Consequently, the war facilitated the entrance of women into the public sphere, since the boundaries between the 'public' and the 'private' were shaken, challenging the traditional family values of Greek society. In particular, leftist women were given the unique opportunity to struggle, not only for political liberation, but also for equal political rights and emancipation through their active participation in the various political youth organisations. Nevertheless, despite the supposedly progressive rhetoric employed, in terms of gender equality, the Greek Communist Party proved to be a rather conservative institution. By the end of the Civil War, leftist women not only saw the prolonged gender equality put aside by the Left; a troubling expectation to return to their previous traditional roles also arose. Women of the Left had not only to overcome the political repression of the state and the resulting marginalisation, but also the unsettling attitude of the Greek Communist Party.

2.3 Re-approaching gender, political violence and nationalism

Despite its varied definitions, the concept of power is at the core of any attempt to approach and contextualise violence. Although one can be fully aware of the definitional complexities and dangers, or can take into account the diversity of classifications, it is not easy to clearly distinguish between individual and collective, organised and random, and public and private

¹⁹⁰ Interesting discussions in relation to the declarations of repentance can be found in the memoirs and oral testimonies of former political detainees; however, they usually involve the experiences of their co-prisoners. Regina Pagoulatou (2009) is among the few female political exiles who discusses the signing of a *dilosia* in her memoir; also see the interview with S.R (July 16th, 2007, Athens), who was among the repentees at the Makronisos camp. For more on the subject, see the testimonies of Olympia Papadouka (2006), Patra Potamianou-Hatzisava (interview granted February 2nd, 2009 in Athens and unpublished memoir-her memoir was published in 2009, but it is the unpublished draft that I am using throughout the thesis, with the permission of the author), Youlia Linardatou (interview granted September 18th, 2009 and March 11th, 2010, Athens), Elisavet Kehagia-Mihailari (July 17th, 2008, Livadeia). Of particular interest is the personal archive of the painter and political exile, Katerina Hariati-Sismani, and especially a letter sent by her uncle while she was in exile (January 14th, 1951, *Museum of Political Exiles-Ai Stratis*, Athens).

violence. With this in mind, the drawing of a strict line between what Robben and Suarez-Orozco call 'hard' violence (physical) and 'soft' violence (indirect or psychological) should be avoided (2000: 5).¹⁹¹ A firm distinction between physical violence and coercion and indirect non-physical practices would entail a certain degree of arbitrariness. Most academic research focuses on physical violence, since it is easier to prove and quantify than psychic and symbolic violence (Robben and Suarez-Orozco, 2000: 5).¹⁹² Direct state oppression and political violence can be defined as "the commission of violent acts motivated by a desire, conscious or unconscious, to obtain or maintain political power" (Moser, 2001: 36). However, mental, psychological abuse and sexual insinuation are equally disturbing oppressive techniques, resulting in the traumatising of female political detainees. These indirect practices (e.g., exclusion, coercion, and terrorisation) are also viewed 'as strategies of power and dominance'¹⁹³ within wider, dominant ideologies.

Gender-related violence, the second basic concept used in this thesis, has been defined, primarily by feminists, as an "assault on a person's physical and mental integrity" and as "violence which embodies the power imbalances inherent in a patriarchal society" (El-Bushra and Piza-Lopez, 1993: 1, cited in Moser and Clark, 2001: 6).¹⁹⁴ This approach is important in achieving a broader understanding of the phenomenon, especially when considering that the gendered qualities of violence remain 'untouched' and the very notion of violence itself is underestimated. Violence is extremely complex to define, "not only because of its different categories, but also because of its multitude of causal and motivational factors" (Moser, 2001: 39). Gender violence has long been part of an international academic dialogue on the oppression of women. While cognisant of that context, my aim is to situate politically motivated violence against women within a wider theoretical debate on nationalism in order to illustrate its function as an indispensable factor of nationalist ideology and to avoid viewing it as merely incidental to armed conflict.

A gender analysis of the role of sexual abuse and political terror encompasses recognition of the actuality of violence perpetuated by the State, but also including that

¹⁹¹ The work of Robben and Suarez-Orozco (2000), Scarry (1987) and Sluka (2000) has proven to be extremely helpful in re-approaching gender political violence in the Greek context.

¹⁹² Robben and Suarez-Orozco (2000) do not define 'symbolic violence' in their edited volume, the term is attributed however, to Bourdieu (1977) and it is referring to different forms of social or cultural domination that are in most cases unrecognised or unnoticed, but naturalised within hierarchical relations of power. Also see *States of Violence*, edited by Coronil and Skurski (2005), especially the Introduction of the volume, where drawing on de Lauretis (1989) (among others), the editors emphasise on the difficulty of defining violence, while stressing the interconnectedness between violence and rhetoric, and the social and the discursive (Coronil and Skurski, 2005: 6).

¹⁹³ Also see Crawley (2000, especially p. 93).

¹⁹⁴ Cockburn (2001), Giles and Hyndman (2004) and, in particular, Moser (2001) provide an insightful feminist framework in order to recognise and highlight the gendered nature of armed conflict and political violence. Also see the definitions of violence provided by Nikolic-Ristanovic (2000: 21-33).

performed by groups neither directly controlled nor restrained by the State during war or armed conflict.¹⁹⁵ In times of political unrest and social chaos, particularly within the context of an armed conflict (in this case during the Greek Civil War, but also during the military junta), organised violence targeted both groups and individuals. It was primarily originated by the state with the collaboration of paramilitary groups and institutions closely connected to the official apparatus; it primarily took place in the public sphere. While coercion and politically motivated violence is usually 'performed' in public as a means of rehabilitating and intimidating the population, the line between the 'public' and the 'private' is blurred when it comes to gender violence. However, the framework outlined here incorporates state and institutionalised violence as its basis, in the sense that such oppressive and violent practices were, in most cases, performed and imposed by state institutions (police, gendarmerie and army) and other organisations which, although not always officially state regulated, were acting under the protection of the regime (paramilitary organisations, the clergy and the judiciary).

In this respect, the arguments provided by feminist scholars are important. In particular, Crawley, based on Pettman (1996), states that during war "bodies, boundaries, violence and power come together in devastating combination" (2000: 95). Women's bodies, through their symbolic articulation during social and political turmoil "become the site for signifying the dominance of one group over the other" (Crawley, 2000: 95). Crawley thus concludes that violence against women, regardless of whether it is sexual and/or physical, has to be re-conceptualised as an assault, not only on women's bodies and psyches, but also on the body politic, since this violence is primarily an exercise of political power and dominance (2000: 93, 95).

The outlined framework draws attention to the interrelationship between gender and political violence; it is a relationship that is usually overlooked, since conflict analysis ignores the gender dimension of the dynamics of political violence during armed conflict (Moser, 2001: 33). Gender-related violence tends to be associated with domestic violence, even during war, and thus the role of the different agents in the conflict is usually oversimplified. Feminist scholars argue that the sites of violence are linked, since militarised violence occurs not only during war, but also before and after the conflict (Giles and Hyndman, 2004: 4).¹⁹⁶ In order to disrupt the ongoing continuum of violence, the system of power relations that shapes gender politics and rationalises violence needs to be challenged.

Within this framework of analysis and in the context of this thesis, I need to delineate

¹⁹⁵ Also see the edited volumes by Moser and Clark (2001) and Jacobs *et al.* (2000).

¹⁹⁶ For an interesting discussion on the continuum of gender violence, see Cockburn (2004) and Moser (2001).

nationalism in relation to gender and gender violence, primarily pertaining to the crucial role of nationalist ideology in the justification and normalisation of gender violence. As argued by Pettman, "...nationalism is always gendered" (1996: 56),¹⁹⁷ in the sense that, despite the differences in terms of state strategies, nationalist aspirations and rhetorical formations, there are distinct and noteworthy similarities in the functioning of nationalism as a platform where gender identities and roles are authorised or convicted.¹⁹⁸

As Wilford (1998: 9) has noted, drawing on Anderson's (1983: 12-13) observation regarding the difficulty of both defining and analysing nationalism, one needs to be careful when discussing nationalism and in particular its gendered character. In a similar way, nationalism, according to Smith (1986: 15; 1991: 72) is articulated in various ways: as a process of nation-building, a symbolic and linguistic representation of a nation, but also as "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity..." (cited in Wilford, 1998: 9-10; Mayer, 2000). Following this discussion, Spike Peterson argues that, regardless of how nationalism is defined in terms of 'imagining' or 'inventing' a national identity or privileging a specific 'natural' community, uniformity is a prerequisite and is often achieved through coercive means (1999: 36).¹⁹⁹ In accordance with Gellner's argument that "it is nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way round" (1983: 55), it should be stressed that nationalism functions not only through unity, but also through exaggerated differences.²⁰⁰ In this vein, Wendy Bracewell poignantly emphasises gender and nation as "relational identities", created through a process of highlighting difference (2000: 585). Accordingly, within nationalist frameworks, women are often exploited, marginalised and silenced, based on gender and sexual difference, normative constructions and articulations of femininity and sexuality.

Anne McClintock aptly notes that, despite the extensive and undoubtedly influential theoretical discussions and analyses of nationalism,²⁰¹ "the gendering of the national imaginary has been conspicuously paltry" (1993: 61). Furthermore, McClintock underlines that nationalism is a 'gendered discourse' and while male theorists have been indifferent to gender complications of nationalism, feminist analyses are also few (1993: 63).²⁰² Despite the limited number of feminist theories of nationalism, the existing research is extremely useful and undoubtedly

¹⁹⁷ This argument is also shared by McClintock (1993: 61).

¹⁹⁸ Also see Mayer (2000: 1-22).

¹⁹⁹ Peterson (1999) is referring to Anderson (1991), Gellner (1983) and Smith (1991), while critiquing their work as hegemonic theorisations of nationalism; Yuval-Davis (1997: 1, 3) is also among the feminist scholars who characterise the work of the aforementioned theorists as hegemonic and gender-blind theorisations about nations and nationalism.

²⁰⁰ Joane Nagel, instead of the role of difference, talks about 'otherness' (1998: 248).

²⁰¹ The bibliography on the subject is vast; indicatively, see Anderson (1983, 1991), Gellner (1983), Hobsbawm (1990), Smith (1986, 1991).

²⁰² Yuval-Davis makes a similar critique (1997: 1-2).

influential.²⁰³ Feminists, in particular, have been interested in the ways gender as a category can serve to deconstruct the interconnectedness between gender roles, social demarcations and nationalism.²⁰⁴ Under this premise, gender and sexual differences, dichotomies such as culture/nature, public/private within nationalist movements and patriarchal structures permeate, naturalise or promote the exclusion, marginality and silencing of women.²⁰⁵ In this sense, women in the imagined male, heterosexual communities are situated differently, both in the private and public arena, and have restricted access to power, knowledge, rights and resources.²⁰⁶ In Cynthia Enloe's words, nationalisms "have typically sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation and masculinized hope" (1989: 44, cited in McClintock, 1993: 62).

Consequently, the theorising of nationalism in terms of gender is of particular importance to this project. Specifically, the analysis of women as biological, social and cultural reproducers and as signifiers and symbolical markers of the nation is pivotal in addressing the issue of gender violence in the Greek context.²⁰⁷ Women in the post-war and post-civil war period were also carrying the burdens of tradition and patriarchy,²⁰⁸ based on ascribed gender-specific social roles as articulated and imposed by nationalist narratives and settings and they were easily transformed from virgins and sacred mothers to sinners who were dangerous for the nation.²⁰⁹ Thence, as Greek women were assigned with the continuation of their roles as mothers,

²⁰³ Indicatively see, Jayawardena (1986), Yuval-Davis and Anthias (1989), Yuval-Davis (1997), Sutton (1995), Enloe (1993), Nagel (1998), Peterson (1999). For a review of this research, also see Chapter 1 (section 1.6) of the current thesis.

²⁰⁴ Indicatively, see Yuval-Davis (1997), Wilford and Miller (1998), Mayer (2000), Ivekovic and Mostov (2004).

²⁰⁵ For an interesting discussion on the functioning of these binaries in nationalist and militarist frameworks, in terms of gender relations, see Peterson (1999). Also see Mayer (2000: 12-14) and Giles and Hyndman (2004, especially p. 11).

²⁰⁶ Also see McClintock (1993: 61) and Peterson (1999: 53-54).

²⁰⁷ Besides Yuval-Davis and Anthias (1989) and Yuval Davis (1997), influential framework, addressing the ways women are employed and affected by nationalist projects, Peterson (1999) also displays a similar, but different in many ways, framework, with an emphasis on heterosexism. Also see, Wilford and Miller (1998), Mayer (2000), Bracewell (1996: 25-33), Ivekovic and Mostov (2004) and Korac (1998: 153-184). For a general discussion on ethnic and nationalist violence, see Brubaker and Laitin (1998: 423-452).

²⁰⁸ I am aware that the term patriarchy has often been considered problematic or inadequate in the analysis of gender and nationalism (see Yuval-Davis, 1997: 7); however, in the context of my own research, patriarchy and the honour/shame paradigm is important in terms of understanding social stereotypes, gender norms and traditional perceptions of femininity and sexuality that were employed by state and nationalist mechanisms and became apparent in the victimisation of women. Furthermore, as Cockburn (2004: 33) stresses, we need to be aware of the role and revival of extreme forms of patriarchy, where men's honour is depending on women's purity and on these grounds, along with male impunity, women can be abused and killed. In any case, I agree with Yuval-Davis (1997: 7), who notes that patriarchy should not be perceived as a distinct social system, keeping in mind for instance, the decisive role of racism and social relations for women's subordination and oppression. For an analysis of the 'honour and shame' dichotomy in Greek ethnography and anthropology, indicatively see, the papers of Herzfeld (1986) and du Boulay (1986) in Dubisch's (1986) edited volume and Chapter 1 (section 1.5) of the current thesis.

²⁰⁹ Kesic (2004: 76-80) also discusses the traditional and stereotypical images of women, and the ways they were employed in the context of Former Yugoslavia-Croatia. Also see Mayer (2000: 5-19); Mostov (2000: 89-107); Martin (2000: 69-84); Ivekovic and Mostov (2004: 10-12); Aretxaga (1997: 122-145) and Chapters 1 (section 1.6) and 2 of the current thesis.

protectors and nurturers of the nation, ultimately the guardians of morality, those who engaged in political activities were easily turned into sexually promiscuous enemies of the nation, religion and family. Concomitantly, the prevailing virgin/whore dichotomy, applicable to various nationalist and militarist settings, was also effectuated in the Greek case, rationalising and justifying the oppression, exclusion, imprisonment and abuse of female dissidents.

Even though in this thesis, I discuss the ways leftist women have been marginalised, oppressed, persecuted, tortured and incarcerated within the Greek nationalist context, I need to stress that in various nationalist conflicts and national liberation movements, women entered the male-dominated public sphere and became politically active, often through their involvement in wars, conflicts or even atrocities. Moreover, within nationalist settings, women were provided a political ground on which to put forward socio-political demands and feminist contestations regarding a number of issues, such as emancipation, gender equality and reproduction rights.

As current literature suggests, in several cases women are often empowered due to their active participation in these nationalist struggles. For instance, in Nazi Germany, as Claudia Koonz (1987) has eloquently shown in *Mothers in the Fatherland*, in an overtly repressive, misogynist, nationalist movement, women not only adopted traditional female roles, as wives, mothers of soldiers and caretakers, but they also assumed active roles by indoctrinating other women in charitable and religious organisations, even delivering Jewish victims, or becoming tormentors themselves (Koonz, 1987: 4-7; 13-15). Additionally, women regardless of their status as second-class citizens in the Nazi state, managed to reach high ranks in the Nazi Party, as the case of Gertrud Scholtz-Klink clearly indicates (Koonz, 1987: 15).

In a similar way, Simona Sharoni (2001), in her comparative analysis of women's mobilisation in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and in Northern Ireland, draws similar conclusions about the possibility of positive implications of women's involvement in political and nationalist conflicts. Both the *intifada* and the 'troubles' allowed the Palestinian and nationalist (Catholic) women in Northern Ireland respectively, to enter the public domain and to become politically active without posing a threat to the male body politic and the gender order. Concomitantly, even though activism and political participation were necessitated by the absence of men and the imperatives of the national struggle, women did not only challenge the public/private dichotomy, but eventually prioritised their struggles for gender equality and emancipation, thus redefining their gender roles and identities (Sharoni, 2001: 93-97).

Within this framework, the distinctiveness of the Greek case regarding women as political actors in the post war period, requires further attention. Even though primarily leftist and communist women actively participated and struggled for freedom and equality within the leftist

resistance organisations and gained political rights and relative gender equality – albeit out of political necessity – it was the women of the Right who seemed to benefit the most of the civil war anticommunist and nationalist framework, in order to put forward primarily socio-political demands and to a second level, a feminist agenda.²¹⁰ As the leftist and communist women were persecuted, forced to an illegal status and marginalised, women of the victorious Right took advantage of their social status, family ties, political connections and wealth to enter the political scene (Vervenioti, 2002b: 115-116, 118, 124-125). Tasoula Vervenioti (2000a: 119; 2002b: 115-116) has underlined the Greek paradox and irony of women of the Right who became politically active, contrary to leftist women, due to their connections with wealthy conservative political families. Their political engagement, however, was presented as necessary for the salvation of the nation, the children and the Greek family, from the communist threat. On this ground, they portrayed themselves as mothers and virtuous wives, safeguards of the defining elements of the Greek nation based on family, religion and tradition; in this way, not posing a threat to the patriarchal norms and gender hierarchies. Even though the nationalist objectives were prioritised, while the feminist ones were noticeably downplayed, women of the Right eventually developed a political and feminist agenda demanding primarily voting rights, without however challenging traditional gender roles (Vervenioti 2002b: 115-116, 118, 124-125). Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the first two women who gained a public office in Greece both belonged to the elitist Right. Eleni Skoura was the first woman MP, elected in 1953; in 1956, Lina Tsaldari, the wife of the former Prime Minister, Panagis Tsaldaris, became the first female minister (Social Welfare).²¹¹ They were both connected to rightist conservative political forces and were first involved in charitable organisations, before becoming strong supporters of women's suffrage.

²¹⁰ For the development of a feminist consciousness at the end of 19th century in Greece, see Varikas (1987, 2004); for more on feminism in the interwar period, see Avdela and Psarra (1985) and for women entering the political scene under the Metaxas regime, see Vasilaki (2003) and Poulos (2009: 63-68).

²¹¹ For more about Lina Tsaldari, see Vervenioti (2002b: 122-124).

2.4 The persecution and political confinement of female dissidents during the Greek Civil War

2.4.1 The exile triangle of the female dissidents²¹²

Exile or 'administrative banishment' was established by the Metaxas dictatorship (1936-1941) and became one of the most effective methods of political repression, predominantly against communist and leftist citizens.²¹³ This type of internment continued in the post-war period, primarily targeting members of the Communist Party and trade-unionists.²¹⁴ Still, it was during the Civil War that political exile became the principal form of incarceration and punishment, leading to the banishment of thousands of leftists, both men and women, on numerous small islands across the Aegean.²¹⁵

Exile was used by the government, not only as a means of political eradication of the Left and to extract Declarations of Repentance, but also as an effort to intimidate the population. 'Governmental deportation', as the state called the exile, was institutionalised through a highly repressive legislation. The banishment was enacted through the reactivation of legislative decrees outlawing not only the effective act of overthrowing the regime, but also the propagation of ideas.²¹⁶ At the same time, Compulsory Law 511/1947 assigned absolute authority to the gendarmerie and the police force to organise everyday life in the concentration camps. In the same year, edicts 392/19.8.1947 and 687/8.5.1948 extended the displacement indefinitely, on

²¹² The main types of internment during the Greek Civil War and throughout the following years were prisons, exile sites and indoctrination camps (also see Voglis, 2002a); this is also applicable to female political confinement. However, the exile sites were transformed into concentration camps based on edict 392/1947 and later on, according to Compulsory Law 511/1947, they were officially transformed into camps of disciplined living. For this reason, often in oral and written testimonies, but also in historical studies, the terms exile sites and indoctrination and concentration camps or camps of disciplined living, are used interchangeably. Since political exile as a method of political annihilation against leftist and communist women mostly intensified after 1947 (primarily in 1948 when women were deported to Chios, with the exception of the six months exile in Ikaria in 1947), I mostly employ the term concentration camp to describe the camps of Makronisos and Trikeri. For Chios, the term camp of disciplined living would be the most accurate and for the second phase of political internment at Trikeri (after the transfer of women from Makronisos, July 31st, 1950), the term exile site or exile camp seems proper.

²¹³ For more, see Voglis (2002a: 62-68, 92-96).

²¹⁴ For more information on political exile in the interwar and civil war period, see Voglis (2002a: 92-96).

²¹⁵ In September 1947, the Communist Party indicated the number of exiles to be 24,000; however, Voglis, based on statistics from the UNRRA, indicates that a year later 12,878 persons were in exile. According to Greek officials, in September 1949, the political exiles reached 15,000 (Voglis, 2002a: 92). According to the Greek government, in the summer of 1950 (a year later, after the official termination of the Civil War), the overall number of political exiles at the Makronisos concentration camp was 40,000-45,000 (among them 3,700 women). The statistics can be found in the Conference Proceedings, *Istoriko Topio kai Istorikh Mnini, To Paradeigma tis Makronisou* [Historical Site and Historical Memory, the Makronisos Example] (2000: 117).

²¹⁶ For more on the institutionalised civil war framework of exclusion, persecution and incarceration, see Voglis (2002: 61-66).

the basis that the exiles were 'dangerous for public order'.²¹⁷ The reassertion of the collective responsibility of the family in law, the incrimination and punishment of any family member, regardless of age and actual political involvement, through the 'emergency measures' was one of the most notable governmental policies, leading to the 'preventative' exile of individuals with no former political engagement (Vervenioti, 2000a: 110).²¹⁸ 'Preventative exile' was used by the regime in an effort to prevent the recruitment of individuals in rural areas, usually in northern parts of Greece where the Democratic Army was dominant.²¹⁹ The deported and exiled relatives of the persecuted dissidents refused, in most cases, to sign a Declaration of Repentance, not because of communist ideological convictions, but because they considered it to be a betrayal of their own family members (Vervenioti, 2000a: 110).

The common 'exile triangle'²²⁰ for women was formed by the islands of Chios, Trikeri and Makronisos, while other intermediate stops were the island of Ikaria, and later on, the island of Ai Stratis, where many women were sent after the closure of the Trikeri camp in 1953. Women were sent to the island of Ikaria, in the north-east of the Aegean Sea, in October 1947, where they remained for six months. In March 1948, they were transported to Chios, in the north-eastern Aegean, where the 'preventative' (*proliptikes*) women exiles from Athens and nearby islands such as Lesbos were already confined.²²¹ The exiled women at Chios were detained in a camp under the jurisdiction of the Aegean islands' Gendarmerie Headquarters. Their exile was based on 'disciplined living' as the state called it; in fact, women were effectively imprisoned, since they were kept in the barracks with limited time outside their cells.²²²

A year later, on April 4th, 1949, 1,200 women were transported with their children from the Chios camp to Trikeri. Trikeri is an islet in Pagasiticus Gulf, where the *proliptikes* had already been deported, mainly from the northern parts of Greece where the battles between the

²¹⁷ See Alivizatos (1995: 495-501).

²¹⁸ Family collective responsibility was applied during the Metaxas dictatorship and was based on the reactivation of the 1871 brigandage law, followed by the 1948 loyalty oath, requiring certificates of social morality when one needed to obtain a license, a passport or an admission to the university (Vervenioti, 2000a: 110). For more information, see Alivizatos, (1995) and Tsoukalas (1981: 134).

²¹⁹ The criterion for 'preventative' exile was not always the dominance of the Democratic Army; women and men in areas that were not controlled by the Democratic Army, like the Peloponnese or the island of Lesbos, were often also exiled. For the case of Lesbos, see the interviews and informal conversations with Marikoula Kirimi, October 17th, 2006, Melpo Papastefani, October 26th, 2006, Mirsini and Pavlos Tzoanos, October 13th, 2006 and Eustratia Tsokarou-Mitsioni, October 21st, 2006, all of which held in Lesbos island.

²²⁰ For more information on the female exile triangle, see the memoirs of the former political exiles Marigoula Mastroleon-Zerva (1986), Ourania Staveri (2006) and Regina Pagoulatou (1999).

²²¹ For the 'preventative' exiled women from Lesbos, see the interviews and informal conversations with Melpo Papastefani, October 26th, 2006, Mirsini and Pavlos Tzoanos, October 13th, 2006 and Eustratia Tsokarou-Mitsioni, October 21st, 2006, in Lesbos island.

²²² For more information on exile at Chios island, see the accounts of Athina Konstantopoulou and Stasa Kefalidou in *Stratopeda Gynaikon* [Women's Camps] (1976: 39-80, 83-119) and Regina Pagoulatou (1999: 41-102). Also see Theodorou's personal archive (Box 1: Exile Material, ASKI) and "From women exiles on the island of Chios", MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners.

Democratic and the National Army were still intense. As the armed struggle was coming to an end, with the defeat of the Democratic Army in the mountains of Vitsi and Grammos in Florina (north-western Greece), thousands of women and their children from the Slavic-speaking villages were sent to Trikeri.²²³ In August 1949, the number of exiled women and children at Trikeri totalled approximately 5,000.²²⁴

The exiles at Trikeri faced extreme hardship, ranging from lack of water and medical treatment to malnutrition and forced labour. Women gave birth in the camp, watched their children fall ill or die, and were constantly terrorised and harassed.²²⁵ Even old women and children were detained for having relatives politically engaged on the Left and were compelled to live in worn-out tents, despite the often extreme weather conditions. However, it was the national and religious indoctrination, censorship and lack of contact that have been described as the most disturbing aspects of their experiences.²²⁶

The life of the exiled women in Trikeri soon worsened; in November 1949, the camp command passed from the police to the Makronisos Rehabilitation Organisation (MRO), under the authority of the army. In the meantime, the Greek National Army defeated the Democratic Army and the 'preventative' camp was dissolved.²²⁷ The 1,200 remaining women were subjected to a regimented re-education based not only on the worst possible living conditions, but also on intense propaganda and psychological oppression; a taste of what was yet to come at the notorious Makronisos camp if they did not repent. The first indications began with organised visits from the Minister of Public Order and the Bishop of Larisa, followed by the head of the MRO, Colonel Anagnostopoulos, and the 'repentees' from the Makronisos camp who were transformed through torture into tormentors.²²⁸ Nevertheless, none of the 1,200 women gave in, and on January 25th, 1950 they were piled, along with their children, into a ship's hold and transferred to Makronisos (Fourtouni, 1986: 141).

Women were detained at the Makronisos camp until the end of July 1950, when the elderly were dismissed and the 500 'unrepentant' (who did not sign Declarations of Repentance) were sent back to Trikeri, where they spent two more years. In the winter of 1952, most of the

²²³ For more, see Theodorou's personal archive (Box 1: Exile Material, ASKI).

²²⁴ Interesting information relating to living conditions, everyday life and statistics with regard to female exiles at the Trikeri camp can be found in Theodorou (1976: 123-221) and in her personal archive (Box 1: Exile Material, ASKI). Also see, Fourtouni (1986: 95-143) and Pagoulatau (1999:105-149).

²²⁵ See Theodorou's personal archive, Box 1: Exile Material, ASKI.

²²⁶ See the memoirs of Victoria Theodorou (1976) and her personal archive (Box 1: Exile Material, ASKI), Marigoula Mastroleon-Zerva (1986), Ourania Staveri (2006) and Regina Pagoulatau (1999), former political exiles.

²²⁷ Victoria Theodorou (1976: 189-221) vividly describes this change of command at the Trikeri camp; also see Eleni Fourtouni, who is translating Theodorou's journal (1986: 125-140). Also see Theodorou's personal archive (Box 1: Exile Material, ASKI) and the interview with Katina Sifakaki (June 2nd, 2007, Trikeri Island).

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

camps were phased out under public pressure and the unrepentant political detainees were released on furloughs issued by the police on the orders of a person with power (Fourtouni, 1986: 187). In April 1953, nineteen exiles and ten guards were left at Trikeri, and after a couple of months, since they did not have anyone to intervene to obtain temporary passes, they were relocated to the island of Ai Stratis, where they spent several more years.²²⁹

2.4.2 Women at the Makronisos concentration camp

Makronisos is a small, barren island off the Attica coast that was used throughout the twentieth century as a site of exile; in the early stages of the Civil War (1947), the Makronisos concentration camp was used to rehabilitate soldiers of 'suspicious' political orientation.²³⁰ According to a historian, Stratis Bournazos, 16,200 soldiers were sent back to the front after their rehabilitation, this time fighting against their former comrades; undoubtedly their integration served military purposes, but there was also a significant symbolic dimension (2000: 126). According to Greek officials, after the formal termination of the Civil War in September 1949, the number of political exiles reached 12,000, including members of the Slav-Macedonian ethnic minority.²³¹ The Makronisos Reformation Organisation (MRO) belonged to the General Directorship of the Army, but was placed under the supervision of a five-member council, composed of the Ministers of Justice, Army, Education, Public Order, Press and Information (Bournazos, 2000: 141). The Minister of the Army and Professor of Sociology, Panayiotis Kanellopoulos, and the Minister of National Education and Religion and Professor of the Philosophy of Law, Konstantinos Tsatsos, were in charge of the Makronisos camp.

References to the internment of female political exiles at the Makronisos concentration camp were until recently absent from public dialogue and official discourse. Makronisos has been associated with the suffering of men, since thousands of soldiers and political dissidents were massively tortured there for nearly six years (1947-1953). Female former partisans and political detainees were also subjected to physical violation, sexual threats and psychological abuse, sometimes along with their children. Despite their six-month confinement, it was the

²²⁹ The exact number of women who were exiled to the Ai Stratis camp cannot be ascertained; according to women's accounts (i.e. Theodorou, 1976) and the historian Kyriaki Kamarinou (2005: 230), the number is between 16 and 19. For more, see Chapter 3 of the current thesis.

²³⁰ See Hamilakis (2002).

²³¹ This is the number that Voglis indicates, based on the UNRRA (2002a: 92). According to the evidence provided by Papandreou's government and the minister P. Kanellopoulos at Parliament in the summer of 1950, the overall number of the political exiles on Makronisos was 40,000-45,000 (16,700 citizens: 13,000 men and 3,700 women plus 27,777 soldiers and 1,100 officers). The political exiles and newspapers of the Left indicate the number 50,000-100,000. See the Proceedings of the Scientific Meeting, *Historical Site and Historical Memory, the Makronisos Example* [Istoriko Topio kai Istorikh Mnini, To Paradeigma tis Makronisou] (2000: 117).

fierce indoctrination, the mental terror, the sexual intimidation and the threat of abducting the children of the unrepentant that became unbearable during their confinement. State propaganda was especially exercised in the camp through moral and religious rehabilitation, while their role as mothers and wives was subjected to intense questioning and criticism. Under this premise, female political exiles were characterised either as naive and manipulated women or as unfit and immoral mothers.²³²

Women arrived at the camp on January 27th, 1950 after a two-day journey in terrible weather conditions. They were intimidated from the first moment they laid eyes on the island; the military organisation and structure of the camp, with the fully armed officers and policemen in formation, was associated with Nazi concentration camps.²³³ Huge letters covered the hills saying 'Long Live King Paul', or 'We Want Guns', and the island was full of replicas of the Parthenon, the Acropolis, ancient Greek theatres and statues; thousands of tents were lined up along with identical slogans.²³⁴ The buildings and tents were strategically situated, depending on the prisoner's political status and the likelihood of compliance.²³⁵ Women were held at the specifically formed unit for their redemption, the 'Special School for the Rehabilitation of Women' (ESAG), separated from the rest of the camp (where male political prisoners and soldiers were detained) by a large barbed-wire fence called the *syрма*.

The terrorisation of women began within hours of their arrival and continued throughout the six months of their internment at the camp. Female exiles were given a one-day extension to sign the Declaration of Repentance; a refusal would lead to the abduction of their children and extensive use of torture. The indoctrination began with a visit from the camp Commander, Antonis Vassilopoulos, accompanied by the redeemed former exiles, who described in great detail their torture and their present moral regeneration as a result of renouncing their former Communist affiliation. Those women who did not give in had their strength tested on January 30th, a memorable and tragic day,²³⁶ as they were dragged from their tents to the stage area,

²³² This is also apparent in the interviews and discussions with former political inmates; see Nitsa Gavriilidou, Eleni Savatianou and Plousia Liakata (June 1-2nd, 2007, Trikeri island and March 5th, 2008, Athens), Zozo Petropoulou (June 2nd, 2007, Trikeri island, October 6th, 2009 and February 10th, 2010, Athens) and Pota Kakava (June 1st, 2007, Trikeri island).

²³³ S.R (June 1-3rd, 2007, Trikeri and July 16th, 2007, Athens), a political exile at Makronisos, made these associations, along with her co-exiles Nitsa Gavriilidou, Plousia Liakata and Eleni Savatianou. The interviews with Nitsa, Plousia and Eleni were also granted on June 1-3rd, 2007 on Trikeri, followed by informal conversations (March 5th, 2008, Athens).

²³⁴ See Hamilakis (2002), Voglis (2002a: 107) and Fourtouni (1986: 132, 144-183; especially, pp. 144-145) who is translating parts of Aphrodite's Mavroede-Panteleskou Makronisos Journal and Mavroede-Panteleskou in *Stratopeda Gynaikon* (1976: 329-401).

²³⁵ See Hamilakis (2002: 311). The political prisoners, who were considered to be instructors or cadres of the Communist Party and were more likely to remain unrepentant, were usually isolated from the rest.

²³⁶ The political exile Nitsa Gavriilidou in her memoir, *Apopse htypoune tis gynaikes* [Tonight they are beating the women] (2004), describes in great detail the 30th of January, 1950. Also see the interview with Chrysoula Fitiza (July

where the *alphamites*²³⁷ and Colonel Vassilopoulos had gathered to terrorise the unrepentant. Vassilopoulos stated:

Poisonous vipers, the day I promised you is near [...] if you don't sign today your eyes will close forever. There is no mercy for you, no humanity, no pity. How can you still dare to raise your little bodies – you, a mere thousand females – against the will of our nation? Today it's all over, all over for you. You will be made to sign, whether you like it or not. You will sign from the stretchers before you die (cited in Fourtouni, 1986: 152).

As soon as the speech was over, he ordered the removal of the children, since “the children belong to Greece” and the mothers must become Greek again (Fourtouni, 1986: 153). The abuse of the women began by targeting well-known representatives of the Communist Party and younger detainees, who were beaten with whips, guns and clubs, stamped on with boots and subjected to *falanga*,²³⁸ a common form of torture. The majority of the exiles were severely hurt, suffering fractures, haematoma, paralysis, concussion and mental breakdown.

The administration of the camp continued the terrorisation and the coercion of the exiles at the Headquarters, managing through force to extract the statements of repentance. Within a day, half of the 1,200 women had signed, often while unconscious or unable to resist.²³⁹ Even the voluntary signing of the statements was a traumatic experience for the prisoners, since the declarations were publicised in the local press and read aloud after Sunday mass in the churches to which they belonged.²⁴⁰ Furthermore, in order to be released, they had to persuade at least two of their comrades to repent. Regina Pagoulatou, an actress and political exile, describes the process of signing the declarations as ‘decoloration’, while pointing out that “after signing the affidavit we were neither in harmony with ourselves nor with the other women. And even if it is difficult for betrayal and guilt to coexist, we had both inside us, colliding with each other and tormenting us” (1999: 164).

The torture of the female detainees that took place on January 30th was recorded and broadcasted for days at the camp through loudspeakers, as a means of intimidating the ‘unredeemed’ inmates. The psychological oppression continued with the planned visit of their relatives and friends to the camp amphitheatre; however, the tactic proved to be ineffective. Approximately 500 unrepentant women, along with the male inmates, faced malnutrition, thirst,

^{1st}, 2007, Ai Stratis island).

²³⁷ *Alphamites* were either soldiers or former political detainees who had signed the Declaration of Repentance under extreme torture and later acted as torturers at the Makronisos concentration camp.

²³⁸ *Falanga* was a common practice during which the prisoners were stripped, with their arms and legs tied to a bed or a chair, while the coercer beat them with a stick until they passed out.

²³⁹ See interviews and discussions with Chrysoula Fitiza (July 1st, 2007, Ai Stratis island) and Zozo Petropoulou (October 6th, 2009 and February 10th, 2010, Athens).

²⁴⁰ This is also discussed by the former political exile, Zozo Petropoulou (October 6th, 2009 and February 10th, 2010, Athens).

lack of medical treatment and forced labour for months.²⁴¹

In Makronisos, apart from physical violence, psychological terror was proven to be the most effective weapon employed by the State. Even though former political exiles managed to cope, in some cases, with the beatings, the *falanga* and deprivation, they still recall the terrifying scenes that took place at the camp. It was the constant fear, the nightly harassment by drunken guards and the indoctrination by the officers and the priests that became unbearable. A journalist and former Makronisos detainee, Aphrodite Mavroede-Panteleskou, has argued that psychological harassment was “scientifically designed and expertly executed” in order to create a climate of “uncertainty and disorientation” assaulting “everything that keeps a person human” (cited in Fourtouni, 1986: 168).²⁴² In addition to the psychological terror, there is another distinctive element of the abuse that was carried out on Makronisos in comparison to the other internment camps and detention centres across the country. Former political exiles were turned, through extensive torture and enforced use of substances, into the most notorious coercers. The ‘mised’ soldiers and leftist citizens ‘deluded’ by the Communist ideology, who returned to the sacred path of the *ethnos* (nation), were supposedly willing to rehabilitate their former comrades.

In official state discourse, Makronisos was described as the ‘National School’, a ‘Rehabilitation Centre’ and the ‘New Parthenon’. Ministers, governmental officials, members of centre and right-wing parties, high-ranking military officers, members of the clergy and the intelligentsia of the period praised the significant role of the camp. The description of Makronisos as the ‘New Parthenon’ or ‘Parthenon of the New Hellenism’ is attributed to the Minister of Military Affairs, Panayiotis Kanellopoulos, who described Makronisos in Parliament on July 14th, 1950 as a fine example of Greek civilization (Bournazos, 2000: 128-129). Unlike Kanellopoulos, who apologised for such characterisations during the *metapolitefsi*, Konstantinos Tsatsos, the Minister of National Education and Religion, remained unrepentant and defended the views he expressed in an interview in May 1949 in the propagandistic magazine, *Scapaneas*,²⁴³ where he stated that “Makronisos is not a method of violence, but to the contrary a restoration of freedom to the young people who had surrendered psychologically to foreign dogmas [...]. Makronisos is firstly a grand institute [...].” (Bournazos, 2000: 122-123, 128-129).

²⁴¹ Most of the buildings and the replicas, even the church of Saint Antonios, in honour of the camp Commander, Antonis Vassilopoulos, were constructed by the political exiles.

²⁴² Aphrodite’s account can also be found in *Stratopeda Gynaikon* [Women’s Camps] (1976). This climate of fear and psychological terror in the Makronisos camp, was among the first parameters stressed by Plousia Liakata in relation to her incarceration at the camp (interview granted June 1st, 2007, Trikeri island).

²⁴³ *Scapaneas* was the magazine produced on Makronisos by the reformed exiled soldiers called *scapaneis* (pioneers).

Spyros Oikonomou, a professor at the University of Athens, claimed that “Makronisos should be considered as an additional Greek miracle, a lighthouse that one day will enlighten humanity” (Bournazos, 2000: 120). Similarly, Stratis Myrivilis, a leading member of the Greek intelligentsia, a writer and an educator, was one of the ardent supporters of the camp that was destined to save and heal “the wounded consciousnesses [...] and the transformed victims of the bad witch [...] in order to give them back their human dignity and Christian heart” (Bournazos, 2000: 120).

The political Right and the military organisation and technology did not solely rule Makronisos; it was also governed by ‘a regime of pain’ (Panagiotopoulos, 2000: 287). Although it has been described as an atrocious experiment of extreme torture and fear, the distinctiveness of the Makronisos exile camp lies in its ontological and symbolic function as a rehabilitation institution and its central role in the official rhetoric (Bournazos, 2000: 144-145).²⁴⁴ The return to ‘Greekness’ and national purification were to be achieved by reminding the detainees of their glorious history and the miracles of classical antiquity through replicas of ancient monuments and theatres, lectures and symbols throughout the camp.²⁴⁵ Hellenism and national rebirth, as promoted by state propaganda and implemented by the regime, proved to be more effective than the pain to which the exiles were subjected at the camp.²⁴⁶ With regard to women, national reformers promoted their ‘healing’ and reformation as mandatory, in order to save the nation and the Greek family. Consequently, the internment of women served a great national cause, while the resulting social stigmatisation owing to their confinement proved more devastating than the brutalisation of their bodies.²⁴⁷

2.4.3 The political imprisonment of women

Along with the numerous exile camps, a significant number of detention centres and prisons were also in operation. The central women’s prisons were the Averof Prisons, located in the centre of Athens; the Patras Prison in the Peloponnese was the main detention centre of the periphery.²⁴⁸ Up to the present day, the peripheral prisons have not attracted much public or academic attention, even though the number of executions of women was higher at the

²⁴⁴ Bournazos (2000: 115-145) discusses the propagandistic role of Makronisos in the state ideological project and Panagiotopoulos (2000: 285-302) explores the symbolic role of torture and pain in the Makronisos rehabilitation process. Even though the use of pain in the Makronisos ‘rehabilitation’ project is not officially admitted, it is however implied. The MPs of the Centre and the Right and the conservative intelligentsia, described the practices employed as educational and therapeutic, not violent (Bournazos, 2000: 122-123).

²⁴⁵ See Bournazos (2000) and Hamilakis (2002).

²⁴⁶ See Panagiotopoulos (2000) and Bournazos (2000).

²⁴⁷ For more on the bodily and social stigmatisation of the political dissidents owing to imprisonment, see Panagiotopoulos (2000).

²⁴⁸ For more on the Averof Prisons and the other main prisons, namely Kallithea and Patras, see the “Appeal of the women prisoners in the Averof Prisons” (MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners).

detention centres outside the capital (Vervenioti, 2003: 134).²⁴⁹ The prisons at Kifisia and Kallithea in Athens are also important, since underage male and female prisoners were held there.²⁵⁰ The Kifisia Prisons in particular became synonymous with terror and abuse for 207 female²⁵¹ and at least 330 male underage detainees.²⁵² Political repression and nationalist rehabilitation was exercised against juvenile detainees with a distinct ferociousness that targeted both their political and gender identity.

Alongside the thousands of women held between 1945 and 1950 at the Averof Prisons, 119 children were imprisoned with their mothers.²⁵³ The 'children of the Civil War', as they are usually called, is another neglected aspect of academic and public dialogue in Greece. The confinement of children and infants at detention centres and camps is only one indicator (and not the most dramatic) of the wider state-run project of the political eradication of the dissidents. Most of the detained children had both their parents imprisoned or exiled.²⁵⁴ The health of the infants, some of whom were born in the centres, was extremely poor, with adenopathy and anaemia being the most common diseases. The state and its penitentiary centres, as well as the Greek Red Cross, had a biased stance even towards the children of female dissidents, since they were not considered to be detainees and food portions were not distributed to them (Vervenioti, 2003: 128; Fourtouni, 1986: 118). Their mothers and the other political prisoners had to share their own insufficient food in order to ensure their survival.²⁵⁵ Furthermore, in August

²⁴⁹ According to the Archive of the United Democratic Left (Box 140, ASKI), 151 women were executed between May 6th, 1947 and July 29th, 1949 at provincial cities (Vervenioti, 2003: 134n49). Vervenioti (2003: 134-135n49) mentions that, according to the memoir of the political exile Alexandra Giannopoulou-Trianti (1990: 72-74), 100 women were separately executed at an old monastery turned into a home for the aged, outside the town of Patras; women stayed only one night, to confess to a priest and then they were executed (Giannopoulou-Trianti, 1990: 72). In the Averof Prisons, between February 21st, 1948 and July 27th, 1949, 17 women were executed. Also see Vervenioti (2003: 135n50) and Papadouka (2006: 79).

²⁵⁰ For more information on the Kifisia and Kallithea Prisons, see the memoirs of underage political prisoners Pagona Stefanou (1998) and Anna Teriaki-Solomou (2004). The legal age of adulthood in 1945 Greece was 20.

²⁵¹ According to the Greek Red Cross at the Kifisia Prisons in June 1951, 207 underage women were confined (Vervenioti, 2003: 122n39).

²⁵¹ According to the Greek Red Cross at the Kifisia Prisons in June 1951, 207 underage women were confined (Vervenioti, 2003: 122n39).

²⁵² The abuse of the male underage political prisoners at the Kifisia Prisons began in 1948 and, even though the information is inadequate when it comes to the exact number of those assaulted, 24 men were transferred from Kifisia to the Intzedin Prisons (Crete) and 330 to the Makronisos camp; the accusations were supported with signed statements. The signed accusations were sent to the newspapers *Dimokratikos Typos* (August 20th, 1950) and *Mahi* (September 5th, 1950), whose editors were arrested for publishing the letters and the detainees were prosecuted for defamation. For more on the abuse of male underage political prisoners, see Papadouka's memoir (2006: 218-227) with information from the newspapers of the period.

²⁵³ At the Averof Prisons, between 1945 and 1950, 3,282 women were imprisoned (Dalianis-Karambatzakis, 1994: 18 and Vervenioti, 2003: 127-128). For valuable information on the children at the Averof Prisons, see the influential study of a former political prisoner at the Averof Prisons and doctor, Mando Dalianis-Karambatzakis (1994).

²⁵⁴ For more on the imprisonment of children and underage men and women, see the newspapers *Dimokratikos Typos* November 25th, 1950, December 3rd, 1950, December 31st, 1950, *To Vima*, January 29th, 1947, September 20th, 1947 and *Rizospastis*, February 1st, 1947, March 13th, 1947 in Papadouka (2006).

²⁵⁵ See Vervenioti (2003) and the interviews with Elli, Zoe and Mary (interviews granted, November 20th, 2006, Athens).

1950, the Directorship of the prisons ordered the transfer of children over the age of two to Queen Frederica's Child Centres (*paidoupoleis*) (Vervenioti, 2003: 128).²⁵⁶ As in most cases the parents of these children were imprisoned or exiled and their relatives were devastated by poverty and constantly harassed by the authorities, especially in rural areas, female political prisoners had no choice other than to consent.²⁵⁷

The end of the Civil War was not followed by the discontinuation of women's imprisonment. The number of prisoners began to decrease in the 1950s, with the application of the 'peace measures' of the Plastiras Government, based on Law 2058/52. The imprisonment of the political detainees, however, was frequently extended until the early 1960s. According to the Newspaper of the United Democratic Left, *Avgi*, twenty-seven women were still imprisoned in 1962, most of them having spent more than twelve years at the Averof Prisons and had been sentenced to death by court-martial in show trials.²⁵⁸ It thus becomes apparent that women from all over Greece, of diverse social and cultural backgrounds, spent more than a decade either exiled or imprisoned. This is exemplified by the case of Nina, a twelve-year-old girl, the youngest political prisoner at the Averof and eighty year old, Mamalina, the oldest.²⁵⁹

There are two significant and distinct elements to imprisonment in comparison with exile. Even though both political exiles and prisoners were denied their status as political detainees, the confinement of the political prisoners was based on criminal charges, often resulting in their execution or lifelong incarceration. The most common convictions were based on the emergency laws, the Third Resolution (1946) and Law 509 (1947), punishing the implementation of ideas aiming to overthrow the regime or detach part of the country (Voglis, 2002a: 65). Therefore, the intentions and ideas were punished instead of the actual acts themselves, transforming the political crime into a crime against the nation based on the

²⁵⁶ Also see Dalianis-Karambatzakis (1994: 19-22). The *paidoupoleis* were child centres organised by Queen Frederica, in July, 1947, in order to protect the refugee children of Northern Greece from Communist influence and to prevent their deportation to Eastern Europe. In total, 53 child centres were founded and remained active even during the Greek Dictatorship. On the other hand, the Greek Communist Party formed in May, 1948, the 'Committee for Child Assistance' (EVOP), under the supervision of a doctor and professor at the University of Athens, Petros Kokkalis; the main function of the Committee was the education of the children. Both institutions (especially *paidoupoleis*) have aroused controversial public and academic disputes and their role has yet to be further explored. For more information on the child centres and institutions for the protection of children, see Lagani (1996; 2005: 125-146); Vervenioti (2005: 101-123) and Daliani-Karambatzakis (1994: 21-22).

²⁵⁷ This is the argument that Tasoula Vervenioti (2003: 128) puts forward, drawing from Daliani's (1994) research, but it also emerges in my interviews with former political prisoners Elli, Zoe and Mary (interviews granted, November 20th, 2006, Athens). Also see "The persecution of women in Greece" and "Terrorist acts against women" (MGA/InfoXVI/Women).

²⁵⁸ See the Greek newspaper *Avgi* (EDA Archive, Box 140, ASKI). The case of Chrisoula Kallimani is worth mentioning, since she was among the 27 remaining political prisoners at the Averof Prisons; instead of being released, she was transferred as a political prisoner in 1959 to a public mental clinic, since she was suffering from psychopathic illness (EDA Archive, Box 140, ASKI). Also see the case of Eleni Voulgari, discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3 of the current thesis.

²⁵⁹ The stories of Nina and Mamalina can be found in Papadouka (2006: 67-79, 95-103).

reactivation of legislation that was established in the interwar period (1923-1940) (Voglis, 2002a: 65-66). The second feature is closely connected to the first, in the sense that political prisoners could be executed at any time based on violation of the emergency laws, frequently imposing death or life sentences. The end of the Civil War was accompanied by the prohibition of executions, thanks to the United Nations Resolution of September 1949. Law 375 of the Metaxas Dictatorship in 1936 was, however, reactivated in 1951 and executions based on espionage convictions continued until 1958.²⁶⁰

The execution of women is another subject that has not attracted much attention, especially in the prisons outside Athens, and thus information is inadequate, even though more women were executed in Tripoli, Thessaloniki, Patras and other peripheral detention centres than at the Averof Prisons (Vervenioti, 2003: 134). The fear of execution was a common trauma for the political prisoners. Women often describe the constant fear of their own or their comrades' executions as the most horrifying aspect of their confinement. Mary and Elli, political prisoners at the Averof Prisons, referred to their condemned co-prisoners and to their friend, Zoe,²⁶¹ with great affection and admiration, stressing the constant fear and anguish of waiting at the *Mellothanateio*²⁶² for several years to be executed.

Although it was the state that politically repressed and tortured women in the camps and prisons through its mechanisms and institutions, the Communist Party progressed and, in some cases, imposed the correct attitude of the loyal cadres. In the memoirs of the political internees, the role of the Party Leadership is in many cases portrayed as a catalyst at all levels of imprisonment (Vervenioti, 2003: 92). This led to a different type of coercion that could not, in actuality, be compared to the organised system of persecution and torture, as enforced by the state. According to Vervenioti, two power-systems were in operation in prisons and internment camps, namely the central Directorship and the Party Leadership, while the Foucauldian scheme of 'surveillance and punishment' was imposed both by the Party and the State (2003:

²⁶⁰ Also see Voglis (2002a: 65-68). The executions of Beloyiannis and his comrades in March 1952 and the execution of Ploumpidis in August 1953, convicted as spies according to Law 375, were among the most well-known but not the last to take place. According to Ilias Staveris' personal archive (Box 4, ASKI), between 1950 and 1958, thirty political detainees were executed, including one woman.

²⁶¹ Zoe's death sentence was cancelled after she had spent thirteen years imprisoned and three years at the *Mellothanateio*, waiting for her execution. Zoe Arseni was a political prisoner at the Averof Prisons, imprisoned for thirteen years. Soon after her release in the early 1960s, she was captured and exiled again due to the establishment of the military dictatorship. Zoe's case was not unique; several women who had spent more than a decade in prisons and exiles were captured again in the 1960s or in the first days of the junta and were detained for several more years. The interviews with Mary, Elli and Zoe were granted on November 20th, 2006 in Athens.

²⁶² *Mellothanateio* was a designated area occupying three chambers for condemned political prisoners. The number of condemned female political prisoners at the Averof Prisons is estimated at 276 (Dalianis, 1994: 18). Valuable information in relation to the detention in the *mellothanateio*, can be found in Krini Pavlidi (1951). Krini Pavlidi, was a former political prisoner at the Averof Prisons, sentenced to death and detained for six months at the death-chamber (*nekrothamos*) as she calls the *mellothanateio* (1951: 22-31).

92). This scheme, however, is not always sufficient to explain the functioning of the Central Women's Averof Prisons since, despite not being recognised as such, the prisoners were in fact political and not criminal detainees (Vervenioti, 2003: 93). Nevertheless, Foucault's groundbreaking analysis is extremely helpful in understanding the punishment (corporal and psychic) imposed in and within the prison system and, in particular, its treatment as an instrument of power (1991: 30). Foucault situates prison and the penal system within "a certain 'political economy' of the body" and especially within the context of internment, abuse and torture "it is always the body that is at issue – the body and its forces, their utility and their docility, their distribution and their submission" (1991: 25). Even though punishment is treated as a political tactic in Foucault's analysis of the penal system, within the body politic it is still the 'technology' and the 'microphysics of power' that are exercised on the body, as a strategy and not as a possession (1991: 26, 30).

The Party Leadership (or 'bureau') comprised high ranking members of the Communist Party (usually well educated) who were in charge of the secretly organised courses and everyday functions and activities, including food portions, cleaning and medical care, but their principal task was to ensure Party cohesion and conformity.²⁶³ The bureau was in communication with the Communist Party and, when the behaviour of an inmate was considered to be 'suspicious' or inconsistent towards the official Party line, the prisoners were then secluded from the prison community. On these occasions, their co-prisoners were expected to conform to Party decision and avoid any contact, even a typical greeting, with the 'suspicious' internee.²⁶⁴

During the imprisonment and exile, gender biases and norms were imposed both by the power structure of the Prison Directorship and the Party Leadership. Accordingly, the political dissidents were expected to marry a member of the Communist Party, and values and concepts like virginity and motherhood were presented as the sole role and sacred path for women. Furthermore, the role of motherhood was used as a method of persuasion by the State to obtain Declarations of Repentance, but also by the Communist Party in order to justify the Communist political struggle, by emphasising that women political detainees were primarily mothers (Vervenioti, 2003: 124-125). The prisoners themselves, especially those from rural areas with no previous political and social engagement, often adopted patriarchal values and conservative attitudes as proper female behaviour. Short hair, smoking, wearing trousers and bright colours,

²⁶³ For more on the party mechanism inside prisons, see Voglis (2002a: 208-212) and Vervenioti (2003)..

²⁶⁴ This dimension is further analysed on Chapter Three; more information can be found in the memoirs of former political detainees, see Vasileiou (1999), Manolkidou-Vetta (1997) and Patra Hatzisava (unpublished memoir and interview, February 7th, 2009, Athens). Vervenioti (2003) has analysed and discussed in great detail, the exclusionary and often oppressive stance of the party mechanism, primarily in the Female Averof Prisons.

especially during their trials, was considered to be provocative behaviour, especially among former partisans from rural parts of the country.²⁶⁵

Despite the hardships and the restraints, even those practised by the Communist Party, as well as the ideological differences and ruptures of the Left, women developed a sense of belonging and formed a network based on solidarity and common experience that was later protected, along with the honour of the Party.²⁶⁶ Women, after being released and demobilised, felt disoriented and incompetent; they had spent the most productive years of their lives imprisoned and were now faced with the difficult task of rebuilding their lives in fear and uncertainty, unemployed and socio-economically segregated, often alienated even from relatives or friends.²⁶⁷

2.5 State oppression and women within the ‘imagined’ Greek Nation

The gendered nature of oppression against women is visible through the specific characteristics of their repression and victimisation. My goal here is to stress not only the intensity and extent of the persecution and violence against women and its gender-related coercion, but also the importance of incorporating and examining gender violence as a powerful instrument of the nationalist ideology. At a time of political crisis, a patriarchal and nationalistic discourse often re-emerges as a doctrine, and the roles of women are re-traditionalised. Concomitantly, nationalism reinstates women to their ‘proper’ gender identity as biological and cultural reproducers of the nation (Yuval-Davis, 1997). Women as national symbols and purified mothers ensure the propagation of the nation and are transformed into “the nation’s most valuable *possessions*; the principal *vehicles* for transmitting the whole nation’s values from one generation to the next; *bearers* of the community’s future generations— crudely, nationalist wombs” (Enloe, 1989: 54, cited in Wilford, 1998: 15). As previously discussed, in the Greek context, left wing women were coerced into traditional roles through imprisonment, exile and indoctrination based on the national triptych of *patris*, *thriskeia*, *oikogenia* (homeland, religion,

²⁶⁵ During my interview with Elisavet, a political prisoner from a village in Lesbos island, she often referred to these characteristics, as inappropriate behaviour (interview granted July 17th, 2008, Livadeia).

²⁶⁶ This claim is based on my interviews with former political prisoners Elli, Zoe and Mary; interviews granted, November 20th, 2006, Athens and Elisavet, interview granted July 17th, 2008, Livadeia, and on the memoirs of women political detainees, especially those by Anna Solomou (2004), Pagona Stefanou (1998) and Margarita Kotsaki (1986).

²⁶⁷ This parameter is also discussed by the former political prisoner Pagona Stefanou in her memoir (1998: 49-50) and also emerges from my interviews with Elli Protogerelli (November 20th, 2006, Athens), Kaiti Ventouri (May 27th, 2007, Athens) and Eleni Bourboula (April 9th, 2009, Athens).

family).²⁶⁸

Although the Greek Civil War cannot be described as an ethnic conflict, reinforced ‘hellenisation’ became a vital element of the nationalist project. The “recent and more distant past” was mobilised and the ethnic dimension re-emerged as vital (Van Boeschoten, 2003: 43). For example, in the case of Greek Macedonia, as Riki Van Boeschoten points out, “this ‘remobilized’ past was the conflict between Greek and Bulgarian fighters at the turn of the century, known as the Macedonian Struggle (1904-1908)” (2003: 43). As a result, “all members of the Macedonian minority were considered to be Bulgarians and traitors to the nation” (Van Boeschoten, 2003: 43). Not only the inhabitants of the Slavic-speaking regions of Greece, but also Communists and former members of Resistance groups were subjected to this remobilised past, considered to be malicious and atheist ‘Bulgarians’ (Van Boeschoten, 2003: 43-44).²⁶⁹ In a reciprocal manner, this ethnic and ideological classification validated the terrorisation and banishment not only of the women and men who belonged to the Slav-Macedonian ethnic minority, but also of any citizen who could ‘qualify’ as Communist or sympathetic towards the guerrilla fighters. Geographic region, ethnicity, and political affiliation, the traditional markers of narratives of the nation since the nineteenth century, confirm national identity negatively in this instance and not in the harmonious manner of national fantasies. This equation between ethnic identity and political affiliation was institutionalised through the reactivation of a severe legislative scheme. Under the same reasoning, the Third Resolution imposed the death sentence on those who “conspired or incited rebellion or came to an understanding with foreigners or organized armed groups” (Voglis, 2002a: 66). Within this legislative framework and politically repressive context, and with national-mindedness as the “principal element of the post-civil war dominant ideology, Communists were depicted as completely alien to the nation” (Voglis, 2002a: 66).

Postwar Greek society was divided between the ‘faithful’ (*ethnikofrones*, nationally-minded) Greeks and the ethnically and politically ‘impure’ ‘EAMoBulgarians’ who were excluded from citizenship.²⁷⁰ The distinction was even harsher for women; they were either virtuous and

²⁶⁸ In relation to the discursive formation (as a slogan) of the triptych *patris, thriskeia, oikogenia*, see Gazi’s (2011) recent study. Even though the triptych was dominant in the period ranging from the Metaxas dictatorship until the fall of the military dictatorship, the historian Efi Gazi (2011: 31-32) concentrates on the 1880-1930 period, in which it was originated.

²⁶⁹ In most cases, I use the term ‘slavic-speakers’ or ‘slavophones’ throughout this section when referring to the ethnic Slav Macedonians of northern and north-western Greece. This is a common term used by historians (Clogg, 2002b) and anthropologists (Karakasidou, 1997, Van Boeschoten, 2003) in recent studies. For more on the state oppression of the slavophones and the role of ethnicity, see Van Boeschoten (2000: 28-46) and for the role of language, see Kostopoulos (2000).

²⁷⁰ This division was one of the main ideological elements of national-mindedness, which according to Elefantis was both nationalist and moralistic (2003: 142). For more on the ideology of *ethnikofrosini* (national-mindedness), see

decent mothers of the nation or 'Bulgarian whores' (Vervenioti, 2000a: 112-113). In a circular fashion, the ethnic markers ascribed to leftist women were delineated on the basis of further legitimisation of their banishment and repression. In other words, the more they were persecuted, the more they were not Greek. Because of their activism, this persecution and confinement was validated by their persecutors through the excuse that they were not targeting fellow Greeks, but 'Slavs' and potential traitors. Since Communism was equated to a contagious, foreign disease originating from the Eastern Bloc (Bournazos, 1997: 110-112, 116-120), communist and/or perceived communist women were transformed not only into a 'miasma', a political 'other', but an ethnic 'other' as well. This alienation of women and the institutionalisation of their political and ethnic 'otherness' became the legitimisation basis of their oppression and the foundation upon which their necessary national redemption was established.²⁷¹ Their redemption came at a price; in many cases, that of their own lives or their exclusion from the life of the nation for those who survived. Royal Judge-Advocate Captain Scordas' statement is an example of the first instance. During the trial of a political prisoner, Elli Svorou, after Elli's refusal to renounce the Communist Party, he said: "These (women) are poisonous vipers whose veins do not have Greek blood but Bulgarian. They do not have Greek fathers, but Bulgarian." He sentenced Elli to death so that she, and others like her, could "not poison the body of our country" (Thermiotis, 2003: 195).²⁷² The denial and/or trivialisation of women's role as guerrilla fighters and political dissidents are examples of the second instance, where women survived the physical violence perpetrated upon them, but not the symbolic erasure of their actions.²⁷³ According to Vervenioti, "the title *synagonistria* (fellow-combatant), an honorary term of address throughout the Resistance, became a synonym for a woman of 'loose morals'" (2000a: 112). It was not acceptable for Greek women, the guardians of morality and the 'holy mothers' of the *ethnos* (nation) to engage in political activities outside their nationally appointed duties (Dubisch, 1986; Vervenioti, 2000a). Within the national realm and in the public discourse, the virginity and morality of female partisans were discredited. In fact, it became a

Elefantis (2003: 140-149).

²⁷¹ Wendy Bracewell notes that "national identity is often defined by reference to an alien 'other' outside the nation", but in some cases 'others' can also be singled out "within the national collectivity" (1996: 32); in the context of male nationalist politics, Bracewell concludes, "women, too can act as a convenient internal 'other'" (1996: 32).

²⁷² Elli Svorou, a political prisoner from the island of Lesbos, was executed on June 16th, 1949. During her eighteen days of confinement at the Security Offices in Lesbos, Elli was physically and sexually abused. For more on Elli's case, see Thermiotis (2003).

²⁷³ Political prisoners and political crimes were never recognised as such by Greek law and the government. In fact, political crime was transformed into a crime against the nation. During the Greek Civil War, Michael Ailianos, Minister of Press and Information, following the government's denials of the existence of political prisoners, stated: "The Greek Government denies there have been any executions for political crimes. It also emphatically denies that there are any individuals of the above detained in prisons...these crimes were not political but common crimes" (Voglis, 2002a: 65). For more on the 'elusive' definitional status of political prisoners in the Greek Civil War, see Voglis (2002a: 64-68).

state practice for unmarried women, guerrilla fighters of the Democratic Army (DSE), to undergo a gynaecological examination when captured in order to prove their virginity (Vervenioti, 2000a: 112). In this vein, in her memoir *Katina Latifi*, a former guerrilla fighter, recalls the meeting she had with a well-known journalist and writer, Spyros Melas, in Bucharest, where she had fled after the end of the Civil War. After Melas found out that she was a guerrilla fighter, he pressured her to reveal how many DSE captains flirted with her and with how many she had actually slept (Latifi, 1999: 152).²⁷⁴ Therefore, in the Greek national(ist) imagery, it was the leftist women who had to be recuperated, since their political identity and Communist beliefs were perceived to be a contagious disease, a threat to the morals of the nation and to the 'sacred Greek family'.

In the national rhetoric, used to indoctrinate all women and not only those who were politicised, the juxtaposition was between the 'Bulgarian' and 'whore' on the one hand and the 'Greek' and 'mother' on the other (Voglis, 2002a: 108). Female former partisans and activists were destined to lose their sacred position as safeguards of the Greek family and ultimately of the 'Motherland' in this narrative of nationhood (Voglis, 2002a: 108). They were portrayed not only as nationally unfit and morally impure, but also as unsuitable mothers, since they had rejected their destined roles as inscribed within the domain of family and gender relations. The 'concept of motherhood', fundamental within the family domain and social dynamics of Greece, was greatly stressed within the discourse of reform and redemption "precisely because the radicalism and societal mobilization of the 1940s had changed the socialization of women" (Voglis, 2002a: 108).

Female political activism, outside the prescribed and circumscribed space of Greek womanhood, was expected to result in an assault on their virtue and honour (Vervenioti, 2000a). In her *Makronisos* journal, Aphrodite Mavroede-Panteleskou records a fairly common incident of the verbal abuse and nationalist fervour that characterised the treatment of politicised women:

Officers and alphas rushed inside our tents like drunken cannibals. Get ready whores. Line up. Today we'll drink your blood. Turning to the alphas Colonel Vasilopoulos said: "Faithful sons of Greece. I give them to you. Do with them as you will. Use your imagination. Waste them. They are the scum of Greece. They are whores. They have betrayed our nation. These women are to blame. Be ready to execute your orders without pity" (Fourtouni, 1986: 152-153).

Military judges, policemen, and army officers referred to women in such terms, not only while they were imprisoned or in the concentration camps, but afterwards as well; whenever women needed to acquire a public document, their political identity was placed in the open for all to

²⁷⁴ This incident is also mentioned by Tasoula Vervenioti (2003: 76n51).

abuse. The triptych of *patris, thriskeia, oikogenia* was reactivated every time the Greek national identity was in question. All three of these institutions were ready and eager to ensure national unity through the reassertion of women as the bearers of the 'nation'.

In the summer of 1948, at the Chios concentration camp, almost two hundred women were classified as 'dangerous' and were transferred to a separate building, where another segregation took place between the 'Bulgarians' (women who had relatives in the Democratic Army) and 'Russians' (women who were considered to be Communists and had engaged in some sort of political activity) (Voglis, 2002a: 106).²⁷⁵ It was also here that the rehabilitation of female political exiles began through courses of Moral Education, with politicians, priests and eminent members of local society functioning as lecturers and reformers. The Greek Orthodox Church played a substantial role in the 'national effort' and in the construction of a nationalist ideology. 'The Bulgarians as a nation and a race', 'Christianity and the woman' and 'The Slavic danger' were some of the common themes of these lectures.²⁷⁶ They are quite revealing in terms of the propagandistic nature of the nationalist and religious enlightenment offered in these sessions. The religious denotations indicate not only the efforts towards prisoners' reformation within the nationalist rhetoric, but also the gender markers inscribed among the male and female dissidents. The political mobilisation of leftist women was portrayed as akin to moral lapse and national degeneracy; they could still be saved through their internment and redemption. Panteleimon, the Bishop of Chios, characterised the political exiles as 'stray children' who were much like the whore in Jerusalem who was eulogised by Jesus Christ after her repentance and could also be saved (Voglis, 2002a: 77). The repressive techniques against women were thus legitimised and justified as essential, not only for their own religious reformation and social integration, but also for the salvation of their nation. Religious discourse, and the Greek Orthodox Church in particular, justified and readily consented to the regime's rehabilitative practices, even when the 'correction' entailed the physical abuse of the female dissidents.²⁷⁷ The nationalist state mechanisms entailed a system of political persecution, confinement and torture in order to exterminate political and social dissent and ensure the new Greek, Christian and moral national body. In this sense, the rebirth of the Greek 'Nation' was

²⁷⁵ For this classification also see the account of the former political exile, Athina Konstantopoulou (1976: 67).

²⁷⁶ Marigoula Mastroleon-Zerva (1986: 73-75), Aphrodite Mavroede-Panteleskou (in Fourtouni, 1986: 169-170) and Athina Konstantopoulou (1976: 76-77), political exiles on the islands of Chios, Trikeri and Makronisos, mention the themes of the lectures in their memoirs.

²⁷⁷ Voglis discusses the role of the religious connotations in relation to what he describes as 'rehabilitative practices' employed by the administration (2002a: 77). When it comes to the nationalistic and patriarchal nature of religious discourse, the statements and speeches of the Bishops of Larisa and Chios are noteworthy. For the Bishop of Chios, Panteleimon, see the newspaper *Acropolis*, September 18th, 1949 (Poulos, 2000) and Voglis (2002a: 77) and for the Bishop of Larisa, see Fourtouni (1986: 132).

attained through the purification of women, both in actual and symbolic terms.

The rehabilitation of the unrepentant women took a disturbing turn in November 1949, when the Trikeri camp was taken over by the Makronisos Rehabilitation Organisation (MRO) and the army.²⁷⁸ The reformers were not simply former 'repentees,' but members of the local government and clergy, ministers, high ranking officers of the National Army, prominent members of the intelligentsia, and bishops who conducted the national education. Two of the first to visit the island were the Minister of Public Order and the Bishop of Larisa, who stated that "the only realities here are the Greek Nation and the National Army, which with Christ's help have triumphed over the barbarians." "Forget all these misleading ideas about equality", the Bishop urged, "and come back to Christ" (Fourtouni, 1986: 132). The government officials and the penitentiary officers at the concentration camps and detention centres propagated abstract notions of purity and honour through the physical exercise of patriarchal power and mental and psychological techniques that targeted female gender identity. Their aim was to reintegrate the female detainees who had violated the moral and Christian codes of shame, virginity and motherhood into the traditional gender roles they had previously performed.²⁷⁹ Consequently, women who had failed to prove their conformity to the imposed system of gender relations had to be 'recuperated' and moved to the private sphere. State-formulated and exclusionary binaries and distinctions, such as public/private, were re-activated within the nationalist hegemony in order to justify the brutalisation and marginalisation of women (Crawley, 2000: 91).

2.6 Sexual terrorisation and victimisation during the Greek Civil War

2.6.1 Assaulting the female body and psyche

Within the context of the Greek Civil War, the gender dimension of violence was distinct, as was the sexualised nature of both the armed conflict and the subsequent oppressive regime.²⁸⁰ Sexual violence in wartime is not just an attack on the female body; it is also primarily intended to suffocate the political body.²⁸¹ When examining the history of this period and the phenomenon of gender violence, it is clear that an understanding of sexual violence needs to be approached beyond the public/private dichotomy that focuses on the physical body and should also be seen

²⁷⁸ See Theodorou's account in Fourtouni (1986: 129).

²⁷⁹ According to Bina D' Costa (2004: 233), 'housewives', 'mothers' or 'daughters' were also the gender roles usually performed by Bangladeshi women.

²⁸⁰ For more on the sexualised nature of armed conflicts, see Jacobson *et al.* (2000: 1-2).

²⁸¹ See Crawley (2000, especially pp. 93, 95).

as an assault on the body politic.²⁸² In the Greek context, the legitimisation of this form of victimisation of women served primarily as an exercise of political power and re-appropriation of gender roles. Women's role as partisans and activists was degraded, while their bodies were sexually targeted in order to turn them from dissidents into immoral women and, thus, legitimise their brutalisation (Krog, 2001: 203). The target of this political repression and violence was not only the physical body, but also the community whose disintegration was attributed by the state and its representatives to the very victims it abused. As Riki Van Boeschoten argues "all these forms of violence on the female body were clear transgressions of the social code of honor" (2003: 44). Similarly, Pettman stresses that with this type of abuse "both person and society are so disintegrated they are paralysed and negated" (1996: 102). There is a close relationship between the state and sexual abuse, transforming this type of violence into an exercise of political control and domination.

Psychological torture, along with sexual and physical abuse, was used during the Greek Civil War in order to create a climate of social disruption and political demotion. The following extract from the journal kept by the poet and political exile Victoria Theodorou at Trikeri camp, highlights some of the common forms of sexual intimidation and political dishonour:

To humiliate us further, they [the officers at Trikeri camp] told the guards that we were convicted whores and murderers. The guards took for granted that we would be easy prey to their lusts. When they encountered our scornful response and realized that we were political prisoners, they turned against us with redoubled fury, punishing us for scorning their sexual advances as well as for resisting their pressure to succumb politically (Fourtouni 1986:110).²⁸³

As Mayer aptly points out, "when nation, gender and sexuality intersect, the body becomes an important marker—even a boundary—for the nation" (2000: 17-18). In these terms, "the body", writes Antjie Krog, a journalist and writer who has conducted extensive research on violence in South Africa, "is the one reality we can possess...and when the body becomes the site of torture and severe trauma, an important channel for experiencing reality is affected" (2001: 203). Krog (2001) confirms the findings of other researchers who have worked on gender and violence by stating that the bodies of women in times of war, political instability, and economic disparity are victimised sexually and symbolically.²⁸⁴ Psychological terrorisation and sexual victimisation

²⁸² For the political contextualisation of rape and sexual violence, see Kelly (1988; 2000); also see Crawley (2000).

²⁸³ Victoria Theodorou was a well-known poet and a political exile on the islands of Chios, Trikeri, and Makronisos; Victoria and seven other women political exiles (Evagelia Fotaki, Athina Konstantopoulou, Stasa Kefalidou, Nitsa Gavriilidou, Roza Imvrioti, Afrodite Mavroede-Panteleskou and Liza Kotou) kept detailed journals while exiled at Trikeri in 1950-1951. Their journals were published under the title *Stratopeda Gynaikon* [Women's Camps] (1976) and can also be found in the personal archive of Victoria Theodorou (Box 1 and 2, ASKI). This fragment is translated by Eleni Fourtouni (1986) and is her translation I am using throughout this section.

²⁸⁴ Besides Krog (2001), Crawley (2000), Kelly (2000), and Turshen (2001) have also conducted extensive research

target the vulnerable, sexualised body, but also employ notions of honour, chastity, and virginity that were, and to a certain degree are still, very prominent in the patriarchal family and the community structure of Greece, in order to affect the subject's experience and ordering of their reality. As Elisavet, a political prisoner at the Averof Prisons, recently disclosed "only the matter of honour, through rape or even the threat of it, would force me to give in and sign a declaration of repentance" (Interview, July 17th, 2008, Livadeia).

Political dissidents were not the only targets of this sexual and symbolic violence by the oppressive regime during the Greek Civil War. The civilian population, especially during the early (1945-1947) and late (1949) stages of the conflict, also bore the brunt of it. In many cases, civilian women who had no direct links with either the Democratic Army or the Communist Party, were assaulted or terrorised as a means of intimidation in order to prevent them from joining the forces of the Democratic Army.²⁸⁵ During the period of 'white-terror' (1945-1946) and the early stage of the Civil War (1946-1947), women were gang raped, forced into prostitution, mutilated, sexually assaulted in public places or in front of their relatives, had their heads shaved, and were stripped naked (Van Boeschoten, 2003: 44).²⁸⁶ The terror continued and intensified in 1949. As shown by recent scholarship, archival material and the interviews I have carried out, women —primarily from northern Greece— joined the Democratic Army out of fear of being raped, exiled, imprisoned, and executed, and not solely because of their ideological beliefs.²⁸⁷ In oral testimonies, rape is frequently referred to as a common practice of right-wing paramilitaries, especially during the 1945-1947 period. However, there is no complete account in official statistics of the actual number of sexual assaults (Van Boeschoten, 2003: 43). According to the Memorandum (1987) submitted by the Greek Democratic Army (DSE) to the United Nations in

in relation to war and sexual violence against women.

²⁸⁵ Ilias Staveris, a political exile, reports in his personal archive (Box 4, ASKI), which contains archival documents from the Women's Movement from 1945 until the late 1950s, that 120,000 women were terrorised and abused (referring to different forms of violence, including confinement, sexual, physical, and psychological abuse). Also see the Modern Greek Archives (MGA/Info/XVI/Women "Rapes", "Women Prisoners", "Maltreatment and Attacks", "Women Wounded by Terrorists", "Women Murdered", "The persecution of women in Greece" and "Terrorist Acts against women") which contain information from all over the country (King's College London Archives).

²⁸⁶ Similar cases can be found in "Maltreatment and Attacks", MGA/InfoXVI/Women. Also see, Nikolic-Ristanovic's (2000: 41-77) study on rape and sexual violence of women refugees in the context of the former Yugoslavia, especially her analysis of rape as a part of war strategy (pp. 65-72).

²⁸⁷ This is the argument that Riki Van Boeschoten (2003: 43) and Tasoula Vervenioti (2002a: 137, 140) put forward, but it also emerges in the written and oral testimonies of women who joined the Democratic Army. Archival research, especially the Archives of the United Democratic Left (Box 140, 145, ASKI) which contain data on the profiles of the political detainees and the personal archive of Ilias Staveris (Box 4, ASKI) and the Memorandum (1987) of the Democratic Army to the United Nations (submitted in March 1947) also point to that direction. Plousia, a political detainee and former partisan, and her co-exiles, Eleni and Nitsa, adopt the same viewpoint in relation to the necessity of joining the Democratic Army as a mode of rescue: interviews granted June 1-3, 2007 at Trikeri, followed by a number of informal discussions in Athens, especially on March 5th, 2008. The interview with Eleni Bourboula (granted April 9th, 2009, Athens) is also revealing in terms of the overall climate of fear and terror, especially in Northern Greece. Also see the cases of terrorisation, assault and murder of women in "The persecution of women in Greece", "Terrorist Acts against women", "Women murdered since April 1946" and "Rapes" (MGA/InfoXVI/Women).

March 1947, 211 rapes were recorded for 16 prefectures within the year 1945-1946.²⁸⁸ Whole regions, however, are not included; for example, Athens and the islands, and other parts of mainland Greece. There is no historical breadth either, as the reported cases refer to violations that took place prior to March 1947. Undoubtedly, the actual number is much higher, since the codes of shame and honour were vigorous and most of the cases went unreported.²⁸⁹ In fact, the archival records indicate the mass rape of 300 young refugee women in a camp at Ioannina in 1945, who were later forced into prostitution in an effort to prevent their recruitment by the Democratic Army (Staveris' Archive, Box 4, ASKI).²⁹⁰

It is difficult to argue however that the sexual crimes were committed as a result of a specifically organised project directed by a central authority.²⁹¹ The majority of the sexual assaults were conducted by paramilitary units with the help of the rightist bands that were formed by the government in 1946 under the names MAY (*Monades Asfaleias Ypaithrou*, Country Security Units) and MAD (*Monades Asfaleias Dimosyntiritoi*, Municipal Security Units) (Voglis, 2002a: 71). A year later, those units were transformed into *Tagmata Ethnofouras* (National Defence Corps), closely connected to the army. The collaboration of the armed paramilitary bands with the security forces was confirmed by the Minister of Public Order, S. Merkouris, on March 20th, 1946 (Vardinoyiannis and Aronis, 1996: 15). Women were interrogated in police stations or in designated centres such as military camps. Women from all over Greece, often without any previous political involvement, faced physical, psychological and sexual terrorisation.

Wendy Bracewell, who analyses the hysteria over 'nationalist' rape in Kosovo through the prism of Serbian nationalism in the 1980s, argues that an atmosphere was in fact created "in which rape as an instrument of national politics was made thinkable", while "well before the outbreak of war, rape had been redefined as an aspect of national conflict, rather than a sexual crime" (2000: 582). In this regard, Riki Van Boeschoten (2003-45) who explores war rape in the political context of the former Yugoslavia (1992-1995) and the Greek Civil War, claims that the process of reconstruction of the enemy was similar in both cases, stressing at the same time, that it is the invisibility and silence regarding war rape, "which enhances the impunity of the

²⁸⁸ See Van Boeschoten (2003: 44).

²⁸⁹ Riki Van Boeschoten (2003: 44) argues that the number of sexual assaults is higher, but the accounts of former dissidents (Papadouka, 2006; Karagiorgi, 2005; Gritzonas, 2001) and archival research (Staveris' Archive, Box 4, ASKI and *League for Democracy in Greece*, Modern Greek Archives, MGA/Info/Women 'Rapes') also lead to that conclusion.

²⁹⁰ Incidents of sexual abuse and rape cases are also discussed in Papadouka's memoir (2006: 181-185), DSE Memorandum (1987:85-86) and Gritzonas' memoir (2001: 23-29). Also see "Rapes" and "Maltreatment and Attacks" (MGA/InfoXVI/Women).

²⁹¹ Also see Van Boeschoten (2003).

perpetrators and makes it into a highly effective means of ethnic or political cleansing” (2003: 51). When it comes to the Greek Civil War however, rape was mostly a form of political rather than ethnic annihilation as has been the case in other nationalist or war contexts.²⁹²

The perpetrators of sexual assaults in Greece were primarily right-wing paramilitaries, gendarmes and army officers.²⁹³ Doctors, who were either compliant or cooperating with the regime, often facilitated the abuse of women, while the judicial system legitimised their persecution and harassment. The case of Pepi Karayianni, a teacher raped while imprisoned and unconscious, exemplifies this collusion of the military, medical, and judicial state apparatus. She was sentenced to death by the military judges under Law 509/1947 on charges that she was acting as a spy against the nation on behalf of a foreign country. Doctors were not only aware of the assault, but when she was sentenced to death they dismissed the initial rape accusation because the victim refused to undergo a second medical examination.²⁹⁴ In a number of instances, doctors became the coercers of sexual assaults; in others, they were the perpetrators. Two doctors (one of them the military doctor of the Larisa police station) raped Glykeria, a 22-year-old political detainee, using their medical instruments.²⁹⁵

The threat of being raped or sexually abused was constant for women detainees in the interrogation centres, police stations, and concentration camps. Women were continuously reminded that if they did not sign the Declarations of Repentance, they would be beaten and harassed, or their children would be taken away from them. Aphrodite Mavroede-Panteleskou, a journalist and political exile on Makronisos and Trikeri, recalls:

What scared us the most was when they were taking us out [of the tents] in the dark. We did not know what the purpose of these night abductions was and we were shivering. We only knew that they were selecting the young women and an undefined fear of something dreadful was upsetting us (Avdoulos, 1998: 186).

Anna Solomou describes the mechanisms of terrorisation that involved sexual humiliation and abuse and were used against the female and male dissidents in her 2004 memoir. Besides suffering *falanga* and *panagitsa*,²⁹⁶ Anna was threatened that, if she did not reveal her

²⁹² Also see Van Boeschoten (2003).

²⁹³ See the archival material “Rapes”, “Maltreatment and Attacks” and “Women murdered” (MGA/InfoXVI) of the *League for Democracy*, where the majority of the assaulters were members of paramilitary organisations and gendarmes.

²⁹⁴ For more on Pepi Karayianni’s case, see Papadouka (2006) and the newspaper *To Vima*, February 6th, 1947 and February 14th, 1947 (ELIA). Also see the newspaper *Rizospastis*, December 28th, 1946 (MGA/Info XVI/Women Prisoners, Modern Greek Archives).

²⁹⁵ The story of Glykeria was found in Olympia Papadouka’s memoir, *Oi Gynaikeies Fylakes Averof* [The Female Averof Prisons] (2006: 182).

²⁹⁶ *Panagitsa* (Little Virgin Mary) was another practice of abuse, which entailed the tying up of the prisoner who stood for hours in front of a wall without being able to lean against it. Every time the prisoner began to lose balance, the

comrades, she was either going to be thrown out of the window or raped.²⁹⁷ Despite the threats, she kept silent and did not disclose her comrades. Remaining silent during interrogation was a common practice among the dissidents (Solomou, 2004: 109); Anna's was one of many cases. Electra Apostolou, herself brutally abused and murdered during her interrogation, had written in a letter: "Every time I'm captured I don't worry at all...as I no longer have memory, I don't have ears, I don't have a tongue...I don't even have one day of a past" (Staveris' Archive, Box 4, ASKI).

As mentioned earlier rape in oral and written testimonies is rarely discussed especially when the writers refer to their own experiences. One of the few cases where incidents of rape are mentioned is in Regina Pagoulatau's memoir (1999), where she describes her attempted rape by a guard at the exile island of Trikeri.²⁹⁸ She narrates:

The door opened suddenly. The beam of the flashlight revealed the presence of my body, like a sculpture in the dark, and a soldier fell on me with force, switching off the beam. In his face I recognized the night guard...the stench of wine filled the darkness. I was against the wall unmoving. "Orders! Orders that you not get away," he shouted and his hands gripped my body like pincers. My body became heavy, like wood, and I became one with the wall. "Don't, don't! For God's shake! Don't do it," I shouted and put my hands in front of my chest to keep him off, while his hot breath, heavy with wine and panting, warmed my nostrils and the smell made my inside churn..."Don't do this to your sister!" I was shouting and crying. And with one hand against his chest, I raised my other hand and gave him a vigorous slap on his face. His legs became tangled with mine. He tried to bend my legs and to throw me down..."I am your sister, soldier, don't you see me? Your sister...and my voice was pierced by the force of my own voice. I felt his hands loosen their grip, and a sob rose up in his chest...How could I be such a wretch?...They got me drunk and ordered me to come here. Forgive me woman. Forgive the beast that was ordered to go astray...I felt like a living dead woman, frozen in my place (1999: 133-134).

In relation to the prevailing silence, we need to be aware of the social norms and the gender biases that dominated Greek society at that period and to large extent still exist. According to these norms, such matters were private. The atrocity of rape was considered private and women were to remain silent.

"Militarised rape" bears the "cultural significance" of controlling and penetrating the 'enemy' women of a different race, religion, and, in the case of the Greek Civil War, political affiliation (Turshen, 2001: 59). Transformed into a political strategy, rape in armed conflict has to

police officers beat them. That happened to prisoners for hours and days without any rest, food, or water; see Solomou (2004: 108).

²⁹⁷ There are a lot of well-known cases of political prisoners who supposedly committed suicide documented in the newspapers of the Centre and the Left; in fact, they were thrown out of the window during their interrogation or out of the car during their transportation to the police station. More information can be found in Olympia Papadouka's memoir (2006: 234-235), which is based on newspapers of the period.

²⁹⁸ Similar cases, including rapes, attempted rapes and mock executions have been reported in several camps and prisons; for instance, in the notorious Larisa military camp. Indicatively see the memoir of Natalia Apostolopoulou (1997: 116-119), where she discusses the traumatic experiences of her co-exiles, Jenny and Argyro at Larisa camp.

be examined as a deliberate tactic and as a particularly intended and constructed social and political experience.²⁹⁹ In the Greek Civil War example, that experience was one of rupture, both internal and external. Olympia Papadouka, a prisoner at the Female Averof Prison, recalls a horrifying scene between 'a child of rape' and its mother, a scene that exemplifies this rupture. There were times, Papadouka says, when the mother would beat the child and other times when she would hug it, tormented by guilt and trauma (Papadouka, 1996: 111-112; 2006: 183). Born in prison, a 'child of rape' —so called by the women political prisoners— was a product of forced impregnation. The former political prisoners Elli, Zoe, and Mary, detained at the Female Averof Prisons, also narrated the incident while being interviewed for this research (Interviews, November 20th, 2006). Victims of a violent mechanism, systematically executed by its agents in order to politically discredit the dissidents and disrupt social cohesion, mother and child also function symbolically as the primal scene of this national and political battle.

Instability, hate, and ethnic and nationalist differences transform women's bodies into battlefields (Krog, 2001: 203). Rape, forced impregnation and institutionalised prostitution are common practices within many nationalist regimes. During the Greek Civil War, the supporters of the Left and Slavic-speaking women were singled out and sexually targeted (Van Boeschoten, 2003: 44).³⁰⁰ The vast majority of war rapes took place in the Slavic-speaking villages and in other ethnically-mixed areas of northern Greece, as Riki Van Boeschoten has argued (2003: 44).³⁰¹ In the villages of Kastoria and Florina in north-western Greece, where the Slavic-speaking population was significant, the sexual assaults, rapes, and mutilation were largely directed at women who belonged to the ethnic minority (Van Boeschoten, 2003: 44). According to the DSE Memorandum, in the Slavic-speaking village of Ftelia, 30 women and young girls were 'dishonoured' (the term usually refers to rape) by the armed paramilitary groups (Memorandum, 1987: 33; Gritzonas, 2001: 24).³⁰² In a similar fashion, in the village of Filiates in the area of Ioannina in March 1945, the terrorist band of EDES (National Republican Greek League) 'disgraced' 30 women of the *Tsam* minority (Van Boeschoten, 2003: 44).³⁰³

²⁹⁹ See Nikolic-Ristanovic (2000: 41-59, esp. pp. 41-43).

³⁰⁰ This is apparent in the case of 'Dimitra' (pseudonym) from a slavic-speaking village in north-western Greece, who was recruited by the Democratic Army and later on sexually assaulted (by police officers) due to her participation in the DSE and the fact that she belonged to the Slav-Macedonian ethnic minority. The discussions were held in July 10th, 2006 and July 3rd, 2010 in north-western Greece, but the exact venue cannot be revealed as the interviewee wishes to remain anonymous and for this reason a pseudonym is also employed. For a particularly interesting discussion of sexual violence in the former Yugoslavia, see Nikolic-Ristanovic (2000: 57-59, 65-73).

³⁰¹ Incidents of sexual abuse targeting primarily Slavic-speaking women in the villages of Kastoria (and Florina) can be found in the DSE Memorandum (1987: 33, 45-46, 50, 85); also see Gritzonas (2001).

³⁰² According to Gritzonas, other Slavic-speaking villages where sexual atrocities took place included Sfika, Kotta, Alona, and Meliti (2001: 26); Gritzonas is based on the DSE Memorandum (1987).

³⁰³ According to Riki Van Boeschoten (2003: 44), based on the DSE Memorandum (1987: 255), out of the 32 rapes in Epirus, 30 women belonged to the *Tsam* ethnic minority.

Vervenioti argues that female political dissidents managed to overcome the traumatising of the 'Bulgarian' designation more easily than that of 'whore' (2003: 76n51). However, the ethnic stigma marked the Slavophone (Slavic-speaking) women, who were simultaneously perceived as Communists, for decades to come, and provided justification for their sexual abuse and their continuing socio-political marginalisation.³⁰⁴ Despite the fact that the ethnic classification, as shown, was a means to 'justify' the sexual assault, the argument that sexual victimisation was part of a strategy of ethnic cleansing cannot be made; rather, as Van Boeschoten illustrates, the sexual assaults had more to do with "the construction of the enemy in an ethnic key" (2003: 44). Even though rape has been described by most scholars as an instrument of war or ethnic cleansing, and as a method for procreating one's ethnic group,³⁰⁵ within the context of the Greek Civil War it primarily became an ideological and symbolic component of sexual and political violence.

2.6.2 The abuse of the (fe)male body

A re-assessment of gender-political violence should not minimise the suffering of males.³⁰⁶ This is not only because men were also victimised, physically, sexually and psychologically, but also because the term 'gender', although used primarily in this thesis to denote women, is not an exclusive marker for them; it contains, by necessity, other signifiers such as masculinity and femininity, the social constitution of male and female and sexual difference. "Gender cuts across all levels of causality and shapes both women's and men's involvement in, and experience of, violence" according to Moser (2001: 40). Cynthia Cockburn, however, offers a different perspective on the gender issue during war and peace, arguing that "men and women often are tortured and abused in different ways, both because of physical differences between the sexes and because of the different meanings culturally ascribed to the male and female bodies" (2001: 22; 2004: 35-36). Cockburn claims that it is "in brutality to the body" and the sexual victimisation and terrorisation that sexual differences are accentuated, and concludes that "the instruments with which the body is abused in order to break the spirit tend to be gender differentiated and, in the case of women, to be sexualized" (2004: 35-36).

In many cases, male political prisoners, especially those who were underage, were the victims not only of political persecution and national reformation, but also of sexual abuse and

³⁰⁴ See the interview with 'Dimitra' (July 10th, 2006 and July 3rd, 2010, north-western Greece).

³⁰⁵ Indicatively, see Pettman (1996), Nikolic-Ristanovic (2000: 41-77; 2002), Turshen (2001), Krog (2001), Kesic (2001), Sluka (2000), Giles and Hyndman (2004), and D' Costa (2004).

³⁰⁶ This is argued by Cynthia Cockburn (2001: 21-22) and she is also referring to the work of Ruth Jacobson.

torture. According to the newspapers of the period, at the Kifisia prisons in Athens, where underage men and later women were detained, in early 1948 the Directorship of the Penitentiary Center undertook a series of mental, physical and sexual methods of humiliation and terrorisation.³⁰⁷ The strategy of eradication enacted against juvenile male political detainees comprised acts of malnutrition, thirst, extensive beating, forced nudity, lewdness, and rape. The aim of these extreme forms of harassment was not only the signing of the Declaration of Repentance and the renunciation of Communism, but primarily the exemplification, terrorisation, and the moral and bodily mortification of the dissidents. The male political prisoners at the Prisons of Intzedin in Crete, previously held as minors at the Kifisia Prisons, along with 330 underage exiles at Makronisos, report that a common method of harassment was referred to as the 'balloon'. It began with a beating using cement-filled socks and wire ropes, continued with forced soap swallowing, and concluded with the prisoner, while still bleeding, being handed over to the Director for the final stroke.³⁰⁸ The Director of the centre, Mouzakis, was either present at most incidents of abuse or the chief perpetrator himself. The prisoners also denounced the burning of genitals with cigarettes and anal penetration with various instruments (Papadouka, 2006: 218-219). Alongside the Directorship and the guards, former members of paramilitary groups with criminal records were also employed as torturers; in fact, they were the ones conducting evaluations, supposedly to figure out whether the prisoners were male or female, and under the influence of drugs they sexually assaulted the juveniles (Papadouka, 2006: 219).

In both corporal and psychological violence, the gendered characteristics are noteworthy. Sexual differences and hegemonic masculinity were accentuated and proven effective when it came to creating anxiety, fear, and vulnerability among the juvenile detainees. The minors were usually naked during the interrogation and torture; nudity, along with sexual innuendo, caused vulnerability and shame.³⁰⁹ Loss of dignity was particularly important in Greek society. Sexual assault against male and female prisoners was perceived as violation of the traditional code of honour and extended to the family and the community.³¹⁰ The sexual victimisation of men was especially aimed at feminising them by challenging their masculine identity. In the cases of male abuse such as the incidents that took place at the Kifisia Prisons, the intention was to harm mainly underage male political detainees in a way that would make

³⁰⁷ For more information on the victimisation of the underage political prisoners, see Papadouka (2006: 218-226) and Ilias Staveris' Archive (Box 4, ASKI).

³⁰⁸ The incident is narrated in Papadouka (2006: 219); also see, Ilias Staveris' Archive (Box 4, ASKI).

³⁰⁹ This is based on the accounts of former underage detainees, as reported in the newspapers of the period, and can be found in Papadouka (2006: 218-223).

³¹⁰ For more on the code of honour in the Greek context, see Herzfeld (1986); du Boulay (1986); Vervenioti (2000a); Van Boeschoten (2003) and Chapter 1 (section 1.5) of the current thesis.

them vulnerable and fragile, both characteristics associated with femininity. Such violence targeted the notion of male honour, which was extremely dominant in the patriarchal ideology of the time and the existing social order.³¹¹

Sexual abuse and harassment of young women, on the other hand, was a common form of terrorisation and remained the ultimate fear for the prisoners throughout their detention, leading to their traumatising and stigmatising. On many occasions, the naked and tortured female body became the locus of sexual fantasy and desire for the torturers (Voglis, 2002a: 136).³¹² Women, through nakedness, sexual assault and humiliation, were transformed into the 'disposable other';³¹³ even female body functions such as menstruation and gestation were trivialised by the tormentors.³¹⁴ Sexual violence by state agents was normalised, but it also underlined the dominant form of masculinity, as cultivated within the prevailing 'power relations of gender' and the still active processes of militarisation.³¹⁵

During this period, the explicit gendered parameters and characteristics of their abuse coincided with the goal of political rehabilitation. Underage female internees were exposed to a series of degrading and profoundly political practices such as their transfer from the Female Averof Prisons to the Kallithea and Kastoros Prisons, where criminal convicts and prostitutes were also held.³¹⁶ Women emphasise their distress in interviews and memoirs, not only of the fear of sexually transmitted diseases and the 'demoralising effect' that their confinement with what they referred to as 'public women' might have, but mainly due to the fact that they were perceived as common criminals and not as political dissidents (Voglis, 2002a: 213).³¹⁷ Moreover, the 'stigma' that they wanted to overcome was not only that of the 'dishonoured' woman resulting from their rape or assault, but also that of the prisoner and the criminal (Voglis, 2002a:

³¹¹ Wendy Bracewell (2000) provides an insightful analysis of the ways in which 'nationalist' rape in Kosovo has been articulated in the context of Serbian nationalist politics and rhetoric, thus re-appropriating gender roles and imposing idealised images of masculinity (dominant, heterosexual) and male honour.

³¹² In particular, see the memoirs of Kotsaki (1987, 65-71) and Papadouka (2006: 181-185). Several sexual assaults took place during the interrogation and detention of women political dissidents; in most cases the torture and abuse occurred while they were naked. Additional information can be found in the Personal Archive of Ilias Staveris, (ASKI). The previously mentioned rape of Pepi Karayianni, a teacher, is one of the few cases of sexual victimisation that were publicised; more information can be found in Papadouka (2006, 247-252), in the newspaper *To Vima*, February 6th, 1947 and February 14th, 1947 (ELIA).

³¹³ The term is attributed to Kesic (2001: 33).

³¹⁴ Begona Aretxaga (1997: 137-142) has analysed the employment of menstrual blood –considered impure and a taboo theme in the Irish Catholic culture, and in several other contexts as well– by the Armagh women political prisoners, as a complex symbol of sexual difference, that raised a wider public debate on gender politics in Northern Ireland, but, due to its visibility, was also transformed into a 'curse' for the male body politic (1997: 136, 142).

³¹⁵ Crawley (2000: 91) talks about the 'power relations of gender' in relation to the demarcations of public/private distinction.

³¹⁶ Vervenioti (2003: 145) characterises this transfer as profoundly political; for more on this transfer, see Kotsaki (1987: 73-75) and Papadouka (2006: 226).

³¹⁷ The arguments are drawn from interviews with a number of political prisoners, especially that with Elisavet; interview granted July 17th, 2008, Livadeia. Also see Olympia Papadouka's memoir (2006) and Vervenioti (2003).

213).

In addition to the evident goal of political degradation and annihilation, the aim of this horrifying scenario of extreme fear, disorientation, abuse and terror was also to nationally rehabilitate the inmates. Therefore, a re-establishment of 'Greekness' was put into effect, through explicit nationalist patterns, which even applied to the underage internees. For example, the Director of the Kifisia Prisons, Mouzakis, placed Bulgarian names on their chests.³¹⁸ In addition to that he ordered, against the advice of the Red Cross doctors, the continuation of the abuse of A. Papayiannis, a seventeen-year-old boy already wounded and skeletal from hardship; the Director himself commanded the drawing of the boy's 'Bulgarian' blood (Papadouka, 2006: 220). The recuperation of minors was progressed as mandatory, since they were young and thus 'easily' transformed into pure and virtuous Greeks. Nationalist and ethnic proscriptions were employed in order to justify the maltreatment and torture of the underage dissidents. However, although the confinement, repression and especially sexual violence against minors trespassed 'political' lines through the projection of national and ethnic purification, the 'ethnic' was in the service of the 'political' and not the other way around.

Consequently, men, especially those who were underage, were also severely victimised, physically, mentally and sexually. In the case of women however, their suffering was carrying gender-specific complications and nationalist markers. The female body as a symbol of the nation, was carrying nationalist expectations and connotations, ultimately embodying the Motherland, the pure and holy Greek Nation. The difference between the cases of men and women is that the traumatic experiences of explicit physical acts of violence on women were followed by social oppression and exclusion. Homelessness and unemployment were part of the latter and exemplified a form of socio-political 'ostracism' instigated and manipulated not only by the State, but also, in many cases, by the Communist Party itself (Vervenioti, 2000a: 105, 116-118; 2003). The transition from armed conflict to the peace process was not unproblematic for women. Homelessness, displacement, resettlement, or even returning home carried different markers and complexities for women. Gender biases and constraints re-emerged, along with patriarchal ideologies after the Greek Civil War and the political struggle and issues surrounding the traumatisation of women lapsed into obscurity for years. In contrast, in post-conflict Greece, men managed to politically and socially 'redeem' their suffering and mobilisation. As aptly emphasised by Meertens, citing Hannah Arendt (1973), the gender differentials of terror and uprooting are related to the 'triple loss' of meaning, citizenship, and social bonds for women (2001: 141).

³¹⁸ See Papadouka (2006: 222).

2.7 Conclusion.

The aim of this chapter was to examine state oppression and political terror against women and explore its purpose as an integral element of nationalist ideology and a militaristic regime. Gender violence as a means of political eradication was not an isolated event of the turbulent political history of Greece during the 1940s and 1950s; rather, it was a constituent element of a state-operated nationalist project that continued after those years. This discussion illustrates that national identities are linked to the appropriation of women as reproducers and guardians of the nation. Within the nationalist movement, power relations and patriarchal structures have long promoted an idealised view of women as the guardians of morality and continuity. The bodies, actions and beliefs of women have to be controlled and punished so that they will be unable to challenge the prevailing gender and power hierarchies.

During the Greek Civil War, a hegemonic patriarchy was imposed through a nationalist movement that violently imposed its religious and militaristic narratives in order to ensure the stability of the state and the national identity through the control of gender identity. A repressive and nationalist mechanism was in charge of ensuring continuity and avoiding the disintegration of the nation, using coercion and terrorisation against the women who challenged these goals, thus also eradicating the possibility of others doing so in the future. Women, through the patriarchal order, were physically and symbolically transformed into the biological and cultural reproducers of the nation; within this imposed system of power relations, the reconstruction of the *ethnos* had to pass through the 'bodies' of women.

Nationalist and political discourses are always gendered (Pettman, 1996). On this ground, women whether marginalised, victimised or mythologised, are treated as empty vehicles that serve male fantasies and national(ist) objectives. Control and exclusion are naturalised, not only by the state apparatus, but also through state-regulated constructions (such as the public/private distinction) based on the 'power relations of gender' (Crawley, 2000: 91; Pettman, 1996). Consequently, the overall project of nation building and regeneration is to obtain the consensus of the submission of women through patriarchal patterns of control and silencing.

Chapter 3

The political incarceration and control of female dissidents during the period of weak democracy (1950-1967): State and Party mechanisms

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 reconstructs the history of the political persecution and incarceration of female dissidents and their experiences during the period of 'weak democracy' (1950-1967). Although the civil strife officially ended in the summer of 1949, the persecution, repression and confinement of the political dissidents continued, in some cases, until the mid-1960s. It is argued that, despite the historical and political changes during the so-called 'weak democracy', there was a distinct continuity of oppression, persecution and terrorisation against women. This continuum of social oppression, political control and internment of the politically active women is analysed through its noticeable gendered and institutionalised characteristics.³¹⁹

Firstly, the historical and political setting of the 1950-1967 period is examined, with an emphasis on the Constitution of 1952, which not only further legitimised the persecution of leftists, but actually set the basis for the legalisation of the *parakratos* (para-state) that ultimately led to the establishment of the military junta.³²⁰ The supposedly democratic Constitution of 1952 enacted a series of emergency laws in order to 'defend' the country from the already defeated communists, still considered to be a threat to the nation (Kitroeff, 2002).³²¹ The term 'weak democracy' is also addressed in the sense that, along with the *parakratos*, both terms best describe the socio-political context of the period, as Greece was 'struggling' between democracy and dictatorship.³²² As argued by the historian Alexander Kitroeff (2002), "the *parakratos* was a repressive political mechanism sanctioned by anticommunist emergency measures and administered by the military, with the collaboration of the police and the tacit agreement of the government".³²³

³¹⁹ Cynthia Cockburn (2004) and Caroline Moser (2001) provide insightful analyses of the gendered continuum of violence during war and peace.

³²⁰ For more, see Alivizatos (1995: 525-600, especially, pp. 528, 578-600) and Kitroeff (2002).

³²¹ Also see Alivizatos (1995, 2008).

³²² Kitroeff (2002) describes this 'struggle' as the 'twilight zone' between democracy and dictatorship.

³²³ Also see Mouzelis and Pagoulatos (2005) and Tsoukalas (1981).

Within these anticommunist emergency measures, facilitated by the still active Law 509 of 1947, the intention and not only the actual act of Communist activity was penalised (Kitroeff, 2002; Alivizatos, 2008: 52, 54-55). As a result, thousands of people remained imprisoned and exiled, including women and children. This section revisits the lives and experiences of exiled and imprisoned women with an emphasis on the exile camp of Ai Stratis and the Averof Prisons, along with the other regional centres that were operating throughout the period of analysis. The island of Ai Stratis was usually the final destination of the unrepentant women who did not sign the loyalty oaths at the Makronisos and Trikeri camps. Similarly, the Female Averof Prisons were operating throughout the 1950s and 1960s and also remained active during the military dictatorship. In addition to the women already imprisoned during the Civil War period, large numbers of arrests took place during the workers' strikes in May 1953, resulting in the detention of female protesters. The structure of violence and control within the prison camps will be examined in detail, not only in relation to the gendered characteristics of the state-sponsored repression, but also to the often ambiguous stance of the Communist leadership. The gendered and institutional edifice of oppression and persecution, along with the prevailing power hierarchies, are explored as vital elements that made a culture of violence acceptable.

The final part comprises an attempt to approach a highly marginalised aspect in academic debate, namely the political activism and traumatic experience of the dissidents and former guerrilla fighters who were forced to go underground immediately after the Communist defeat in 1949. Additionally, in 1947, the Greek Communist Party (KKE) was declared illegal and most of its members had to leave the country or go underground. However, only the prominent members of the Party could flee; for the remainder of its supporters, going underground seemed to be the only way to avoid execution or imprisonment.³²⁴ Although both men and women, as former partisans or suspected Communist sympathisers, were forced to go underground due to state repression and harassment, for women especially there were distinct gender aspects associated with this 'decision'. Going underground meant constant fear and the threat of state agencies or anyone (even comrades or acquaintances) who would consider these 'non-existent' women to be easy prey.³²⁵ Deprived of any form of identification and shelter, incapable of returning home, they were subjected to harassment and terrorisation, as well as family and community pressure. Despite the severe persecution instigated by the state and its mechanisms, the illegal Communist Party also expected them to secretly undertake political

³²⁴ Also see Vervenioti (2000a: 115-116; 2002a: 132; 2003).

³²⁵ See the interview with Eleni Savatianou, granted, June 1st, 2007, Trikeri island; for the status of leftist women, also see Hart (1996) and Vervenioti (2000a).

duty in the form of the Party's organisational support. The section thus concentrates on what the dissidents often refer to as the period of *paranomia* (illegality),³²⁶ aiming to highlight not only the gendered implications of going underground under the threat of state terror, but also the prescribed gender conformity to the Party.

3.2 Historical and political context

The end of the brutal and fratricidal civil strife in the summer of 1949 did not mean the actual end of the war in the Greek case, both in terms of violence, persecution and socio-political consequences.³²⁷ The official termination of the armed conflict did not mark the beginning of liberties, personal, political and civil rights; it was not the end of the executions (which ceased in 1954), nor the end of political persecution, imprisonment, deportation and the exclusion of leftist citizens, suspected Communist sympathisers, women and children.³²⁸ In fact, thousands of dissidents and their families were taken over by a new political hostage that remained active until the early 1980s, when the National Resistance Movement was recognised and the term bandit war (*simmoritopolemos*), used to characterise the 1946-1949 period, was abandoned.³²⁹

3.2.1 Why 'weak democracy'?³³⁰

Historians, political scientists and sociologists have recently described the period of analysis as both 'short' and 'long', 'weak' and 'strong' in terms of rights and freedoms.³³¹ Despite parliamentarianism and the new liberal Constitution of 1952, politically active citizens were persecuted and detained based on the emergency legislation that penalised any activity that could be perceived as a challenge towards the political and social status quo.³³² The persecution and repression of leftist and democratic citizens was evident, especially at a grass-roots level and in rural regions.³³³ Despite the supposedly democratic Constitution of 1952, the

³²⁶ *Paranomia* (illegality) is the term used by the political detainees and activists themselves to describe the illegal Party mechanisms.

³²⁷ Tsalikoglou (2008) and Panourgia (2007, 2009) also argue that the official ending of the Greek Civil strife did not mean the actual and symbolic termination of the war.

³²⁸ For more, see Panourgia (2007, 2009).

³²⁹ The National Resistance (1941-1944) was recognised with Law 1285/1982. For more, see Chapter 5 of the current thesis.

³³⁰ The term 'weak democracy' is attributed to the electoral sociologist Ilias Nikolakopoulos (2001); for more, see Chapter 1 (section 1.3) of the thesis.

³³¹ This refers in particular to the edited volume *The 'short' 1960s decade* (Rigos, Seferiadis and Hatzivasileiou, 2008) and to the work of Tsoukalas (2005, 2008), Alivizatos (2008) and Nikolakopoulos (2001).

³³² See Alivizatos (1995, 2008) and Kitroeff (2002).

³³³ See Tsoukalas (1981, especially pp. 131-132).

main goal of the post-civil war governments was the containment of communism.³³⁴ Under this premise, Clogg accurately points out that post-civil war Greece scarcely constituted a model democracy (2002: 143). At the same time, the political forces, including the Centre, prolonged the condition of the supposed insurgency, both in terms of state practices and official rhetoric.³³⁵ Although the Throne and the military, along with paramilitary organisations, almost exclusively exercised power, the role of the United States in the Greek politics of the period was undoubtedly crucial.³³⁶

The post-civil war regime instituted a climate of fear, suspicion, censorship and terror that led to the legitimisation and extension of the incarceration of thousands of dissidents. Even though 'open terrorism' was veiled (Tsoukalas, 1981: 133) and there was a precursive democratic air, mainly after 1955, the political persecution still continued into the 1960s. Notably, the right-wing rule of 1952 until 1963, a system of 'guided democracy', acted in tandem with semi-institutional mechanisms of repression (Mouzelis and Pagoulatos, 2005: 88). In fact, it was the authoritarian regime of the 1950s and 1960s that led to the 1967 coup.³³⁷

In the late 1950s and 1960s, workers and students were the new targets of anticommunist authoritarianism. Ongoing repression brought about the banning of strikes, demands for higher wages and social insurance, even the singing of songs that could be considered to be communist or revolutionary.³³⁸ Deportations continued and especially targeted students and workers during the May strikes of 1953. Particularly, the exile camp of Ai Stratis remained in operation until 1962, along with the Averof Prisons in Athens and the peripheral detention centres. Additionally, in 1959 and 1960, trials of well-known members of the Communist Party took place, including those of female political dissidents, based on fabricated accounts of espionage.³³⁹ Even in the 'good days' of the 1960s, as described by Alivizatos (2008: 55), referring to the electoral victory of the Centre, freedom, personal liberties and political and social rights were far from attained.³⁴⁰

Furthermore, regardless of the proclaimed official termination of executions in 1952, the last took place on August 14th, 1954 and it was that of Nikos Ploumpidis, a well-known communist leader who was expelled from the Communist Party and mistakenly accused of

³³⁴ See Alivizatos (2008, especially pp. 52-54).

³³⁵ For more, see Alivizatos, 1995: 535-536, 583-587; 2008: 52-53.

³³⁶ For more, see Tsoukalas (1981: 138-139) and Clogg (2002: 142-159).

³³⁷ See Kitroeff (2002, 2003), Alivizatos (1995, 2008), Nikolakopoulos (2001), Tsoukalas (1981).

³³⁸ Indicatively, see Tsoukalas (1981: 134-135) and Alivizatos (1995; 2008: 55).

³³⁹ Also see *Oi Dikes gia 'kataskopia' tin anoixi tou 1960* [The Trials of 'espionage' in the spring of 1960] (1960) and Alivizatos (2008: 53).

³⁴⁰ Georgios Papandreou, the leader of the newly-formed *Enosis Kentrou* (Centre Union), won the elections held on February 16th, 1964 (Alivizatos, 2008: 55).

being a British agent. In fact, Ploumpidis' comrade Nikos Beloyiannis was arrested and sentenced to death by a court-martial in December 1950 for violating Law 509/1947 and for supposedly acting as a spy on behalf of the Soviet Union, so Ploumpidis publicly declared Beloyiannis' innocence and decided to take the blame. Despite Ploumpidis' initiative and the national and international clamour for the cessation of executions, Beloyiannis and his three comrades (Batsis, Kaloumenos and Argyriadis) were executed on March 30th, 1952. Beloyiannis' partner, Elli Pappa, was also sentenced to death, but was exonerated due to maternity, as she had given birth to her son two months before while imprisoned.

Even though what has been described as anti-communist hysteria had abated,³⁴¹ in 1962 a new anti-communist law was put into effect under the guidance of the Professor of Law, Konstantinos Tsatsos, who was serving as the Minister of Public Administration (Alivizatos, 2008: 54). Furthermore, a Constitutional Court was established, but the personal rights of the citizens who were supposedly in a position to challenge the socio-political order were denied.³⁴² At the same time, the Greek Communist Party was still illegal and certificates of social beliefs remained mandatory for employment, education, even for everyday activities such as driving, fishing or hunting during the 1950s and 1960s (Tsoukalas, 1981: 134). The political dissidents, in order to avoid deportation and imprisonment, were forced to flee or go underground. In fact, 80,000 political refugees fled to the Socialist Republics after the defeat of the Democratic Army and were denied repatriation, along with Greek citizenship, until 1982.³⁴³ Consequently, the term 'weak' or 'guided' democracy,³⁴⁴ when attributed to the 1950s and 1960s, is quite accurate as the emergency legislation was systematically employed in order to ideologically exterminate the Communist 'enemy' without catalysing parliamentarism.³⁴⁵

3.2.2 The Constitution of 1952: institutionalising the Para-state

As previously argued within the post-civil war context, the real centres of power rested within the Army, the Palace and a small group of politicians; these authorities set the basis for what Tsoukalas accurately describes as a 'pseudo-democracy' (1981: 134-138).³⁴⁶ It was during the supposedly democratic period of weak democracy that the state continued to dominate through

³⁴¹ Also argued by Seferiadis and Hatzivasileiou (2008: 17).

³⁴² Also see Alivizatos (2008: 55).

³⁴³ For more information on the political refugees of the Greek Civil War, see Danforth (1995).

³⁴⁴ Besides Mouzelis and Pagoulatos (2005), the Professor of Constitutional Law, Nikos Alivizatos (1995), also uses the term 'guided democracy' to describe the period.

³⁴⁵ Also see Seferiadis and Hatzivasileiou (2008: 27) and Alivizatos (1995, 2008, especially pp. 52-54).

³⁴⁶ For more information in relation to the post-civil war context, see the edited volume *I 'syntomi' dekaetia tou '60* [The 'short' 1960s decade], by Rigos, Seferiadis, Hatzivasileiou (2008). Also see Mouzelis and Pagoulatos (2005) and Kitroeff (2002).

mechanisms of repression that were further necessitated by the Constitution of 1952, which was democratic in prefix. The political culture of the period and, most importantly, state policies were not illegal or unconstitutional; in fact, the reverse was true.³⁴⁷ However, the constitutional and political framework was deliberately based upon generalisations and vague terminology, especially with regard to the definitions of crimes against the nation, resulting in the persecution and conviction of thousands of citizens based on farcical trials (Kitroeff, 2002).³⁴⁸ In fact, it was the 1952 constitution that put into effect the para-state that dominated the rightist anti-communist post-civil war reality of Greece, ultimately leading to the military dictatorship. Accordingly, the authoritarian regime, along with unofficial mechanisms, transformed the suspected communists once again into traitors and a threat to the nation.

Nevertheless, the Right, instead of abolishing those mechanisms that were utilising the institutionalised *paranomimotita* (para-legality) of the Metaxas, Occupation and Civil War periods, now amplified them (Tsoukalas, 1981: 135). Even though the mechanisms were operating through a vague system of illegality and legitimacy, protection was not only conferred through the constitution, it was also granted via the armed forces, the gendarmerie and the secret information services through their increased power that not only assisted this condition of a para-state, but further legitimised it.³⁴⁹ As pointed out by Tsoukalas (1981), there was a distinct continuation of terrorism against those who were sympathetic towards the Left, especially in the countryside. In fact, on October 10th, 1961, the Military Command Officer at Litororo urged members of the National Security Battalions (TEA) and the inhabitants of the region to kill the political candidates of the Left (Tsoukalas, 1981: 132). Similarly, in the autumn of 1966, during students' protests, dissenters were arrested and imprisoned for two and a half months for insurgency. In those demonstrations, a student, Sotiris Petroulas, was murdered, signalling the eradication of the student movement and the beginning of a distinctively authoritarian regime that would climax with the 1967 coup d'état.

Seferiadis and Hatzivasileiou argue that, even though the para-state and para-constitution were in effect, the extent and intensity was not comparable with the first post-civil war period (2008: 17). Nevertheless, in 1962 and despite the insurgency officially ceasing according to the Council of the State (STE), the Karamanlis administration introduced a new anticommunist law (4234/1962) outlawing the political parties that threatened the regime in power (Seferiadis and Hatzivasileiou, 2008: 17; Alivizatos, 2008: 54). In reality, in 1962 and

³⁴⁷ See Tsoukalas (1981, especially p. 135), Alivizatos (1995, 2008) and Kitroeff (2002).

³⁴⁸ Kitroeff is based on the work of Alivizatos (1995); for more on the 1952 Constitution (or para-constitution), see Alivizatos (1995: 525-600, especially, pp. 528, 578-600).

³⁴⁹ Clogg describes these mechanisms as 'dark forces' (2002: 152).

1963, the *parakratos* was not only in full operation, but also in close collaboration with the official state (Seferiadis and Hatzivasileiou, 2008: 17). The climax of one of the darkest phases of Greek political life was the murder of the leftist Deputy, Grigoris Lambrakis, in 1963.³⁵⁰ Members of para-state organisations murdered Lambrakis, a parliamentary deputy with the United Democratic Left (EDA) and leader of the Peace Committee, in Thessaloniki during a public gathering for the peace movement on May 22nd, 1963. Lambrakis, who was a socialist and not a communist, had previously been threatened and the government, the police and the Central Information Services (KYP) were informed of the threats, but decided not to take any protective action (Dordanas, 2008: 139-140; Kitroeff, 2003). The murder was attributed to common members of the felony, even though the murderers were convicted criminals strongly connected to the para-state, and also closely associated with high-ranking officers of the gendarmerie (Clogg, 2002: 153; Dordanas, 2008: 142; Seferiadis and Hatzivasileiou, 2008: 17-18).

The agents of the para-state, the *parakratikoi*, were often criminals, Nazi collaborators (*dosilogoí*), even rapists, as was the case in the Lambrakis murder,³⁵¹ acting under the auspices of the police. In fact, the Central Information Services (KYP) under the authorisation of the Prime Minister, Konstantinos Karamanlis, included auxiliary forces and organisations with former anti-communist, right-wing police informants as its members (Kitroeff, 2003). In the 1960s, the organisations of the para-state had renewed their powers based on royalism and anticommunism.³⁵² The authoritative establishment was functioning in parallel with the para-state; however, in 1967 the para-state became the official and only State (Kitroeff, 2003).

Within this expulsionary and often ‘suffocating’ atmosphere,³⁵³ the successful political and ideological extermination of the Left was not enough; once again, national-mindedness dominated the public and private sphere as a means of political control. Ironically, in 1952, during this conservative government with the army rule and the repressive mechanisms in full operation, women gained the right to vote and women’s movements re-emerged after a prolonged silence imposed by the 1936 Metaxas dictatorship, the effects of which continued during the Civil War period. Nevertheless, despite the granting of long-awaited voting rights, the imprisonment of female political dissidents or suspected left-wing sympathisers continued, in

³⁵⁰ See Seferiadis and Hatzivasileiou (2008: 17). For further information in relation to the Lambrakis murder, see Dordanas’ paper (2008: 126-142) and Clogg (2002: 153).

³⁵¹ Giosmas, a former Nazi collaborator and member of a paramilitary organisation during the Civil War, and two others murdered Lambrakis, but he was absolved from blame with only a one year sentence for disturbing the peace (Dordanas, 2008: 142).

³⁵² See Tsoukalas (1981), Alivizatos (1995, 2008) and Kitroeff (2003).

³⁵³ Tsoukalas (1981: 134) describes it as such.

some cases, until the mid-1960s. Similarly, discrimination in the public sphere and the exclusion of female dissidents from the public sector was notable and distinct, even after the fall of the dictatorship in 1974 and the democratic turn over. Thus, the Civil War did not end in 1949, not even during the period of weak democracy, at least not for the thousands of leftist citizens and political dissidents, both male and female. Female political dissidents, in particular, were deprived of their long anticipated status as citizens and of any sense of self, isolated and stigmatised.³⁵⁴

3.3 Reconstructing the experience of female political exiles during weak democracy

In the mid-1950s, a significant number of persecutions were still taking place, targeting well-known members of the Communist Party (who were re-deported to exile islands) and new Communist sympathisers, usually workers and students, who were arrested during strikes in the large cities. A Civil War endowment in the form of emergency legislation, especially Law 509/1947 along with the Third Resolution and the re-institutionalisation in 1951 of Law 375/1936 for espionage, led to imprisonment (often based on fabricated accounts) and death sentences via puppet trials and military tribunals, even to the executions of suspected communists.³⁵⁵ Moreover, the still active post-war nexus of criminal measures and the resumption of administrative resolutions such as administrative exile or deportation laid the foundations for indefinite detainment in prison and exile camps (Alivizatos, 1995, 2008).

The status of the political exiles, along with the issue of administrative deportation, remained ambivalent throughout the 1950s. In fact, in 1954 and regardless of the validation of the International Convention for Human Rights that created a new legal condition explicitly proscribing administrative deportation, political exile continued on the island of Ai Stratis (Alivizatos, 1995: 582-583). In reality, the camp remained in full operation until 1963. The Council of the State proclaimed that the insurgency had not ended, since the mandatory act to legitimise termination was lacking.³⁵⁶ In that respect, the Greek Representative to the United Nations claimed that “in Greece there aren’t any concentration camps for political exiles, but only for the displaced that are considered dangerous for public security, such as smugglers, rustlers, drug addicts, and other criminal elements” (Anonymous, 1996: 208-209). Within this

³⁵⁴ For more on the exclusion and marginalisation of female dissidents in post-dictatorship Greece, see Chapter 5 of the current thesis.

³⁵⁵ See Alivizatos (2008: 52-54).

³⁵⁶ See Alivizatos (1995: 583-584, 586).

atmosphere, the continuous appeals of the exiles were dismissed on the grounds that the insurgency, according to the Council of the State, had not ceased.³⁵⁷

3.3.1 Women in exile: The Ai Stratis concentration camp

The elections of 1950 brought into power a more liberal government and the Makronisos Reformatory Organisation was dissolved in July 1950 under public pressure; by the end of the month, the 500 unrepentant female detainees were transferred once again to the island of Trikeri.³⁵⁸ As the public security committees were responsible for the punishment of political dissidents, their exile could be indefinitely prolonged. Accordingly, in the summer of 1951, 544 women were exiled to the island of Trikeri and when the camp was dissolved in April 1953, only 50 women were left on the island; ultimately, approximately 19 women were deported to the Ai Stratis camp, since they had no resources or contacts to intervene and press for their release.³⁵⁹

Gradually more women from urban centres were arrested, usually workers or students, and transported to the island of Ai Stratis. In fact, during the legal demonstrations of International Workers' Day (May Day) in 1953, 53 workers (including 11 women) were arrested. The police tried to inculcate these workers without charging them with any offences, but could not imprison them; nevertheless, they were still sent to the exile camps of Trikeri and Ai Stratis. The majority of the demonstrators were members of the newly formed United Democratic Left (EDA); even though EDA was the legal political party of the Left, its members were being monitored daily by secret police officers and their informers.³⁶⁰ Alexandra Vlassi-Theodorikakou, among the arrested workers, recalls the thorough body searches and the horrifying conditions during her detainment in a cell with ten other female workers that was also occupied by prostitutes (2006: 21). A year later, on May 1954, and after spending a year in the concentration camps of Trikeri and Ai Stratis, they were deported to Athens to be court-martialled.³⁶¹ The exiled workers were exonerated, but their internment continued until 1964 when the political exiles were given amnesty; among them Alexandra, who remained exiled until 1961.

³⁵⁷ For more, see Alivizatos (1995: 583-589; 2008).

³⁵⁸ Kyriaki Kamarinou, in her research on education in prisons and exiles, reports that the unrepentant women numbered 620 (2005: 230).

³⁵⁹ The historian Polymeris Voglis suggests there were 544 female political exiles at Trikeri, relying on British sources (Voglis, 2002a: 92). The exact number of the female detainees that were transported from the Trikeri camp to the island of Ai Stratis is not recorded; according to women's memoirs, the approximate number of female exiles was 50 (i.e. Apostolopoulou, 1997: 203). The newspaper *Rizospastis* (February 3rd, 2008) and Victoria Theodorou, in her account (1976), mention that in April 1953 only 19 women were left at Trikeri. Kamarinou, on the other hand, points out that in the spring of 1953 approximately 45 women were left; 16 of them were deported to the island of Ai Stratis (2005: 230).

³⁶⁰ This is also mentioned by Youlia Linardatou (September 18th, 2009, Athens and March 11th, 2010, Athens) and Patra Hatzisava (February, 7th, 2009, Athens).

³⁶¹ See the memoir of the political exile, Alexandra Vlassi-Theodorikakou (2006: 20-22).

In the case of the political exiles, it is worth noting that, unlike the political prisoners, they had never been charged with any offences and in many cases had not been tried; nonetheless, their banishment continued for several years. In the context of the 1950s democratisation, the Ai Stratis concentration camp was transformed, under Law 511, into a camp of 'disciplined living'. According to the memoirs of former political exiles, in September 1953 there were 50 women at the camp of Ai Stratis, some with their children, while approximately 15 more were deported to the island primarily during the May strikes.³⁶² However, there are no available official statistics for the exact number of political detainees. When the Prime Minister, Papagos, was asked about the number of political internees in Greece, he responded that the number was very small, and if "someone regardless of his past is in a position to denounce the (Communist) propaganda and any actions that could harm the nation, he will be released" (Newspaper *Avgi*, January 30th, 1954). Similarly, in the United Democratic Left (EDA) annotations of 1955, with regard to the seriously ill political exiles of the Ai Stratis camp and their necessary hospitalisation, the Minister of Justice, Theofanopoulos, stated that the exiles should not complain, since in comparison with other virtuous citizens they enjoy excellent medical care (Newspaper *Avgi*, June 16th, 1955, cited in Flountzis 1986: 189). In fact, in the same year, the camp administration ordered the transfer of the doctors and the medical students to other barren islets, in order to deprive the political dissidents of medical care.³⁶³

When women arrived at Ai Stratis, they took up residence in rented houses, as the male political exiles had managed to ensure that the elderly and women with children would avoid living in tents. Despite the hardships at the concentration camp of Ai Stratis, such as extreme weather conditions, a lack of medical treatment and the constant surveillance of their private lives that had literally become public, political exiles managed to organise small celebrations, continue their studies and develop artistic skills. Although female inmates had succeeded in improving their living conditions in the second phase (1950-1953) of female internment at the Trikeri exile camp and, later, on the island of Ai Stratis, they were still confronted "with a psychologically calculated and wisely created climate of mental anxiety, terror and stress. It was an unmitigated war, without mercy against human essence and composition" (Mavroede-Panteleskou, 1976: 376).

Moreover, during their incarceration, women were deprived of any sense of self, especially *political* self; at the same time, their political and gender identity was constantly at stake, contested and exploited. Maja Korac also points out that "the feeling of being deprived of

³⁶² See the memoirs of Laskaridis (2005: 36-37) and Flountzis (1986: 147). In 1956, according to Kamarinou (2005: 242), there were 33 female political exiles in Ai Stratis.

³⁶³ For more information on this transfer, see the memoir of Antonis Flountzis (1986: 58).

one's identity and of becoming a non-entity" is also associated with the "feeling of humiliation" (2004: 256). As women were seeking to reconstruct their lives as citizens and obtain a sense of self, their struggles to fulfil everyday needs, the educational activities and the secretly organised feasts and theatrical sketches provided them with an illusion of the lives they had left behind. The exiled women were struggling to maintain a sense of personhood and political subjectivity. With new identities being imposed upon them, the adaptation seemed inevitable and sometimes necessary in order to survive. After the mid-1950s, when the executions had stopped, the directorship of the exile camps carried out a series of oppressive practices such as the tearing up of correspondence and the banning of visitations. Although women managed to cope with these restrictions, not always interpreted as being overtly violent, they proved to be a traumatic aspect of female internment, since the constraints were closely connected to separation from their families and alienation from their children.

3.3.2 Party Leadership and the control of gender relations in the exile camps

With regard to the sexual politics of the exile community, collectives³⁶⁴ were created in the exile and prison camps to facilitate the living conditions of the inmates and were monitored by the Communist Party. Within these collectives, certain types of norms were projected within the system of gender relations, in which sexual relationships among the detainees were strictly forbidden. When women arrived at the camp of Ai Stratis, they were immediately informed that personal relationships, even the holding of hands, were forbidden. Actually, there was a code of ethics comprising ten articles initiated by the Party Leadership that regulated gender relations (K.H, 1996: 514-515).³⁶⁵ The interdictory statutes of the Leadership applied mainly to women and entailed, among other things, a proscription against walking the streets alone or with one man; at least four men were required. Additionally, women were not allowed to enter the tent or the house of an inmate unless at least two men were present and the door remained open (K.H, 1996: 515). The same restrictions applied to the personal relationships of the exiles with the locals. The control of sexuality, especially that of women, is not surprising since the 'stigma' of the immoral, atheist and unworthy mother predominated in anticommunist propaganda and nationalist rhetoric (Voglis, 2002: 126-127).³⁶⁶ Therefore, as the Leadership was responsible for the integrity of its members that coincided with the honour of the Party, it also adopted a

³⁶⁴ The collectives, also known as the Political Exiles' Cohabitation Group (OSPE), were created by the political exiles in order to organise their everyday lives and ensure their basic needs; see Voglis (2002a: 94) and for the OSPE in the interwar period, see Kenna (2004).

³⁶⁵ Margaret Kenna (2001: 1-32) discusses in her paper a similar code of ethics (especially 'Article 10', pp.11-13), applied in the exile site of Anafi (a Cycladic island) in the 1930s and early 1940s.

³⁶⁶ Also see Vervenioti (2000a) and Voglis (2002a, especially pp. 124-127).

paternalistic and puritan stance regarding sexuality and gender relations.³⁶⁷

The male inmates were prepared for the transfer of the female exiles to Ai Stratis, as there were rumours in the camp of the upcoming transfer as early as the preceding February. At the time, the male detainees expressed their concerns and suggested some restraints on women with regard to their circulation and participation in the camp.³⁶⁸ Antonis Flountzis (1986), a political exile, but also the doctor of the camp, characterises the comments made by his co-exiles as demeaning to female dissidents. Women, on the other hand, describe their arrival at Ai Stratis as pleasant, since they knew that their lives were going to improve there and that they would be able to meet old friends and comrades, even relatives. Moreover, former female exiles point out in their accounts that men treated them as fellow fighters, without any salacious thoughts.³⁶⁹

The censorship, the repressive surveillance system by the Directorship of the camp and the pressure to sign the Declarations of Repentance continued in the exile camps, as did the strict line of the Greek Communist Party in relation to the *dilosies* (the dissidents who had signed the loyalty oaths) throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Despite the fact that certificates were obtained, in most cases, under extreme pressure and extortion, a large number of Communist supporters were forced into political isolation, since they were labelled as traitors and unworthy of the Communist Movement (Tsoukalas, 1981: 133).

Female dissidents managed to form strong emotional connections with one another, but their attachments were severed as soon as they were transferred to Ai Stratis (Flountzis, 1986: 150). During the mid-1950s, as the political framework was changing, since the executions had stopped and the exiles had managed to organise their lives in a more humane way, ideological differences emerged among the male inmates at first, then among the women. The ideological disputes between the political exiles developed between two opposing standpoints; the first was that of those who supported the continuation of the close relationship between the Greek Communist Party and the Soviet Union. The second was the revisionists, who were in favour of a more autonomous stance. The ideological rupture took a dramatic turn in 1956 at the concentration camp of Ai Stratis and in the Averof Prisons, but the final fracture occurred in 1968 during the junta.³⁷⁰ Despite the ideological tension and the disagreements in relation to the decisions and the stance of the Communist leadership in the concentration camps, the Party

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁸ The information is provided by Antonis Flountzis (1986: 146-7); also see the interview with Vassilis Laskaridis, (October 22nd, 2008, Athens).

³⁶⁹ Indicatively, see (K.H) in the collective volume *Oi Misoí sta Sidera* [Half in Bars] (1996: 514).

³⁷⁰ The Greek Communist Party (KKE) was divided in two branches: the KKE-External (close to the Soviet Union) and the KKE-Internal (autonomous and European stance).

Leadership predominated and the imposed official line remained intact. Within this structure of analysis, Anna Teriaki-Solomou,³⁷¹ a political prisoner and exile at the Ai Stratis camp in 1954, describes Party leadership as orthodox and dogmatic, since anyone who disagreed with the Party was 'classified' and virtually isolated (2004: 126).

Antonis Flountzis (1986) mentions that when women arrived at Ai Stratis the Communist leadership tried to introduce tension in order to cause divisions. The leadership also appointed the woman they wanted to take over the Communist guidance of the female inmates; Katsiva was appointed by the Party mechanism and, with a small group of women, she moved to the best house among those designated for the exiles, the only one with a toilet (Flountzis, 1986: 150).³⁷² Similarly, when Antonis Flountzis and his wife, Katina, who was also exiled in Ai Stratis, were deported to the barren exile islet of Antikythera, they were subjected to a thorough search by the Directorship of the camp and the Party mechanism requested to be present to supervise it. Flountzis describes the incident as a 'double examination' (1986: 151).

Even though the Communist Party was illegal and the exile committees were acting in secret, the appointed Party representatives did not hesitate to isolate, defame, or even discredit loyal members; the Party mechanism, through its exile committees, demanded absolute obedience, discipline and personality cult (Flountzis, 1986: 155). Nevertheless, the ambivalent role of the Communist Party needs to be contextualised, as the authoritative regime of the Right was in full operation, generating constant harassment, terror and persecution against the political dissidents; within this unclear socio-political setting, the Party was supposedly protecting its members and defending the Communist Movement.³⁷³ In any case, the role and the decisions of the Communist Party were transformed into a significant element of the traumatising of the political detainees, causing another form of torment, since the stigmatisation and isolation was instigated by their own Party and carried out by their comrades.³⁷⁴

³⁷¹ Anna Teriaki-Solomou was detained at the prisons of Kifisia and Kallithea as an underage political prisoner and was released in 1952 from the Female Averof Prisons. During Tito's visit in Greece in 1954, she was arrested again and sent to Ai Stratis for six more months, but she was also captured during the dictatorship at the concentration camp of Yaros with her four year old son and was later detained in Crete at the Alikarnasos camp until 1969. More information can be found in her memoir (Teriaki-Solomou, 2004).

³⁷² More information on the role of the Party leadership at the Ai Stratis camp can be found in Flountzis' memoir (1986). For two different perspectives, see the interviews with Laskaridis (October 22nd, 2008) and Farsakidis (March 5th, 2008).

³⁷³ Also see Voglis (2002a).

³⁷⁴ This is the argument that Tasoula Vervenioti is also making in relation to women political prisoners and their traumatising due to the stance of the Communist Party Leadership (2003: 105).

3.4 Female imprisonment during the weak democracy: gender biases and constraints within state practices and the Party leadership

The period of weak democracy was marked by the continuation of administrative exile, along with the civil war scheme of 'emergency measures', which led to the persecution and imprisonment of leftist citizens and Communist sympathisers. In 1951, the Left proclaimed to the United Nations Memorandum that there were 60,000 political prisoners and exiles in Greece; according to governmental statistics, political prisoners numbered 19,797 (Lambropoulou, 1999: 32-33). In March 1952, the Plastiras government commuted the death penalty to life-imprisonment through Law 2058, and a significant number of political prisoners were released. Nevertheless, the terrorisation, oppression and internment of the political dissidents continued throughout the 1950s and in some cases until the early 1960s. In 1962, besides the thousands of exiled citizens at the camps of Ai Stratis and Yaros, there were 1,350 political prisoners, including women, detained at the Female Averof Prisons, usually as a result of fabricated charges.³⁷⁵

3.4.1 Female dissidents at the Female Averof Prisons

In 1950, 3,000 women were detained including 750 at the Female Averof Prisons;³⁷⁶ in the mid-1950s, the prison population was significantly reduced due to the 1952 'peace measures'. In 1957, approximately 300 female political prisoners were incarcerated at the Averof Prisons, divided in two sections comprising 'dangerous' and 'less dangerous', since by that time the majority of the detained women were members of the Communist Party, usually educated, who had spent a decade in the exile and prison camps (Kamarinou, 2005: 181). A year later, in 1958, the review of women's cases began after they had spent almost 10 years in prison. Another group of women was released a year later and, in the early 1960s, only 20 women remained incarcerated.³⁷⁷ It is worth pointing out that new arrests of Communist women took place in the mid and late 1950s despite the decreasing number of political prisoners, mostly the wives of

³⁷⁵ The numbers are provided by Tsoukalas (1981: 133). The fabricated charges were usually for espionage; for more, see *Oi Dikes gia 'kataskopia' tin anoixi tou 1960* [The Trials of 'espionage' in the spring of 1960] (1960).

³⁷⁶ See Olympia Papadouka (2006: 273, 276), based on the newspaper *Dimokratikos Typos*, March 19th, 1950 and April 9th, 1950.

³⁷⁷ See Margarita Kotsaki (1987: 79) and Vervenioti (2003: 178).

prominent members of the Party.³⁷⁸ In the spring of 1960, the infamous trials of women convicted of espionage began after they had already served long sentences without a trial. The Averof Prisons officially closed in April 1966 when the five remaining women were released. However, special reference needs to be made to the case of Eleni Voulgari,³⁷⁹ who was captured while pregnant in 1966 and sentenced under Law 375 for espionage. In fact, due to the 1967 *coup d'etat*, she remained imprisoned with her three-year-old son, born in the women's section of the Averof Prisons, until 1971.

Regardless of the 1952 peace measures, the system of coercion and discipline was representative of the still active authoritarian establishment. The continuity of political persecution and imprisonment of the leftists and imposed punishment through squalid living conditions was rigorous throughout the 1950s. The resumption of detention at the Female Averof Prisons, along with the restrictions and horrible conditions of prison life, demonstrate the state's efforts to politically subjugate Communist women. The imposed discipline and abjection, through the horrifying prison reality of hunger, forced labour and sickness, penalised the political identity of the female detainees. Within this coercive setting, rigorous censorship and strict surveillance of any sense of privacy were transformed into a measure of political control.

Political coercion against the female detainees was noteworthy throughout the 1950s; in fact, the state employed a series of practices in order to control women's political and gender identity. In 1953, 70 female political prisoners who were considered dangerous were transferred from the Averof Prisons to the Kastoros Prisons in Piraeus. The 'intractable' women remained imprisoned for approximately three years at the Kastoros Prisons and, as Maria Sideri (1981: 114) points out,³⁸⁰ their detention would have been prolonged if the escape of 27 male political detainees from the neighbouring Vourla Prisons had not taken place in the summer of 1955.³⁸¹ Women, in their accounts, characterised this reassignment as a typical political transfer, since

³⁷⁸ Referring to Fofi Lazarou, Roula Koukoulou, Avgi Haralambidou (1955). Also see *Oi Dikes gia 'kataskopia' tin anoixi tou 1960* [The Trials of 'espionage' in the spring of 1960] (1960), where the aforementioned and other cases are discussed.

³⁷⁹ The well-known film *Ta Petrina Hronia* [The Stone Years], by Pantelis Voulgaris, was inspired by the personal story of Eleni Voulgari and Babis Golemas, who were both political prisoners at the Averof Prisons and got married inside the detention centre, with their son as the best man. For more information on Eleni's case, see the Petition of Eleni Voulgari's mother for her release in the *League for Democracy* ("Petitions for the Release of Political Detainees", MGA) and the "Open Letter from Eleni Voulgari-Golemas" (MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners).

³⁸⁰ Maria Sideri was a political prisoner for 14 years, which included being transferred from the Averof Prisons to the Kastoros Prisons; for further information, see her memoir (1981). The exact year of the women's transfer from the Kastoros to the Averof Prisons cannot be accurately determined, as Sideri (1981: 113-4) indicates 1954 to be the transfer year; on the other hand, Elli Pappa (2007: appendix), Fani Manokidou-Vetta (1997: 114) and Tasoula Vervenioti (2003: 146) suggest 1955, that was also when Kastoros Prisons closed down. For further details of this transfer also see Soula Karanika's memoir (1984: 60-66).

³⁸¹ On July 17th, 1955, 27 male political prisoners managed to escape from the Vourla Prisons; more information can be found in the memoir of Kyriakos Tsakiris *Vourla: I Megali Apodراسi* [Vourla: The Great Escape] (1994), who was among the escapees.

the aim was to isolate older political dissidents, considered to be influential members of the Communist Party, from the younger detainees.³⁸² After a couple of days, the remaining detainees were pressured by the Director of Athens General Security, Rakitzis, and escorted by police officers, the Directorship and the prison nuns, to sign the Declarations of Repentance. As Maria Sideri describes, Rakitzis, with a whip in his hand, ordered the opening of the prison bars and shouted “you can return to your houses, with your children and families and the younger ones can get married and have their own families...otherwise they will end-up old maids” (1981: 122-123). The women remained unaffected by the threats and responded that the terror and persecution continued, even outside the camps and prisons. He proclaimed that if they did not want to die, women should at least declare that they would live lawfully and in a nationally-minded manner (Sideri, 1981: 123). After their transfer back to the Averof Prisons, the *epikindineio* was introduced, a dark and isolated cell designated for the 14 unrepentant dissidents that were guarded by a nun, Magdalene, in order to continue to pressure them to sign the Declarations of Repentance.³⁸³ This event clearly delineates the concomitance of ‘gender’ and ‘political’ within state rhetoric in an effort to safeguard the continuation of the *ethnos* (nation) and the extermination of the Left through the subjection of women to gender role stereotypes. Nonetheless, the detained women formed a network and their lives were organised, to some extent, as secretly held courses took place and packages sent by the wealthier families or from relatives living in Athens were shared with the poorer women from rural parts of Greece.

Despite the peace measures and the proclaimed democratisation, the socio-political coercion against women had distinct gender parameters. In 1955, 12 female detainees at the Kastoros Prisons were transferred to the Prisons of Rhodes, where they were exposed to forced labour such as the carrying of stones and sand for building purposes. Despite the fact that forced labour should not have been imposed on political detainees, evidently political humiliation and subjugation was put into effect to cause physical pain, fear and terror. This rehabilitation project based on punishment was also apparent in the treatment of women dissidents in need of medical treatment in the Ai Stratis camp, where the gendarmerie of the island ordered invasive bodily searches of these women in order to approve their transfer to the hospital.³⁸⁴ The reported incidents clearly stress the government’s efforts to not only undermine the morale and annihilate the political creed of the dissidents, but most importantly to sexually humiliate and

³⁸² See the memoirs by Fani Manolkidou-Vetta (1997: 113) and Soula Karanika (1984: 60); Tasoula Vervenioti similarly describes this transfer as a substantially political one (2003: 145).

³⁸³ See the memoir of Margarita Kotsaki, who was among the unrepentant dissidents (1987: 77).

³⁸⁴ The reported incidents can be found in Flountzis’ memoir (1986: 187-188), in which he cites extracts from articles of the newspaper *Avgi* (May 5th, 1955 and June 7th, 1955).

politically disgrace them.

Throughout the period of weak democracy, the Directorship of the detention centres continued to torment the political dissidents in order to obtain their loyalty oaths, usually by using familial pressure. This is apparent in the horrifying dilemma that female political prisoners had to face with regard to the previously discussed compulsory transfer of infants from the Female Averof Prisons to Queen Frederica's Child Centres (*paidoupoleis*) in the summer of 1950.³⁸⁵ Women were subjected, not only to the separation and possible alienation from their children (cases of adoptions abroad were also reported), but also to the rehabilitation that was taking place at the *paidoupoleis*, consisting of anti-communist propaganda and fierce nationalist rhetoric that primarily targeted female dissidents as unsuitable mothers.³⁸⁶

In a similar vein, during the twelve-year detainment of Tasia Mamida in the Female Averof Prisons, her mother became seriously ill with cancer and the prison administration pressured her to sign the declaration in order to be allowed a short visit to the hospital. The Directorship detected some sort of inducement in her mother's monitored and censored mail and pressed for a statement of patriotism.³⁸⁷ When Tasia made it clear that she would not denounce the Communist Party, the Director of the prison said:

You are insensitive, ungrateful, heartless...you don't care about your mother, about your family...you are not willing to make a sacrifice for your mother, and supposedly you are willing to sacrifice for the rest of the world? (Faliaga-Papanikolaou, 1980: 64).

It is worth mentioning that Tasia received a letter from her mother while she was in hospital asking her to visit her as her last wish, but the Directorship would only allow the visit if Tasia signed the declaration; her mother died two months after writing that letter. Tasia, undoubtedly suffered a great deal from her mother's loss, as she writes "I am melting day by day. I've grown old. I feel my heart so small and shrunken; there is nothing left inside me" (Faliaga-Papanikolaou, 1980: 93). Despite her torment, in a letter sent to her mother several months after her death, she describes the process of signing a social belief certificate as suicide, as a real death.³⁸⁸

It should be emphasised that the political prison was not an unvarying and 'horizontal' experience, and even though women were living within the prison community as a 'we', there were different layers and degrees of political involvement, of Communist conformity, and

³⁸⁵ For more on children and the *paidoupoleis*, see Chapter 2 of the thesis, especially section 2.4.3.

³⁸⁶ For more on the detention of children in the Averof Prisons, see the study of the former political detainee and doctor, Mando Dalianis-Karambatzakis (1994).

³⁸⁷ See Tasia Mamida, cited in Faliaga-Papanikolaou (1980: 64). Eleni Faliaga-Papanikolaou, Tasia's co-prisoner, published a memoir (1980) based on Tasia's correspondence with her mother.

³⁸⁸ The letter can be found in Faliaga-Papanikolaou (1980: 93).

ultimately, of moral standing derived from social structure and family relationships (Hart, 1999). Political imprisonment was defined by a remarkable level of trauma, where coping mechanisms such as everyday routines of cleaning, studying and ad-lib performances served as survival tactics. Consequentially, as some of these women had spent almost a decade at the Averof Prisons, they developed strong relationships based on affection and solidarity.³⁸⁹

According to women's testimonies, a type of collective ownership prevailed in prison, under which all parcels from relatives containing food, clothes and even gifts had to be split between the detainees; the joint ownership system has been described by some women, however, as a pressing problem within prison life.³⁹⁰ Furthermore, within the prison microcosm, divisions and gaps developed primarily between the political dissidents from Athens and women from the countryside. Zoe, a political prisoner at the Averof Prisons, emphatically reported that there were class differences as there are in society generally (Interview, November 20th, 2006). On the other hand, her friend and co-prisoner, Mary, pointed out:

We had a tremendous solidarity, and affection for each other that was what kept us going and made us human, team spirit...that was what I realised in the 52 days that I was in complete isolation in the Averof Prisons. The relations with one another kept us in life, built our character, we became better not worse (Interview, November 20th, 2006).

Consequently, despite the social and ideological differences and the class divisions, women developed strong ties through this network of solidarity and the common traumatic experience of incarceration, loss and fear.

3.4.2 The mechanisms of the Party Leadership within the prison microcosm

The tensions and the often coercive role of Party Leadership in prisons and camps are usually acknowledged only in private and unofficial discussions. Open accusations against the role of the Communist Party are mostly made by men in their published memoirs or oral accounts; female former dissidents, on the other hand, consider these issues to be private and in their oral testimonies there is a tendency to stress the bonds and solidarity, rather than the tensions within the prison community.³⁹¹ There are cases, however, of women who remained politically active primarily in the ranks of the Internal Branch of the Communist Party (*KKE esoterikou*) and

³⁸⁹ Maria Sideri describes in her memoir the strong relationships formed in prisons and the survival tactics (1981: 123-132).

³⁹⁰ For more details on this system of joint ownership, see Sideri (1981: 110); Mary, Elli and Zoe shared the same views in our interview (November 20th, 2006, Athens). Also see Manolkidou-Vetta (1997: 112-113).

³⁹¹ Tasoula Vervenioti (2003, especially pp. 91-121, 141-147) has examined in great detail the role of the Party Leadership, as imprinted on women's prison memoirs.

adopted a more critical approach after the fall of the junta regarding the role of the Communist Party in their oral and written accounts.³⁹²

In this respect, Fani Manolkidou-Vetta, imprisoned throughout the 1950s, says that life in prisons was strictly organised and that the presence of the Communist Party was particularly strong at the Averof Prisons, as specific women were assigned by the Party mechanism to invigilate the discussions and behaviour of their co-prisoners (1997: 91). She continues, "...the party guidance wanted strict guidance and blind obedience" (1997: 92). Under this premise, women who were not considered to be loyal to the party were put under surveillance. In fact, with reference to women's oral and written testimonies, the Party Leadership isolated approximately 50 female detainees in the Averof Prisons. These dissidents were not necessarily disloyal, since none of them had signed a loyalty oath, but were considered to be too independent and their actions were contrary to strict Communist guidance (Manolkidou-Vetta, 1997: 92-93).³⁹³ There were times that the Party even doubted the communist loyalty of political detainees who were sentenced to death and women who had been sexually assaulted, like Pepi Karagianni, and isolated them.³⁹⁴ In some cases, the Party Leadership, in order to separate the dissenting women from the rest of the prison community, made accusations regarding the sexual orientation of the detainees. Patra Hatzisava, a former political prisoner, revealed at a public event and later in her memoir that the Party guidance approached her and asked her to announce that she received solicitations from her friend Virgo.³⁹⁵

Former political detainees who remained politically close to the Communist Party avoid acknowledging these oppressive parameters of the Party mechanisms inside prisons, as they follow the official line of the Communist Party.³⁹⁶ However, there are women who, despite not being members of the Party, still find these discussions inappropriate. Patra's speech had this effect; in fact, her co-prisoner, Mary Aroni, openly disagreed and, during our interview in reference to Patra's disclosure, claimed that "we were not detained by our co-prisoners but by

³⁹² Indicatively, see Patra Hatzisava (unpublished memoir and interview February, 7th, 2009, Athens), Youlia Linardatou (September 18th, 2009, Athens and March 11th, 2010, Athens), Fani Manolkidou-Vetta (1997), Voula Damianakou (1985) and Sasa Tsakiri (1996).

³⁹³ Also see Patra Hatzisava (unpublished memoir and interview February 7th, 2009, Athens).

³⁹⁴ See Manolkidou-Vetta (1997: 92-93) and Vervenioti (2003: 141-142). Pepi Karagianni was sexually abused and heavily tortured during her interrogation; for further details, see Chapter 2 (section 2.6.1).

³⁹⁵ The public event was the book presentation of Tasoula Vervenioti's *Diplo Vivlio* [Double Book]. More information can be found in Patra's speech (a copy of the speech was given to me by Patra) for the book presentation, but also in her unpublished memoir and in our interview (February 7th, 2009, Athens); also see Vervenioti (2003: 141). In reference to the accusations regarding the sexual orientation of female prisoners, also see Manolkidou-Vetta (1997: 92).

³⁹⁶ This is implied by Fani Manolkidou-Vetta (1997), but it is also evident in my interviews and discussions with women who are still closely related to the Communist Party. Tasoula Vervenioti (2003) makes similar assumptions in the *Diplo Vivlio* [Double Book], in her analysis of women's prison memoirs, especially in reference to Stamatia Barbatsi's memoir.

the state, the state wanted to exterminate us as we were the losers of the Civil War...and they crushed us" (Interview, November 20th, 2006).

Another oppressive tactic, imposed by the Party guidance, was the compulsory self-criticism that began in the spring of 1953. Female political prisoners had to reveal their personal weaknesses and deficiencies regarding their loyalty to the Communist Party, but also had to criticise the behaviour of their comrades (Manolkidou-Vetta, 1997: 112, 116-117). The imprisoned women, in their accounts, describe the process of self-criticism as particularly painful and excruciating. A political prisoner, Fani Manolkidou-Vetta, stresses in her memoir:

The Party forced us to reveal ourselves...to crush our dignity. I don't think that self-criticism made us better fighters or that it helped us in our future lives. We were in prisons for so many years, we came across the trials and the martial courts and with deep pain we saw our co-prisoners getting executed, was it really necessary to go through another open trial, an ordeal, a humiliation? (1997: 117).

She concludes by arguing that, 50 years after the end of the Civil War, there was not even one statement of self-criticism or an act of contrition by the Communist Party or the members of the Party's mechanism in camps and prisons (Manolkidou-Vetta, 1997: 118). In some cases, female political dissidents describe the prison community as structured, hierarchical and authoritarian, stamped by the line of the Communist Party; nevertheless, they assess the prison experience as being positive overall, referring to the relationships-for-life that were formed inside the detention centres.

3.4.3 Power hierarchies and gender constraints as articulated by state rhetoric

Female political detainees have underlined that, despite their struggles for freedom and equal rights during the Resistance and the Civil War and after spending years and years in prisons, they ended up in an inferior position. The former female inmates became subaltern women,³⁹⁷ without any rights and with only obligations, dependent upon and subordinate to the imposed power hierarchy and strictly defined gender roles.³⁹⁸ Within this system of power relations, men's choices to dissolve their marriages with female former prisoners, who were ravaged by time and detention hardships, were justified. On many occasions when women were released

³⁹⁷ For more on the 'subaltern' concept, see Spivak's groundbreaking analysis (1988).

³⁹⁸ See Hatzisava's speech for the book presentation of Vervenioti's *Double Book*. These assumptions were also made by former political prisoners (especially Patra Hatzisava, Pagona Stefanou, but also Stamatia Barbatsi as analysed by Vervenioti, in her *Diplo Vivlio* [Double Book]) in published memoirs, public positionings, interviews and informal conversations. For Barbatsi's case, see Vervenioti (2003), for Hatzisava, her interview (February, 7th, 2009), memoir and speech for Vervenioti's book presentation and for Stefanou, her memoir (1998, indicatively see pp. 49-50, 101-102).

from exiles and prisons, their spouses often felt that they had grown old and chose to dissolve their marriage and marry younger women who were able to look after them and have children.³⁹⁹ In fact, during the period of weak democracy, divorce was almost automatic for men who could rely on the civil law and on the services of the police, who could easily facilitate the procedure grounded on legal reasons since the wives were political prisoners (Vervenioti, 2000a; 2003: 133-134). Marriage was extremely significant to women former political internees, since through this specific social role they were fulfilling their prescribed destiny, to become wives and mothers; this societal position offered them the chance to reintegrate into the social body. Thus, since women were excluded from marriage and legitimate procreation, they were not only forced to carry the labels of nefarious criminals and traitors, closely related to their political identity, but also that of unmarried, childless spinsters, another form of social stigmatisation. Kesic also underlines within the case of Former Yugoslavia that “the nationalistically invested symbols which stereotype women can change from one extreme to another” very easily (2004: 79). Accordingly, for the incarcerated women, the rigid gender identities and symbolic constructions of motherhood and virginity were very easily replaced by promiscuity and sin within the Greek nationalist imagery.

Moreover, as most families were socially and economically devastated, women were assigned the difficult task of restoring their relationships with their children, but also the chore of raising them alone in the midst of unemployment and poverty. After their release, women were undeniably confronted with socioeconomic isolation, political immobility and a daily struggle for survival.⁴⁰⁰ Regardless of the oppression and the difficulties, women stress that they do not regret their political struggles, as they were members of a movement that propagated better lives for all, especially for women who had to survive in a sexist and patriarchal society.⁴⁰¹ Patra Hatzisava, in relation to the position of women in the 1950s and 1960s, argues that it was a very difficult period, especially for young and politicised women.⁴⁰² She opines that “the state intended to regulate our lives, that’s why we were prosecuted...and our lives were ruined” (Interview, February 7th, 2009)

It should be noted, however, that the gender biases were self-imposed in many

³⁹⁹ Patra Hatzisava made these comments in a speech given on the occasion of the publication of her friend’s (Virgo Vasileiou) memoir on January 3rd, 1999 and during the book presentation of Vervenioti’s *Double Book* (Patra gave me a copy of these two speeches); she also raised this issue during our interview (February 7th, 2009, Athens).

⁴⁰⁰ The multidimensional victimisation and suffering of women in war and postwar contexts, primarily as refugees in the former Yugoslavia, is addressed in the edited volume *Women, Violence and War: wartime victimization of refugees in the Balkans*, by Nikolic-Ristanovic (2000), especially see the papers by Konstantinovic-Vilic (2000: 99-133), Mrvic-Petrovic (2000: 135-149; 171-186) and Mrvic-Petrovic and Stevanovic (2000: 151-169).

⁴⁰¹ Interview with Patra Hatzisava, February 7th, 2009 in Athens.

⁴⁰² Patra Hatzisava makes these points in her speech given during the book presentation of Virgo Vasileiou’s (1999) memoir and during our interview (February 7th, 2009, Athens).

instances, based on a very rigid power hierarchy and on the patriarchal family structure with strict social norms. Elli and Patra, both political prisoners, characteristically noted that when Elli Pappa, the partner of Nikos Beloyiannis (the executed Communist leader), was captured and sent to the Averof Prisons, that was the first time that they smelt cigarette smoke and coffee, as they were forbidden by both the Directorship of the Prison and the Party Leadership.⁴⁰³ In any case, the wives of the Communist leaders and the eminent members of the Party expected and enjoyed different treatment inside the prisons, both by the administration and their co-prisoners. There was also a notable gap in relation to the social norms of the Athenian women and women from the countryside who denounced a number of behaviours inside prison as unfit, both for women and especially for political dissidents.⁴⁰⁴ Accordingly, Elisavet from the island of Lesbos, who was imprisoned at the Averof Prisons in 1952, recalls that she could not bathe in front of other women and criticises other political prisoners, usually from Athens, who wore make-up during their trial (Interview, July 17th, 2008, Livadeia). Thus, despite their political activism, female dissidents often acted according to traditional gender roles. Concomitantly, the state was in a position to institutionalise this system of power relations established in the gender order, while the Communist Party, in its own way, further utilised it.

In September 1964, the youth political organisation 'Lambrakides' was formed in memory of the assassinated leader of the Left, Grigoris Lambrakis. The organisation struggled for democracy and the release of the remaining political prisoners.⁴⁰⁵ Young women, mostly students and workers, were actively involved in the political organisation, but very quickly became the targets of a fierce anti-communist and misogynist state propaganda. In the official rhetoric, based on the pre-existing patriarchal structures and social norms, the political engagement of women in the youth organisation was employed in order to humiliate them and accuse them of being immoral. The female supporters of 'Lambrakides', also referred to as 'the women in black stockings', were portrayed as being dangerous for the morals of the nation and to lawful youth. Panagiotis Kanellopoulos, the leader of the opposition party, the National Radical Union (ERE), promulgated the belief in the 1965 Parliament session that the 'Lambrakides' undermine Greek youth, who will produce the future soldiers and the mothers of the Nation (Saint-Marten, 1984: 133). He continues:

...in the specific organisation with the vague political orientation, not necessarily communist, all means are justified. Unfortunately, there is a widely used sexual motivation on the part of

⁴⁰³ Elli's interview was granted on November 20th, 2006 and Patra's on February 7th, 2009, both in Athens.

⁴⁰⁴ In relation to this gap, also see Vervenioti's interesting analysis (2003, especially pp. 147-151).

⁴⁰⁵ The political youth organisations in Greece have not been studied sufficiently, with the exception of Saint-Marten's 1984 study of the *Lambrakides* and Odette Varon-Vassard's (2009) study of the political youth organisations during the Occupation and the Resistance.

the young women at the expense of adolescents...that belong to nationally-minded families. I denounce it and I will give their names to the Government, the Prime minister and the Minister of Education (cited in Saint-Marten, 1984: 133).

Once again, the official nationalist discourse used traditional patterns and equations in order to reinstate gender roles, as women were acting outside their prescribed roles of mothers and wives. As women transgressed the boundaries of the 'private', in opposition to the appointed gendered and national markers,⁴⁰⁶ the regulation was necessary in order to ensure the continuation of the nationalist project. Thence, gender roles were reinstated through imposed conformity to the restrictive binaries of shame and honour, public and private.⁴⁰⁷ Consequently, women within the traditional classifications were constantly controlled, both sexually and politically, as a means of ensuring the construction of *the* national(ist) identity.

3.5 Female political dissidents going underground: the gendered implications

During the Greek Civil War and after the Communist defeat in the summer of 1949, Communist members were forced to go underground or seek political refuge in the Eastern bloc countries, in order to avoid imprisonment and, most importantly, execution. The regime of illegality remained active until the fall of the military dictatorship in 1974, as the Communist Party was still illegal and its members and sympathisers were terrorised and persecuted. In the 1950s, the Communist Party considered the organisation of its illegal mechanisms, which were completely destroyed due to the civil strife and the continuous persecution of its members, to be vital for the continuation of its political struggle. Despite the instigated climate of fear and terror that prevailed during the period of weak democracy, female and male political activists and sympathisers of the Communist Movement continued to serve the Party through an underground network. As the prominent members had fled abroad in order to avoid imprisonment and coordinate the secret organisations from the Socialist Republics, female political dissidents were selected as being the most suitable for underground Party activities. Since women, especially those who had managed to avoid incarceration, were not targeted as often as men, as they were considered by the state to be incapable of carrying out dangerous political tasks, they could more easily mobilise Communist supporters and circulate illegal press notices and newspapers.

Even though the experience of *paranomia* (illegality) emerges in the memoirs and

⁴⁰⁶ Korac (2004) talks about the ways in which women become the markers and boundaries of the nation. Also see Chapter 1 (section 1.6) of the current thesis for a review of similar studies.

⁴⁰⁷ For more on the honour/shame, public/private scheme within Greek ethnography, indicatively, see the edited volume *Gender and Power in Rural Greece*, by Dubisch (1986) and Chapter 1 (section 1.5).

testimonies of former dissidents as an extremely traumatic and repressive period of their political activism, it has been marginalised both in terms of academic research and public debate. It should be emphasised that some leftist and Communist activists spent decades incarcerated and labelled as illegal during their persecution and internment, but after their release (with all the associated consequences) were forced to go underground. Particularly for women, there are noteworthy gendered dimensions closely associated with their experience of joining the illegal communist network that should be highlighted. The 'illegal' women lived under false identities and fake names, borrowed clothes and hid in underground, open spaces or in houses of old acquaintances. As the measure of collective responsibility was still active, families who provided shelter to the dissidents could be imprisoned at any point during a search, as many houses were placed under surveillance and the local police required regular statements in relation to the tenants and residents. Furthermore, as the underground women were forced to live with people they did not personally know, suggested by the Communist Party or other dissidents, they often became the victims of harassment, threat and sexual terrorisation; in some cases, the assaulters were also leftists or former detainees.⁴⁰⁸ Female dissidents, through the underground Party machine, lost their identities, were politically disempowered and, since they were unable to report the crimes, the assault of their bodies and psyches was once again transformed into a weapon of control and degradation. Accordingly, the 'illegal' women struggled to survive in a state of 'permanent temporariness' and isolation;⁴⁰⁹ they also had to cope in some instances with their own people imposing power and control. In reality, as the feeling of 'camaraderie' was shattered giving way to feelings of betrayal and alienation, women were transformed into 'permanent outsiders' within the condition of *paranoia*.

The decision to go underground was inevitable, in many cases, as the released women were doomed to unemployment, social exclusion and poverty. Former female political detainees describe the difficulty of finding a job, even at the minimum wage, as a crucible of adversity; in fact, Argyroula Seferli, who was released in 1955, remembers that she was even short of bread.⁴¹⁰ Most importantly, it was the ongoing terror, the hunting down by the state, as female dissidents describe it, which forced them to join the underground Communist mechanisms. Eleni

⁴⁰⁸ This was the case with E.S., who was sexually harassed by a leftist at his house, where she sought refuge after going underground in 1945.

⁴⁰⁹ Nira Yuval-Davis uses the terms 'permanent outsider' and 'permanent temporariness' to talk about war, peace and refugee as gendered constructions (1997: 110). Also see Mrvic-Petrovic (2000: 171-186), who discusses life in refuge for women as something 'in between', since they 'belong neither here nor there' (2000: 183). This state of 'permanent temporariness' is evident in the experience of Kaiti Ventouri, as a *paranomi* (Interview granted May 27th, 2007, Athens).

⁴¹⁰ See Seferli's letter sent to the Relief Committee of the *League for Democracy* (MGA/Info/XVI/Women Prisoners); Patra Hatzisava's interview (February, 7th, 2009, Athens) and her unpublished memoir.

Bourboula mentions that, when she was released from the Female Averof Prisons in 1962, she could not return to her hometown in Northern Greece as there were cases, mainly in the countryside, where women were found dead under unspecified conditions after returning from prisons and exile (Interview, April 9th, 2009). Their families were obligated to conceal their suspicions out of fear of the local police forces that continued to intimidate and harass them.

Communist women, especially those who went underground, were victims of dislocation, losing their livelihoods and social networks, which resulted in fractured personal and family relations. As women transgressed the traditional gender boundaries and the expected roles, often out of necessity, the creation of a family and the bearing of children seemed impossible. Nevertheless, female political dissidents, who were politically silenced and suffocated within the public sphere, were also socially marginalised, as the prescribed roles of motherhood within the long-standing family structure were not fulfilled. Kaiti Ventouri, who spent 15 years as a *paranomi* (outlaw) from 1950-1965, emphasises that the actual chase began after 1950 and, when the discussion touches upon family issues, she points out that the fact that she did not have children or a family was not a matter of personal choice, as:

When I was released from the Alicarnassos Prison in 1970, I was 50 years old, what kind of family could someone have at this age, who would marry me? I was *paranomi* (outlaw) for 15 years, I couldn't trust anyone, I didn't sleep not once at my home or at a relative's house...I saw my mother only once from afar (Interview, May 27th, 2007).

She underlines, however, that she remains politically active and committed to the ideals of the Communist Movement to the present day, despite her age of 92 years. Between the lines, there is a sense of a personal void and torment and, in a way, she is trying to redeem her lost life through a still active political identity.

When women were reunited with their families after spending years imprisoned and classified as illegal, they struggled to bond, especially with their children.⁴¹¹ Even though there were families in which both men and women were imprisoned or forced to go underground, the mothers were mainly accused of denying their roles of motherhood. That was also the case with 'Maria', whose father was a well-known member of the Communist Party who decided to send his daughters to the Socialist Republics in order for them to be safe and become educated. As his wife was 'advised' by the Party to remain in Greece and facilitate the illegal mechanisms, 'Maria' and her sisters grew up alone in orphanages in former Czechoslovakia and the Former Soviet Union and rejoined their parents in their mid-20s. 'Maria' did not manage to fully

⁴¹¹ Also see the interviews with Patra Hatzisava (February 7th, 2009, Athens) and Eleftheria Ganiti (September 26th, 2009, Yaros). Particularly useful for this discussion are the papers by Mrvic-Petrovic (2000: 135-149; 171-186) and Mrvic-Petrovic and Stevanovic (2000: 151-169), analysing the separation and dissolution of family and the difficulties that women came across as refugees due to the war in former Yugoslavia.

reconnect with her mother and, even today, she still resents her for her decision to obey the Communist Party while ignoring the needs of her children. In the meantime, the role her father in the Party leadership is not only acknowledged, but depicted as heroic.⁴¹²

Despite the Party's stance in relation to the indispensability of women in the underground Party machine, mainly due to necessity as there was a distinct lack of free and reliable members, there were significant gender parameters connected to the *paramonia*, leading to another form of trauma for women. With this in mind, in a number of cases, the Party contacted women as soon as they were released, sometimes even before, giving them specific instructions to go undercover that could not be easily ignored. In fact, in 1951, when Youlia Linardatou was exiled at Trikeri, she was asked by the Party, through a high-ranking member in charge of the communist youth movement, to sign a Declaration of Repentance so that she could be released and take over the illegal mechanisms of the Party. Additionally, she had to inform two of her co-exiles that the Party line indicated the signing of declarations as mandatory.⁴¹³ Youlia disregarded the Party instructions and did not sign the statement; however, her two friends did and later held her responsible for their decision since it caused them a great deal of guilt and regret. Youlia concluded the discussion by saying that "the Communist Party wanted to destroy the political dissidents, to eradicate them; they did not care about our political identity, about our dignity" (September 18th, 2009).

The Party could also interfere with the personal decisions of female political dissidents, such as if and when they could marry and if they should continue their studies or join the underground machine. The political detainees often point out that they regret their unquestioning acceptance of the Party line in relation to their continuation of studies and other important issues that should have been private.⁴¹⁴ Anna Teriaki-Solomou, a former political detainee, points out that, after her release in 1952 from the Female Averof Prisons, she wanted to continue her studies at the Polytechnic School, but the Party instructed her to go underground. Even though she obeyed, she characterises it as a tremendous injustice on behalf of the Party (2004: 125). The Party had also indicated the *paranomia* for her fiancée, Nikos Solomos, who was also a political detainee; regardless of the official Party line, he continued his studies and he became an architect. Similarly, when Youlia was released in 1951, the Party 'recommended' that she should wait for a couple of years before getting married to her fiancée, as the

⁴¹² I have arrived at these conclusions through the interviews and numerous discussions with 'Maria' (pseudonym), especially the ones during the pilgrimage trip to the exile island of Yaros in September 25-27th, 2009 and through the exploration of her unpublished memoir.

⁴¹³ Interviews with Youlia Linardatou, September 18th, 2009 and March 11th, 2010, Athens.

⁴¹⁴ See the memoir of Teriaki-Solomou (2004) and interviews with Youlia (September 18th, 2009 and March 11th, 2010, Athens).

functioning of the illegal network was crucial for the Communist Movement (Interview, March 11th, 2010).

Within this schema, the political conformity and obedience of female political dissidents to the Communist Party signifies the necessitated power hierarchies, but also the expected social roles and behaviours, as articulated by the bipolarity of duty and sacrifice. Concurrently, female dissidents were once again employed, this time by their own political party, in order for the communist objectives to be achieved. In this sense, motherhood, femininity, political and social demands, social norms, sexual stereotypes and gender hierarchies, all served the communist agenda. Consequently, despite the proclaimed gender equality and emancipation on behalf of the Movement, the gender power relations remained intact, as did women's social and political demands. Therefore, women who have called for genuine equality are asked to wait, since the masculine, national goal has not been yet achieved. "Not now, later" is usually the advice to women (Enloe, 1989: 62, cited in Wilford, 1998: 3). In a similar vein, Jayawardena (1986: 259) and Sharoni (1996: 121) poignantly stress that when independence has been achieved and the struggle is over, women are pushed back to their 'accustomed place' and relegated to the margins (cited in Wilford, 1998: 2-3). In this masculine political process of social exclusion and political control of women dissidents, instigated in some cases by both the Right and the Left, what is witnessed is the 'delegitimization of the heroine'.⁴¹⁵

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I argued that, despite the fall of the Communist front and the 1949 defeat, state repression and persecution of the political dissidents not only continued, but also entailed gender-specific complexities. Nevertheless, there was a shift in the character of the exercise of domination in the 1950s, as the executions stopped, the number of the political detainees decreased and a supposed democratisation, along with peace measures, was put into effect. However, a significant and intense terrorisation 'followed' the released female inmates in their effort to reintegrate into the socio-political body. It is noteworthy that, throughout the period of weak democracy, new 'technologies of power',⁴¹⁶ control and persecution appeared to be more repressive and traumatic for women, as they were often instigated not only by the state apparatus, but also by the Communist Party and their former comrades.

At the same time, as both the political and gender identities of prisoners were re-

⁴¹⁵ The term is attributed to Cherifati-Merabtine (1994, cited in Wilford, 1998: 3).

⁴¹⁶ Foucault (1991).

inscribed within the power system of the state that acted as a male body politic, women were unsuccessfully struggling to rejoin civil society. Their fruitless struggle to transform into integrated and acceptable political subjects within civil society was extremely painful, as the stigmatisation of the 'unfit mother' and 'traitor' of the *ethnos* continued. Especially for women, there was a relentless effort to reunite with their estranged family members and restore their personal relationships. Women were dislocated, socially marginalised and politically silenced, as there was no role available to them and they were incapable of serving any cause, for the Nation or the Party. Once again they were disposable, this time in the eyes of both the state and the Communist Party. Consequently, the period of weak democracy needs to be approached as a period of continuous oppression and political persecution resulting in exclusion and trauma, especially for politically active women, in an effort to comprehensively interpret the complex dynamics of the 1946-1974 period, in terms of power relations and gender politics.

Chapter 4

The Female and Political Body in pain: the political persecution and torture of female dissidents during the Greek Military Dictatorship (1967-1974)

4.1 Introduction

The fourth chapter⁴¹⁷ of this thesis concentrates on the gendered characteristics of the political incarceration, terrorisation and sexual torture of female dissidents during the Greek military dictatorship (1967-1974), the third cycle of a political continuum of violence.⁴¹⁸ The 'Revolution to Save the Nation' (*Ethnosotirios Epanastasi*), as the dictators used to call the 1967 *coup d'état*, was a supposedly necessary action in order to protect the country from the 'communist conspiracy' that had taken over the public sector.⁴¹⁹ Within the context of the military junta, a highly nationalist and militaristic regime was once again set in place against the democratic and politically active citizens. For women especially, the Colonels' regime, as a civil war residuum, reinforced a calculated mechanism of persecution and terror that was based on patriarchal and nationalistic narratives, carrying gender-specific markers.

This chapter aims to stress that, although political violence and abuse against female dissidents was not a new phenomenon prior to the 1967-1974 period, state-sponsored violence and sexual torture during the junta was organised and implemented as official state practice, systematised and scientifically performed usually by agents of the armed forces, specially-trained torturers and high-ranking officials. Moreover, emphasis is given to the role of the nationalist rhetoric in connection with the perpetuation and normalisation of state violence, torture and sexual terrorisation of women. Thus, I argue that the ideological framework and nationalist narratives of the regime acted as a vehicle of political annihilation and penalisation, but were above all a correctional mechanism and a method of enforcing traditional social norms and prescribed gender roles within the nation.

The first part of this chapter provides a historical review of the socio-political context of

⁴¹⁷ In the title of this chapter and in the subchapter 4.4, I am paraphrasing Elaine Scarry's well-known and influential study on torture, *The Body in Pain* (1985).

⁴¹⁸ The other two cycles consist of the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) and the period of 'weak democracy' (1950-1967).

⁴¹⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_military_junta_of_1967%E2%80%931974.

the Colonels' coup and discusses, along with the political nature, the ideological and legal structure of the military regime. The initial stage of confining junta's political opponents is approached in relation to the still active para-constitutional framework of the previous periods. This is because national-mindedness and anticommunism re-emerged as a Civil War residue, facilitated by the nationalist ideology that re-traditionalised gender relations and justified the persecution and victimisation of politically suspect citizens. This analysis concentrates on the Colonels' official rhetoric of Greek superiority, traditional family values, norms and institutions that served as a normalising agent for abusing and torturing the unrepentant female dissidents.

The second part of the chapter attempts to reconstruct the traumatic experience of women's internment through the oral accounts and written testimonies of female political detainees and archival resources, focusing on the Yaros and Alikarnassos concentration camps and on the Averof and Korydallos prisons, some of the most notorious incarceration sites. Firstly, I discuss the pre-existing legal framework of internment, while providing some statistical data on political exiles and prisoners during the junta period. The traumatising of female inmates is re-approached through the longstanding power and gender hierarchies, imprinted not only via the actuality of confinement, as imposed by an authoritarian regime, but also by the often oppressive institutional structures of family, religion and the traditionally defined femininity. Expected norms and social behaviour ideals for the politically active women are analysed not only within the dictatorial State and the Colonels' regime, but also in light of the Communist Party's practices and directives, which often implied a restrictive patriarchal stance in terms of gender relations and power hierarchies. Internal Party differences and complex female camaraderie micro-politics are also investigated as sources of traumatising and stigmatising in the prison camps.

The third and final part lies at the core of this chapter's overall argument, as it delineates the gender dynamics of torture and the 'micro technologies of power and terror', mainly within the interrogation and police centres of the junta period, where the power relations and the nationalist ideology of the militaristic system were effectuated. In doing so, I investigate the cases of torture and interrogation as a corollary of a nationalist, anti-communist rhetoric and ideological framework, which facilitated and legitimised torture, sexual abuse and humiliation of female dissidents. In addition to the sites of terror, the role of the torturers and perpetrators of abuse is analysed within the background of extreme militarism and intensified masculinisation. Moreover, the physical, sexual and psychological machinery of terror, the practices of torture against mostly younger women, female students and workers, are also discussed in detail.

The gender and political identity of the female detainees was violated, along with their bodies and psyches, in order to materialise the national triptych of 'patris, thriskeia, oikogeneia' (homeland, religion, family), which embodied the nationalist ideal of the Greek nation, appropriating, at the same, time gender identities and social roles. As traditional assumptions concerning family, gender and sexuality were reintroduced, women were projected as the guardians of the *ethnos* (nation) that was under threat. The sexual abuse of men is also examined within the context of a highly authoritarian and militaristic regime; however, it is argued that it was the torture of women and the female body or the feminised male body that was assigned ethnic, political and religious stigmatisation, moral compliance expectations and, most importantly, nationalist connotations.

4.2 Historical and political context (1967-1974)

The 1967 military coup was tightly connected to the politically turbulent period of the 1950s and 1960s. As Poulantzas (1977) suggests, the Greek dictatorship was a military regime (as were those in Spain and Portugal) and not a fascist one, while the apparatus, when narrowly defined, was authoritarian, based on police and military forces. Although the coup was the outcome of a long period of political instability and turmoil, in addition to the persecution and oppression of leftist citizens, the democratic and leftist forces were caught off guard at dawn of April 21st, 1967.⁴²⁰ Within a few hours, the majority of the leaders of the Left, the Centre, even the Right were arrested, as well as members of the Greek intelligentsia. In the first few hours, 8,000 people, including the Prime Minister, were captured and on the first day of the dictatorship 6,844 people, mostly former political dissidents and well-known members of the Centre and the Left, were deported to the exile island of Yaros. In fact, more than 80,000 citizens were arrested for political reasons throughout the military dictatorship.⁴²¹

The coup was 'justified' by the supposed long-standing Communist threat, while the civil war legal and constitutional framework was almost automatically reactivated.⁴²² As argued by the historian, Kyriaki Kamarinou, the reactivation of Law 509/1947 not only targeted Communist sympathisers, but also any citizen who might be opposed to the regime, as the dissidents were simultaneously deemed to be resisting the social order, not only the dictatorship (2005: 266). The Palace also seemed unprepared and, despite the supposed initial discontent, it adopted a

⁴²⁰ See Clogg (2002: 159).

⁴²¹ For the statistics, see Koundouros (1978: 26-40), Alivizatos (1995: 603-607), Kamarinou (2005), Voglis (2004).

⁴²² Koundouros (1978: 19-20).

neutral stance.

The coup of April 21st, 1967, called by the Colonels a 'National Revolution', was carried out by a group of mid-ranking officers who had been preparing to overthrow the state since the early 1950s.⁴²³ Additionally, even though it was officially denied, there was a connection between the dictatorial regime and former Nazi collaborators, who managed to obtain important posts under the regime (Clogg, 1972: 118). At the same time, a large informal network of associates and assistants operated during the dictatorship, turning in, terrorising, even torturing socially and politically suspect citizens.⁴²⁴

The Greek army, as the victor of the civil conflict, was projected as the 'guarantor' of the *ethnos* (nation) and the guardian of the traditional Greek values; the contest for the guardianship and preservation of the nation was, however, a civil war ideological endowment. In fact, the political scientist, Dimitris Haralambis argues that the army was not only the guarantor of the system, but mainly the guarantor of the 'essence' of the *ethnos* (1999: 81). In this framework, the armed forces were characterised by the Vice-President of the military government and Minister of Internal Affairs, Stylianos Patakos, as "guardians of the sacred love for the fatherland, faith in Christ, devotion to the institution of the family" (Clogg, 1976: 82). Consequently, as the nation was supposedly under threat, the armed forces needed to secure its continuation with all the available resources and mechanisms of violence, thus enabling the persecution, punishment and terrorisation of the socially and politically suspect citizens.

In the seven years of dictatorship, democratic activists and protesters, as well as former (from the Civil War period) political prisoners and exiles, were once again persecuted, incarcerated, and abused. According to James Becket, the American attorney who was representing Amnesty International in Greece at the time, at least two thousand people were tortured (1997: 31).⁴²⁵ The Colonels' Dictatorship was an oppressive regime that carried out deliberate and well-calculated practices to suppress the civil rights of citizens through the Security Police (*Asphalia*) and the Greek Military Police (ESA).⁴²⁶ Male and female dissidents, political opponents and politically non-affiliated citizens were systematically beaten, maltreated and harassed. This led to a 'psychology of fear' that was reactivated immediately after the coup and affected both men and women. During the military dictatorship, female participation in the anti-junta movement and political activism was intense, as were the mechanisms of political

⁴²³ In fact, General Karanikos, during the Dictatorship Trials, testified that the initial coup took place in 1951 and was linked to the secret military organisation IDEA (Sacred Bond of Greek Officers); see Karagiorgas (2003: 261-263).

⁴²⁴ See Tsoukalas (1981).

⁴²⁵ According to Becket, this is a conservative estimate.

⁴²⁶ Indicatively, see Becket (1968, 1997) and "Human Rights in Greece 1973" (Amnesty International) and *The Black Book* (1971, 1972).

terrorisation and suppression used against them.

In 1973, “Greece’s repressive post-civil war socio-political system almost came to a halt” (Kassimeris, 2005: 745). In March and November of that year, the dictatorial regime was challenged by mass demonstrations and protests by the Department of Law of the University of Athens and the Athens Polytechnic School. Although the events lasted for only a few days, the revolt managed to severely challenge the military regime and catalysed popular mobilisation within Greek society, as thousands of workers and students were mobilised in a student protest against an authoritarian educational system that rapidly escalated into a general political uprising against the junta (Kassimeris, 2005: 746). Nevertheless, the student uprisings and social agitation led to a violent suppression and the takeover by a hardliner, Dimitris Ioannidis, also known as the invisible dictator, who served as the Commander in Chief of the Military Police (ESA). Ioannidis instigated a new wave of terrorism, arrests and torture, which remained active until the fall of the regime in July 1974.

With regard to the nature of the system, the constitutionalist Aristovoulos Manesis argues that the Colonels’ coup was an authentic authoritarian regime, based on anomy, while the boundaries between legality and illegality were blurred and fluid (1999: 51). Moreover, the citizens were politically and legally unprotected against “a widespread, illegal and organised violence” that continued unflinchingly until the fall of the dictatorship (Manesis, 1999: 51). As in other authoritarian regimes and during the period of the Greek Civil War, the invisible and widely defined ‘internal enemies’ were charged with crimes that were not committed, transforming them into *de facto* criminal prisoners, punished for their ideas and beliefs and not for any criminal acts (Manesis, 1999: 51; Koundouros, 1978: 27).

In a similar way, Nicos Poulantzas (1977) describes the Greek junta as authoritarian; historians and social scientists have also compared the regime with Latin American dictatorships.⁴²⁷ Nonetheless, recent studies suggest that the regime was neither ‘bureaucratic-authoritarian’, as were the Latin-American dictatorships, nor ‘fascist’, given “the absence of organised corporatist institutions” (Tzortzis, 2003: 2). In contrast with other dictatorships, including the Latin American regimes, the police enjoyed unrestricted authority over Greek citizens. Nevertheless, there are noteworthy similarities with other military juntas, especially with the Argentinean dictatorship (1976-1983), in which the practices of terror and the nature of abuse, especially during internment and torture, were similar to the Greek case, despite the differences in the extent and methods of state-sponsored violence, such as the disappearances

⁴²⁷ Poulantzas (1977) characterises the Greek dictatorship as an authoritarian regime, but the historian Kyriaki Kamarinou describes it as a Latin-American dictatorship (2005: 266). Mouzelis (1986) also approaches the Greek junta as bureaucratic authoritarianism.

and kidnappings. In addition, the rationale and justification for the perpetuating violence of the supposedly subversive citizens in the Latin-American dictatorships was based on the doctrine of 'national security'; the Greek dictators also activated this precept (Haritos-Fatouros, 2003: 22-23). Furthermore, with regard to gender violence and sexual terrorisation, in both cases the nationalist rhetoric, the traditional norms of femininity and religious discourse, rationalised state torturous acts, executed by specially-trained tormentors, transforming them into a routine.⁴²⁸ A 'culture of terror' was thus formed, appropriating gender roles and national identities in order for a new, healthy, purified national body to be created (Taylor, 1997: 151).

Richard Clogg (1976: 81) approaches the ideological structure of the dictatorship as a series of pseudo-ideologies, integrated with the Colonels' official rhetoric and further articulated by the ideological representatives of the regime. Similarly, the *Guardian*, in the leading article "Greece of the Sergeant-Majors" on February 17th, 1973, argues that the coup did not take the form of the proclaimed Revolution because of the absence of ideology and broad support from the conservative political spectrum ("Human Rights in Greece 1973", Amnesty International). The ideological structure of the regime was primarily set on the para-constitutional framework of the Civil War and the weak democracy period. However, the dictators realised that the presumed Communist insurgency would not provide a "sufficient justification for the indefinite prolongation of the dictatorship", and the supposed Communist danger was soon abandoned in the official rhetoric (Clogg, 1972: 114). Nonetheless, the existing ideological context proved sufficient for the long-standing anti-communist propaganda and the normalisation of violence against the dissidents and communist sympathisers, while at the same time, it cultivated a climate of tolerance and impunity.

The residue of the civil war classification between the Greeks and the Communists, as the political 'other', was therefore ethnicised and reactivated by junta rhetoric in order to justify the persecution, oppression and torture of the suspected citizens. General Thrasyvoulos Tsakalotos, one of the junta's ideological instructors, stated in November 1968 through the Greek newspaper *Vradini* that the classification between the Greeks and the Communists would remain, as would "the call to all those who were born Greek to stay alert with the finger on the trigger" against the Communist threat (Papadimitriou, 2008: 154). In the same context, the Lieutenant Colonel and Commandant of the Military Police, Ioannis Ladas, attributes the affliction of Hellenism "both as an idea and as a biological entity", to Communists (Meletopoulos, 1996: 186). Ladas perceives the two opposing poles, the Communists and the Greeks, not as two different ideological schemes, but also on the basis of racial differences. He

⁴²⁸ For more on the Argentinean Dirty War and gender violence, see Taylor (1997: 45) and Actis *et al.* (2006: 127).

proclaims:

The differences between the Greeks and the Communists are not ideological differences, but differences in blood. The Communist problem in Greece...is situated on the basis: Greeks or Communists [...] in the geographical area, Greece, there is no room for both of us. Either we the Greeks stay or the Communists (Meletopoulos, 1996: 186).

He also goes back to the Civil War, urging people “never to forget the victims, the dead call for the avenger-justice” (Meletopoulos, 1996: 187).

The civil war period and the political instability of the 1950s and 1960s were very often mentioned in the regime’s rhetoric, connecting the military junta to an ongoing period of political and moral decay and chaos.⁴²⁹ The narrative of the bloodstained Civil War did more than that; it was a constant alibi for the ongoing persecution and abuse. Similar nationalist narratives were also employed during the Greek Civil War, but when the dichotomy of the Greek and the atheist, dangerous Communist is set on the basis of a racial difference by the Commander of the Military Police, it acquires a different meaning; the ethnic difference was essentialised and emphasised in order to appropriate the ongoing violence.⁴³⁰

Consequently, in comparison to the nationalist propaganda of the Civil War period, during the military junta national-mindedness and anticommunism were not only encompassed in the public discourse, but were transformed into official state practices. The non-Greek dissident, unworthy of living, emerged in most of the cases of torture and abuse; in this respect, the dictators’ proclamations, the rhetoric of the nation, the Greek race and ‘true’ Greeks acted as a discursive mechanism of legitimacy and justification that was enacted in the torture and abuse of the dissidents. Concurrently, the persecution, repression and torture of the leftist citizens was not based on a vague quest for a scapegoat, but was an effort to morally, mentally and physically exterminate, exemplify and punish those who supposedly threatened the nation, the security and the morals of the Greek people. As part of Amnesty International’s investigation into torture in Greece, Stylianos Patakos denied evidence of torture, apparently on the basis that the victims are Communists and therefore not Greek. He stated: “You force me to say it. The Greek Government has to protect its people against its communist enemies. A communist is not a Greek. We must put our own security first” (“Torture of Political Prisoners in Greece”, Amnesty International).

On the basis of the aforementioned national-mindedness and extreme anticommunism,

⁴²⁹ For more on the ideology of the junta regime, see Meletopoulos (1996), Papadimitriou (2008, 2010), Clogg (1972, 1976).

⁴³⁰ Meletopoulos (1996: 184-200) has analysed Ladas’ anticommunist, nationalist and traditionalist rhetoric; also see Clogg (1976: 88-89)

the official rhetoric of the junta was traditionalist, stressing the special features of the Greek race, the importance of family and the other traditional Greek values and institutions.⁴³¹ With that in mind, in his official statements, Stylianos Patakos promulgated and formalised the idea that the nation was threatened by Communists and Slavs and, in this way, the April 21st Revolution acted as a guardian of morality and the intellectual legacy of Hellenism (Papadimitriou, 2008: 155). In fact, during a national anniversary, Patakos underlined the ethnic superiority of the pure Greeks by reporting that “today's ceremony is a re-baptism in the well springs of ancestral tradition; an expression of the national belief that the race of the Greeks is the greatest and best under the sun” (Clogg, 2002: 160).⁴³² The importance of the notions of nation (*ethnos*), morality and tradition is not only apparent in the junta rhetoric, but also in the 1968 constitution and the 1973 revision. The basis was set in the 1952 Constitution, but the upcoming constitutional texts in numerous articles also recognised the superiority of the Greek and Christian civilisation, the national creed and the traditions of the Greeks (Alivizatos, 1995: 640-641). Within this framework, as a system of repressive mechanisms was in effect, one of the junta's instigators proclaimed that “the tortures are necessary for the protection of our civilisation” (Anastasiadis, 2008: 173).

The still active civil war nationalist paradigm of ‘*patris, thriskeia, oikogeneia*’ (homeland, religion, family) was thus re-institutionalised and took a prominent role in the Colonels’ official rhetoric. The national triptych that went hand in hand with nationalism during the civil conflict throughout the junta was updated, expanded and ideologised. This is demonstrated by Georgios Papadopoulos who, on his first speech as the leader of the junta, justified the National Revolution as necessary due to political instability, corruption, anarchy and moral recession.⁴³³ Moreover, he perceived the new government as a ‘catharsis’ from the past and the instigators as ‘predicants’ of an improved moral order (Meletopoulos, 1996: 179). Within the imposed system of power hierarchies, as articulated in the moralistic state rhetoric, women carried gender connotations, ethnic barriers and national symbolisms that had to be regulated.

The Professor of Constitutional Law, Nikos Alivizatos, argues that the difference between state political terrorism during the military dictatorship and the Civil War period is mainly qualitative not quantitative (1995: 611). Within the civil and post-civil war context, gender violence and sexual terrorisation were also widely employed, organised through an oppressive

⁴³¹ For more on the ideology of the official discourse of the military regime, as articulated primarily by Colonel Georgios Papadopoulos as the Prime Minister, see Papadimitriou (2008: 153-156; 2010: 105-114) and Meletopoulos (1996: 155-183); also see Clogg (1972, 1976).

⁴³² Patakos was referring to the national day of October 28th, 1940, when Ioannis Metaxas (Prime Minister and dictator) refused the Greek unconditional surrender and occupation to Mussolini.

⁴³³ Meletopoulos (1996: 155-183) analyses Papadopoulos’ first speech.

state apparatus against female former partisans or political activists. Gender violence and sexual abuse were widespread, not always state-organised, but officially tolerated as the perpetrators were often paramilitary agents, especially in the countryside. Furthermore, paternalistic attitudes, gender norms and power hierarchies along with extreme nationalism fuelled this type of violence and 'facilitated' torturous acts with distinct ethnic parameters and gender characteristics in various camps and prisons where the victims were in many cases underage men and women. During the military dictatorship, violence against the politically active population and torture were systematically exercised and officially implemented as state practice, while sexual degradation and terror became a structural element of detention and interrogation. The inscribed gender patterns and nationalist expectations were once again revived and, within a highly militaristic regime and a still-conservative society, were intensified two decades after the civil strife.

Following this rationale, it is the nature and process of torture and interrogation which differentiates this period, both in relation to the machinery employed and the practices and scientific methods that were exercised. Most importantly, the torture of the female body is analysed in relation to the revival of gender stereotypes and expectations, embodying the nationalist ideals of the regime, acting at the same time as a discursive mechanism of rationalisation and internalisation of the perpetuated abuse. Violence against women during the civil war period is not treated in the present study as a consequence, a by-product of war, but it is examined as a constituent element of the nationalist project of the period and as part of a hierarchical gender structure of specific social roles and imposed gender stereotypes and norms. Similarly, gender violence during the military dictatorship is also examined under the scope of the resurgence of nationalist discourse and its associated power relations and gender hierarchies. Hence, the re-appropriation of gender identities, the control of sexuality and the hierarchical social relations, within the nationalist project of the junta, rationalised and naturalised the victimisation and terrorisation of the dissidents, specifically the unrepentant and socially 'uncontrollable' women. These women were not only perceived as political opponents of the junta, but of the envisioned nation as a whole, challenging the repressive gender binaries and the restricting social locus of the private domain. Moreover, women political activists were perceived as a symbolic threat to morality, tradition and religion, thus to all the constituent elements of the *ethnos*.

Furthermore, interrogation and torture, was conducted using scientifically tested methods, handled by specially-trained perpetrators, under the auspices of the official state apparatus and the army. The officers and soldiers of the armed forces were exposed to

anticommunist propaganda and nationalist rhetoric during their military service and training at the Military Police Training Centre (KESA); within this hyper-masculine and militaristic culture, the role of nationalism proved to be particularly effective, facilitating their transformation into official torturers.⁴³⁴ The sexual abuse of political activists, both male and female, was not only tolerated, but also officially regulated and exercised.⁴³⁵ Moreover, the victims of gender violence during the junta were politically active women, not only communists or leftists, but also centrists or of a more conservative political background, younger in age, students, workers, and professionals with an integrated political identity, but whose social roles and political 'self' was constantly placed under negotiation and control as part of a repressive and nationalist framework and a moralistic discourse.

4.3 The political persecution and confinement of female dissidents

According to Amnesty International and the British Organisation, *League for Democracy in Greece*, in the first few days of the 1967 coup 8,270 citizens were detained; in the Yaros camp, the political exiles numbered 6,138, including more than 200 women.⁴³⁶ In addition to the political exiles, a significant number of dissidents were imprisoned and detained without a trial, interrogated and tortured by the military and police forces (Koundouros, 1978: 27). Although there are no official statistics with regard to the total number of detained (imprisoned and exiled), interrogated and tortured citizens, historians and researchers of the period estimate 80,000 to be realistic.⁴³⁷ The Colonels' Regime announced that 6,509 citizens were detained in the first few days, and Patakos, as the Minister of Interior in December 1969, proclaimed that the government, which was never referred to as a dictatorship, was human, liberal and democratic, while adding that "it is true that we arrest those who agitate too much but we do not interfere with their liberty" (Clogg, 1972: 116).

4.3.1 Contextualising political persecution

Roussos Koundouros (1978: 23) provides a useful classification of the types of internment for the 1967-1974 period. The first consists of the significant number of political exiles that were

⁴³⁴ For more, see Haritos-Fatouros (2003, especially pp. 23-25, 38-65, 133-134).

⁴³⁵ Also see the "Survey of Political Imprisonment", July 1972, Amnesty International, p. 2.

⁴³⁶ The numbers are provided by Koundouros (1978: 24-30) and Alivizatos (1995: 603-606); also see Kamarinou (2005).

⁴³⁷ Koundouros (1978: 24) also agrees that there are no general official statistics in relation to the detainees. However, a few governmental sources and information from international and humanitarian organisations include numbers so some conclusions can be drawn; also see Alivizatos (1995, especially p. 605).

arrested in the first days or months of the junta and were deported to the exile camps of Yaros, Leros, Oropos and to other exile sites. A noteworthy number of arrests also took place without any charge, resulting in the indefinite detention (from days to months) and interrogation of the arrested dissidents. Lastly, approximately 2,000 people were sentenced by a court martial based on Compulsory Law 509/1947.

As there were no legal boundaries, the political repression of the 1967 regime was unauthorised. The police practices entailed arrests, followed by deportation or detention without a warrant of arrest (Alivizatos, 1995: 603). The Colonels, in order to maintain a human face, masked their repressive practices under a veneer of legality. In addition to that the Colonels' dictatorship, similar to other dictatorial regimes, equated the *ethnos* with themselves, since they perceived themselves as a projection of the nation (Koundouros, 1978: 21). On this ground, Compulsory Law 509 of 1947 was deliberately interpreted as an attempt to overthrow the overall existing social order, while it also provided the legal basis for the persecution of communists, communist sympathisers and all democratic citizens who could be viewed as opposing the regime.⁴³⁸

In April 1971, cases under Law 509 were transferred to ordinary criminal courts; however, a number of exceptions applied; for example, cases involving public order and security and the use of explosives remained under the jurisdiction of the Special Courts-Martial.⁴³⁹ There was also the notable case of Amalia Fleming who was tried in September 1971 by a military tribunal, despite the fact that the majority of those charged under Law 509 had been tried by civilian courts since 1971.⁴⁴⁰ A similar paradox was put into effect with regard to martial law, which was in force until January 1st, 1972. Although martial law was abolished on paper, it remained in effect throughout 1972 for the areas of Athens, Piraeus and Thessaloniki and still existed in 1973 in Athens and Piraeus, the most populated areas of the country.⁴⁴¹

In relation to the legal status of the deportees, the legislation went back as far as 1929 (law for robbery and animal theft). Additionally, the new Compulsory Law 165/1967 established that deportations were under the jurisdiction of the Security Committees (*Epitropes Asfaleias*), which could arrest suspect citizens and deport them without a specific charge or try them as

⁴³⁸ Law 509 was ratified in December 1947 in order to dissolve the Communist Party; it charged individuals with the "imposition of ideas whose avowed aim is the overthrow by violence of the existing constitutional or social order or the cession of any part of the national territory or who by any means advocates the implementation of such ideas" (1973: 12, "Human Rights in Greece 1973", Amnesty International Report). Also see Koundouros (1978: 20, 22).

⁴³⁹ See "Speaker's Note on Greek Political Prisoners", January 1st, 1973, p.2, *League for Democracy*.

⁴⁴⁰ Amalia Fleming was a doctor and an activist; she was also the second wife of Sir Alexander Fleming, who discovered penicillin. For more information on the legal framework and the judicial procedure under the military regime, see the "Survey of Political Imprisonment", July 1972, Amnesty International.

⁴⁴¹ For more information on the legal framework of the 1967-1973 period, see "Human Rights in Greece 1973", Amnesty International Report, p.6.

dangerous for public order and security (Koundouros, 1978: 25). Administrative deportation was officially abolished at the end of 1971, but revived in May 1972.⁴⁴² In actuality, the practice of administrative deportation ended after the official closure of the concentration camps under public and international pressure, but was re-activated on a smaller scale after November 1973, as a response to the Polytechnic Movement, until the fall of the regime in July 1974 (Koundouros, 1978: 26). The majority of the political exiles were officially confined as a result of administrative deportation and not a court decision.⁴⁴³ In addition to the political exiles, the significant and unspecified number of dissidents who were detained and interrogated in the police stations and interrogation units, such as the notorious Special Interrogation Unit of the Greek Military Police (EAT/ESA), should be kept in mind.

Exile, but mainly imprisonment, was the result of a long lasting and painful interrogation and detention in isolation that usually lasted for several months without a charge or trial of the accused. The interrogation entailed physical abuse, sexual insinuations and threats, solitary confinement and extreme pressure to denounce Communism. It was, in fact, during the interrogation and in the interrogation and police centres that the most horrendous cases of abuse and terrorisation took place.

What is significantly different about the 1967-1974 period is the fact that, in contrast with the Greek Civil War, the dissidents of the junta period were mostly students, workers and members of the middle class; this resulted in a significant differentiation in terms of social stratum and educational level.⁴⁴⁴ This differentiation in terms of social stratification became evident in the early 1960s, when more women began to work and study and joined student and youth organisations, such as the 'Lambrakides'. Nevertheless, the tentative entry of women into the workforce (often dictated by need) and into university education did not signal a change in the prevailing traditional attitudes in terms of gender conformity. Therefore, despite the differences in terms of participation in various political anti-junta organisations, the gender order remained intact, setting the scene for this distinct continuation of gender violence, political terrorisation and sexual abuse.

4.3.2 Women in political exile

Yaros concentration camp

Yaros had remarkably been used as an exile site from the Roman period and was one of the

⁴⁴² See "Human Rights in Greece 1973", Amnesty International Report, p. 14.

⁴⁴³ See Koundouros (1978: 26-27) and Alivizatos (1995: 603-604, 606).

⁴⁴⁴ See Amnesty International Report "Human Rights in Greece 1973", the "Survey of Political Imprisonment", and Koundouros (1978: 33-35).

notorious camps of the Greek Civil War until 1953. It also operated in the early 1960s as a concentration camp and was the main exile site of the junta. According to the report on the “Situation in Greece” submitted by Amnesty International, at the end of January 1968, 240 women were detained at the Yaros camp. However, the number of women detainees cannot be specified with great accuracy; nevertheless, according to women’s written and oral accounts and the lists of the Yaros’ Gendarmerie Directorship, the number as of April 26th, 1967, seems to be slightly higher than Amnesty International’s claim, probably between 260-300.⁴⁴⁵ The Amnesty International report notes that the majority of the political detainees were arrested based on security files that were prepared twenty years previously.⁴⁴⁶ Since the pressure to sign a loyalty oath was continuous and as intense as during the civil war period, those who did not sign were not only confined, but also deprived of their political and civil rights.

Youlia Linardatou, who was among the first to be arrested by the junta, recalls the horrifying few days of her detention in the racetrack (*Ippodromos*) in Athens, before their deportation to Yaros. The detainees, who had been exiled during the Civil War, were afraid that they would be sent once again to Makronisos. Youlia describes the climate of fear and agony on the night of their deportation regarding their final destination as they were piled into trucks.⁴⁴⁷ She explains “when we arrived at the Skaramagas’ shipyard, we realised that we were going to be sent to Yaros, and our heart was warm again” (Interview, March 11th, 2010). Women seemed to be relieved that they were not going to be sent to Makronisos; on the other hand, men who were exiled to Yaros in the Civil War period carry horrifying memories pertaining to their detention on the island.⁴⁴⁸

The majority of the political detainees at the Yaros concentration camp were aged 40 to 50, were politically active and had also been, in several cases, exiled or imprisoned during the Civil War.⁴⁴⁹ That was also the case for female political exiles; most had an integrated political identity, had previously been incarcerated and were mostly workers and professionals. Students and younger women were arrested and usually held in the police and interrogation centres, where they were horribly tortured. There were a few cases of students who were sent to the

⁴⁴⁵ Eleni Faliaga-Papanikolaou (1989), in her memoir-documentation, provides a list of the names of female and male detainees, based on the lists of the Yaros’ Gendarmerie Directorship; the total number of female exiles listed is 296. Margarita Kotsaki states that 260 women were detained at Yaros (1987: 88). Fani Manolkidou-Vetta, in her memoir, estimates that there were approximately 300 women (1997: 174).

⁴⁴⁶ See Amnesty International Report “Human Rights in Greece”.

⁴⁴⁷ Interview granted March 11th, 2010, Athens.

⁴⁴⁸ Interview with Youlia Linardatou granted March 11th, 2010, Athens. Other dissidents have also described the overall fear of the unknown site of internment. See the interview with Zoe Xenaki (July 24th, 2009, Athens). Neni Panourgia (2009: 98-99) describes a similar story, from a male viewpoint, narrated by the actor and political exile Tzavalas Karousos.

⁴⁴⁹ Neni Panourgia supports this argument (2009); also see the interview with Youlia Linardatou, March 11th, 2010, Athens.

Yaros camp after spending several months in the various interrogation centres of the Security and Military Police. One of these cases was that of Zoe Xenaki, who was arrested and detained for two and a half months in solitary confinement in the Security Police Station; as the officers and interrogators failed to obtain a declaration, she was sent into exile.⁴⁵⁰

Women were detained at the Yaros concentration camp for 16 months and, due to the Red Cross appeals, the overall international outcry and the supposed democratisation of the regime, the camp closed down in the summer of 1973. However, it re-opened in February 1974 under the new leadership of Ioannides and operated as a prison camp for 44 political detainees until the fall of the dictatorship on July 24th, 1974.⁴⁵¹ The living conditions were extremely harsh in this arid and windy island, as were the repressive mechanisms employed against the political exiles, such as propaganda, censorship and strict surveillance.

Female political exiles recall their first impression of the prison building, which has been characterised as the Greek 'Dachau'.⁴⁵² Maria Karagiorgi, a political detainee since 1939, exiled at Yaros and a member of the Greek Parliament, describes:

The prisons were designed in such a way as to provoke fear from the first glance: the endless corridor, the wards with the walled courtyards and the enormous doors [...] the wide dark wards with the tall openings in order for the armed guards to supervise the interior [...] those are just a few of all the things that someone instantly records. Soon, we would discover the rats, the lack of water [...] the lack of hygiene, the snow and rain entering the chambers from the ceiling opening in the winter and many other everyday deficiencies (2007: 209).

As more than 250 women were forced to live in only four wards, space was very limited and women literally lived right next to each other.⁴⁵³ Furthermore, the medical treatment in the camp was very poor; a few medical students, nurses and doctors who were exiled tried to mostly treat the old political exiles with long-standing diseases which were related to hardships caused by internment, malnutrition and lack of medication.

Women initially slept on the floor, but over the first few days they made straw mattresses, cleaned the wards and their cells, which had been uninhabited since the early 1950s, and tried to organise their lives. As pointed out by female dissidents, the only way to

⁴⁵⁰ For further information, see her interview granted on July 24th, 2009 in Athens.

⁴⁵¹ Brigadier Dimitris Ioannides organised and enforced a counter-coup in November 25th, 1973 against the Colonels' dictatorship. Ioannides took advantage of the Polytechnic uprising and the supposed liberalisation of Papadopoulos' regime in order to justify the counter-coup. In relation to the number of detainees, see Koundouros (1978) and the article "During April's Dictatorship" by Dimitris Sarantakos in the Greek Newspaper *Kathimerini* (November 16th, 2003).

⁴⁵² Anna Teriaki-Solomou (2004: 150) compared the Yaros Prison to Dachau as something dreadful, despite the fact she has never been there; so does Maria Karagiorgi in her memoir (2007: 209, 229).

⁴⁵³ For more information on the living conditions in Yaros, see the interviews with Youlia Linardatou, March 11th, 2010, Athens, *Eleftheria Ganiti*, September 26th, 2009, Yaros island and Zoe Xenaki, July 24th, 2009, Athens.

survive in the internment camps was through the 'force' of self-organisation.⁴⁵⁴ The winters in Yaros have also been described as particularly harsh and Zoe Xenaki, who was deported in June 1968 to the camp, considers herself lucky not to have experienced the winter of 1967, during which women went crazy because of the cold.⁴⁵⁵

Similarly, a number of restrictions were applied in order to break the spirit of the detainees, such as the prohibition of correspondence and sudden transfers to other camps and prisons. Visits to Yaros were not allowed and correspondence was censored and occasional.⁴⁵⁶ Accordingly, communication with male exiles was very limited and usually occurred only in the courtyard.⁴⁵⁷ As expected, the propaganda was constant. Eleftheria Ganiti, a political exile, recalls the loudspeakers that were used throughout the day for indoctrination based on paternalistic rhetoric and traditional notions of femininity shouting: "Come quickly, you should leave, go to your home, to your children, where you belong" (Interview, September 26th, 2009, Yaros).⁴⁵⁸ The gender roles were prescribed and entailed motherhood and the return to the household. Women as the guardians of the ancestral values of the Greek nation were expected to return to the private sphere and to stay away from any sort of political activity.

Fani Manolkidou-Vetta (1997) states that, during this period, women who had been incarcerated in their twenties during the Greek Civil War had now reached their forties, with families and children whom they had to leave behind. Anna Teriaki-Solomou was also tormented by the fact that she had to take her four-year-old son, Makis, with her, since there was no one to take care of him. Consequently, she constantly questioned herself as a mother (2004: 150). Makis stayed for two months in the camp, but both mother and child were feeling insecure and frightened by the continuous pressure of the Camp Directorship. Coercion to repent was not only applied to Anna, but to the other women as well, many of whom were pressured by their own families and relatives to sign the declarations in order to be released, usually due to constant harassment by the authorities. Female dissidents were often forced to leave their children with unsuitable relatives; when they were released from prison and exile, they found their children were often aggressive or estranged.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁴ Maria Karagiorgi makes this comment in her memoir (2007) and Dora Koulmanda-Kallipoliti mentioned it during our interview (interview granted July 29th, 2010, Athens).

⁴⁵⁵ Interview granted July 24th, 2009, Athens.

⁴⁵⁶ There was one exception, however; according to Zoe Xenaki, one visitation was allowed to Yaros, instead of the island of Syros where the visitations usually took place, and in fact her sister visited her (Interview granted July 24th, 2009, Athens).

⁴⁵⁷ This is the comment that Zoe Xenaki made in our interview (July 24th, 2009, Athens), but it will be discussed later in greater detail (section 4.3.4).

⁴⁵⁸ Also see Margarita Kotsaki's memoir, in which she talks about the propaganda that took place in the Yaros exile camp.

⁴⁵⁹ Maria Diplou had to leave her two children with their blind grandmother and both Anna Solomou and Eleftheria

During this period, the gender hierarchies were not only articulated by the state, but also by the husbands or the parents of the incarcerated women. The expected political stance was to refuse to sign a Declaration of Repentance which deviated from their own ideological creed, but in most cases it was a difficult decision, as women struggled not only with their everyday difficulties, but were also alienated from their families and tormented by guilt and trauma. Eleftheria Ganiti, when arrested, had just given birth to her daughter; her mother pressured her to sign a Declaration of Repentance, claiming that her child would otherwise end up in an orphanage. Even though Eleftheria did not sign the declaration and has tried to rationalise her mother's stance by stressing that her mother was a widow and her own husband was also exiled, she still carries the guilt and the emotional cost of her decisions at the time.⁴⁶⁰ What again becomes apparent, and is also elaborated in previous chapters, is the long-lasting experience of persecution and internment, since state interventions, inhibitory mechanisms, exile sites and detention centres were re-institutionalised and re-activated during the junta. In the case of women, in addition to the generalised social stigmatisation of the leftists, gender markers differentiated their traumatising, based on the predominant power hierarchies and social norms as indicated by the family, the State and the Party.

The Alikarnassos prison camp

After spending almost a year and a half in the exile camp of Yaros, women were transferred on August 29th, 1968 to the Alikarnassos Agricultural Prisons in Crete, where they stayed for approximately two years.⁴⁶¹ Alikarnassos Prisons were located in a populated area and some dissidents considered that to be a pleasant change in comparison to the previous remote and barren exile sites.⁴⁶² However, this time, women were prisoners in every respect and not simply exiles, since they were locked in small cells and only permitted to spend two hours per day outdoors in the yard.⁴⁶³ According to the archival sources, 168 women were transferred to the Alikarnassos Prison camp; Maria Karagiorgi (2007: 269), stated in her memoir that 250 women

Ganiti state that, initially, their children were either aggressive or did not recognise them on their return. For more on the troubling relationship between the exiled mothers and their children, see Solomou (2004: 151), Manolkidou-Vetta (1997: 175) and the interviews with Ganiti (September 26th, 2009, Yaros) and Hatzisava (February 7th, 2009, Athens).

⁴⁶⁰ See the interview with Eleftheria Ganiti, September 26th, 2009, Yaros island.

⁴⁶¹ Again the exact period of detention in both camps cannot be specified with great accuracy. Margarita Kotsaki (1987: 91) states in her memoir that women stayed for two years in Alikarnassos Prisons, where in fact Anna Teriaki-Solomou (2004: 151) argues that they were exiled for two and a half years.

⁴⁶² See Iro Hatzi's memoir (2002: 80-81).

⁴⁶³ For more, see the memorandum and letter from the women political prisoners in Alikarnassos prison camp that can be found in *The Black Book* (1971: 161-165), consulted in the Modern Greek Archive of King's College London Archives.

were imprisoned in Alikarnassos, but the actual number is probably closer to 170.⁴⁶⁴

The Alikarnassos Prison was a building with tall, steel-clad windows comprising two floors and was situated in the centre of the Heraklion city in Crete.⁴⁶⁵ Political prisoners were permitted visits only a year after their incarceration and then only once every three months; criminal prisoners, on the other hand, were allowed five visits per week. There was also a noteworthy increase in the occurrence of diseases. As the women political prisoners state “the dictatorship does all this to make us give in. It strikes at us with all these means because we refuse to sign the humiliating declaration of submission which it keeps demanding of us, because we uphold our militant honor and human dignity” (*The Black Book*, 1971: 162-163).

The life of women in Alikarnassos improved in some ways, as the location of the prisons in a populated area meant better medical treatment if necessary, and easier access for their families. Additionally, relatives and international organisations could send food and clothing more frequently. Iro Hatzi, a doctor and political internee in the Alikarnassos prison camp, describes the transfer as a relief, since they were able to listen to and watch the locals from behind bars (2002: 80). Even so, as Fani Manolkidou-Vetta states, the main thing missing was their freedom and the fact that they had to suffer the injustice of their internment (1997: 188). Coercion regarding the signing of loyalty oaths continued and this constant pressure caused the older women cadres, who had spent many years in exile, moral and political mortification.

All female dissidents, in relation to their detention in the Alikarnassos Prisons, comment that they were turned from political exiles into prisoners, despite never being charged. According to a letter sent by female political prisoners, women had already been imprisoned for a year when they were informed that their detention would be prolonged by another year, without appeal.⁴⁶⁶ Therefore, they considered themselves to be hostages for an indefinite period, and they stress the fact that the military regime was trying to hide the existence of the Alikarnassos prison camp; on the contrary, the male concentration camp of Leros was publicly discussed more often and to a larger extent.⁴⁶⁷

Maria Karagiorgi argues that their inhumane treatment was planned; women were detained in a dark building, without any communication and were locked in their cells. She

⁴⁶⁴ According to a memorandum sent by the Alikarnassos female political prisoners, which can be found in the digital archive of the *Association of Imprisoned and Exiled Resistance-Fighters 1967-1974* (SFEA) in Athens and in *The Black Book* (1971: 161-162), 168 women were imprisoned in Alikarnassos.

⁴⁶⁵ More information can be found in a hand-written letter by the imprisoned women in the Alikarnassos prison camp (November 4th, 1968, SFEA, digital archive) and in *The Black Book* (1971: 161-165). Also see the descriptions of the prison camp by the political dissident Iro Hatzi (2002).

⁴⁶⁶ For more, see the letter and memorandum of women political detainees in Alikarnassos Prisons (*The Black Book*, 1971: 161-165, especially pp. 164-165).

⁴⁶⁷ Maria Karagiorgi, a political exile, makes this comment (2007: 269), but more information can be found in *The Black Book* (1971: 164-165).

opines that the inhumanity of the internment sites intended to break the morale of the dissidents (2007: 270). Most women were released on August 16th, 1970, but ten of them were transferred to other camps such as the Oropos Agricultural Prisons in Athens and to various areas of the Peloponnese, where they stayed for approximately four months.⁴⁶⁸ A regime of enforced residence was imposed on these deported women, who lived under strict police surveillance until the end of 1971. The condition of enforced residence entailed arrest and deportation to various areas across the country without charge or trial, since they were alleged to be “dangerous to public order and security” (“Speaker’s Note on Greek Political Prisoners”, Amnesty International).

Similarly, Fani Manolkidou-Vetta describes her incarceration at Alikarnassos Prison as noticeably different and harsher than all the other camps, since the exiled women were no longer the twenty-year old, often politically immature women who had been exiled to the various civil war exile camps (1997: 188). There was also a troubling uncertainty in relation to how long the dictatorship would last; women were facing health and family issues, closely connected to their enduring internment. Most importantly, the 1968 split of the Greek Communist Party, resulting in two branches: the Interior and Exterior, caused a great deal of alienation and emptiness in relation to the Communist Movement, but also with regard to their comrades. Against this background, when Tasia Glezou, who openly disagreed with the Party’s fractionalisation into two branches, was about to be released from Alikarnassos Prisons, her co-prisoners who remained loyal to the official Party line attributed her release to a declaration and refused to say goodbye (Manolkidou-Vetta, 1997: 189). Clearly, the fractionalisation in the Communist Party caused tensions among the detained women and, even though these tensions did not escalate into open conflict, the disagreements and accusations often divided the prisoners into two groups.⁴⁶⁹

Even though the internal Party differences caused a great deal of distress and insecurity and shattered the cohesion of the prison communities, it was the state and its institutions that classified female dissidents as second-class citizens, unworthy mothers and immoral women. The socio-political stigmatisation and the degradation of the politically active women was imprinted in state rhetoric, but most importantly, it was traumatically experienced and integrated

⁴⁶⁸ The women deported to the various areas of the Peloponnese were: in Zaharo, Mina Yiannou, Vaso Thanasekou, Elli Erythriadou; to Messini: Avra Partsalidou, Roula Koukoulou, Margarita Kotsaki; and to Sparta: Chrysoula Gogoglou, Iro Giouzeli, Eleni Bena, Loula Logara. Eleni Bena was sent to Leros after Sparta. For more on the deportation of women in the cities of the Peloponnese, see Karagiorgi (2007: 310) and Kotsaki (1987: 91-92). Especially for the detention in Sparta, see “Report on Exile”, Greek News Agency (MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners).

⁴⁶⁹ For information on the tensions among women in the Alikarnassos Prisons, see Manolkidou-Vetta (1997) and Karagiorgi (2007).

by women themselves in their own narratives. In fact, when a judicial committee visited the imprisoned women in Alikarnassos, Maria Bena stated:

To all of us who participated in the Resistance, they gave us a stamp, like the Jews. And ever since, that stamp follows us [and] the government comes and asks for declarations. Therefore, every woman had to give up her dignity and sign the declarations of repentance (cited in Manolkidou-Vetta, 1997:193).

Likewise, when Maria Karagiorgi was transferred to Averof Prisons, after spending three years in the exile camps of Yaros and Alikarnassos, she realised that it was not the internment and the hardships that made her lose her sense of self, but the authorities' efforts to humiliate, intimidate and deprive her of her dignity (2007: 230).

4.3.3 Political imprisonment in the Averof and Korydallos Prisons

The female detainees 'welcomed' the transfer from the security and military police centres to prisons, as it was portrayed as an escape from the torture and terrorisation that was taking place during the interrogation.⁴⁷⁰ During the junta, the women were mainly incarcerated in the Averof and Korydallos Prisons, both of which were situated in Athens. In addition to the main prisons in Athens, there were also peripheral police centres, military camps such as the notorious camp of Dionysos (505 Naval Unit) outside Athens and specifically designated interrogation centres⁴⁷¹ such as the Reform Prisons and the Third Army Corps, a special place of torture of the KYP (Central Information Agency) and the Karatassos camp, all of which were based in Thessaloniki. There was also the premises of the Piraeus Security Police and numerous other local police stations where men and women were assaulted and detained for a short period, usually up to eleven months, before being transferred to the well-known interrogation centres, mainly in the Greek Military Police (ESA) or the General Security Police Station (*Asphalia*).⁴⁷² For the purpose of this research, emphasis will be placed on the Averof and Korydallos Prisons, since those were the main prisons of the period, where women were

⁴⁷⁰ See Clogg (1972: 19) and "Situation in Greece" (January 1968), Amnesty International Report.

⁴⁷¹ Maria Kallergi, a student, was brutally assaulted and tortured for 25 days in the 505 Naval Unit at Dionysos camp. She was then transferred to the General Security Police Station in Bouboulinas street, where the interrogation and detention continued for nine months, before being sent to the Women's Section of Averof Prison (See "Averof Prison", a clandestine report, MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners).

⁴⁷² For more information on the camps, prisons and police stations in Thessaloniki see the accounts of Dora Koulmanda, Anastasia Georgoulia, Aspasia Karra, Georgia Sarigianidou, Eleni Stefanidou and Ismini Tsioutsia. For the Security Police Stations in Piraeus, see the accounts of the sisters Selini and Penelope Savinidou and Olga Tsolakidou (all these accounts and relevant information in relation to prisons, police and detention centres can be found in the "Averof Prison", a clandestine report, MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners). For Dora Koulmanda, especially see the interview granted on July 29th, 2010, Athens.

detained for the longest periods of time; consequently, there are more data and archival information available. Furthermore, the Averof and Korydallos Prisons were usually the final destination after the initial arrest and short detention in the police stations and, in many cases, after the dissidents were interrogated under torture.

The Averof Prisons in Athens operated during the Metaxas Dictatorship and the Civil War, but was considered unsuitable and officially closed down at the beginning of September 1971. The Averof political prisoners, both men and women, were then transferred to the newly built Korydallos Prisons.⁴⁷³ In terms of the Averof female political prisoners, during the 1968-1969 period approximately 21 dissidents were sentenced and were charged on the basis of Law 509, while two were awaiting trial; there were also 180 common law female prisoners.⁴⁷⁴ The conditions in the Averof Prisons are described by women as being very tenuous, especially with regard to communicating with their relatives, as the censorship of correspondence was harsh, letters were restricted to a minimum and to family matters and could only be sent and received by immediate family members. Prison visits lasted for 15 minutes and were conducted in the presence of an officer. Prisoners awaiting trial were allowed three visits per week, but a permit was required that had to be renewed every ten days by a Court Martial.⁴⁷⁵

The majority of female detainees in Korydallos Prison were students and workers, much younger in age in comparison to those incarcerated in the Averof Prisons during the 1968-1969 period. As already mentioned, most of the dissidents were sentenced under Law 509/1947, with the exception of Eleni Voulgari-Golema, the only pre-coup prisoner (arrested in August 1966 and released in 1971), who was serving a 10 year sentence under Law 375/1936 on the charge of espionage, for sheltering a relative.⁴⁷⁶ In addition to the 17 sentenced female prisoners in Korydallos, 19 more women were arrested on November 18th, 1971 and were detained at the premises of the Security Police, before being transferred to Korydallos Prison.⁴⁷⁷ Most of the

⁴⁷³ The transfer of men was gradual and began earlier, in October 1969 (*The Black Book*, 1971). In terms of numbers, in 1970 there were 200-250 male political prisoners in Korydallos, see *The Black Book* (1971: 239, 250).

⁴⁷⁴ See the "Appeal to the International Red Cross" by the political prisoners of Averof Women's Prison and "Averof Prison", a clandestine report (MGA/InfoXVII/ Women Prisoners). The same report in relation to the medical treatment of female detainees in the Averof Prison states that there were 22 female political detainees and 200 female prisoners in total (including the common law prisoners). Also see the *The Black Book* (1971: 199).

⁴⁷⁵ For more on the conditions in the Averof Prison, as described by the political prisoners see the clandestine report "Averof Prison", pp.1-2 and "Conditions in the Averof Prison", as described by the political prisoners (MGA/Info XVI/Women Prisoners); also see *The Black Book* (1971: 200-204).

⁴⁷⁶ The case of Eleni Voulgari-Golema is discussed in greater detail in the third chapter of the thesis. Also see *Greek News Agency*, November 30th, 1971, "The case of Eleni Voulgari" and "Open Letter from Eleni Voulgari-Golema", MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners.

⁴⁷⁷ There was one exception; that of Maria Angelaki, whose sentence was commuted to deportation to Arta (north-western Greece). In relation to the number of Korydallos female prisoners, see "Women detainees and political prisoners", MGA/Info XVI/Women Prisoners. With regard to the numbers of female and male political prisoners, I need to stress that there are no official statistics. There has been however, a recent effort by the *Association of the Imprisoned and Exiled Resistance Fighters 1967-1974* (SFEA) to collect, document and digitise the personal dossiers

Korydallos female prisoners were in their twenties and were sentenced for their participation in various youth and student anti-junta organisations such as 'Rigas Ferraios' and the 'Lambrakis Youth Movement', for distributing clandestine anti-junta printed material.

It should be noted that, besides the fact that there are no official statistics, the numbers of primarily political prisoners of the period are not stable either; they change depending on the political status and the offences of the dissidents. Most importantly, to a large extent, the socio-political conjunctures determined the number of political detainees. Specifically, incidents of repression and persecution took place in the spring of 1972, mostly affecting students and intellectuals, despite the proclaimed moderation of the regime.⁴⁷⁸ Furthermore, the student uprisings at the end of February, 1973, and the Polytechnic Movement during November 14-17th, 1973, led to new arrests, mainly of students, but also workers, and to the re-opening of the Yaros camp.⁴⁷⁹ In May 1973, a couple of months after the first student demonstrations in the Law School, the number of female prisoners had reached 27.⁴⁸⁰ Despite the general amnesty in August 1973, approximately 12 women dissidents remained imprisoned until the fall of the dictatorship. On November 17th, 1973, after the bloody suppression of the student demonstrations and sit-ins in the Polytechnic School and the army's invasion with tanks, the official number of arrested students, according to the police, was 840; in fact, 2,400 students were captured and a significant number were detained, interrogated and often tortured by the Military Police.⁴⁸¹ Most students who participated in the Polytechnic uprising went underground, but a massive number of arrests continued in 1974. One of the most well-known cases was the arrest of 135 members of the Greek Communist Party (KKE), the 'Communist Youth of Greece' (KNE) and the 'Anti-dictatorial National Students' Union of Greece' (Anti-EFEE) in February,

of the political detainees of the period that has not been completed so far. For this reason, my research in this chapter, in terms of archival research and documentation, is primarily based on the Modern Greek Archives of the *League for Democracy in Greece* (King's College London Archives); the Amnesty International material (King's College London Archives) and the *The Black Book: the Greek Junta Stands Accused* (Volumes I and II), published by the Central Committee of the Patriotic Anti-Dictatorship Front in 1971 and 1972, have been particularly useful, providing information on the female prisoners of the 1967-1974 period.

⁴⁷⁸ Accordingly, in March 1972, there were 22 women prisoners at Korydallos Prison, in May, 17 and in August of the same year, 18. According to a Speaker's Note on Greek Political Prisoners (January 1st, 1973), 25 women were imprisoned in the beginning of 1973. Also See "Human Rights in Greece 1973", Amnesty International Report, p.6.

⁴⁷⁹ For the numbers, see the *The Black Book* Vol. II (1972: 30) and the "Survey of Political Imprisonment", p.1, July 1972, Amnesty International.

⁴⁸⁰ See "Sentenced women political prisoners", MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners. According to the Amnesty International Report "Human Rights in Greece 1973" (p. 14), a conservative estimate would place the number of sentenced political prisoners at 290-300, without taking into consideration the unknown number of people detained under interrogation or awaiting trial.

⁴⁸¹ More information can be found in the special issue "Edo Polytechneio" [This is Polytechneio], dedicated to the Polytechnic uprising of the Greek Newspaper *TA NEA* (November 17th, 2007, p.75). On November 25th, 1973, the chief of the Greek Military Police (ESA), Brigadier Dimitrios Ioannides, organised a counter-coup against Colonel Papadopoulos, reinstated martial law and another, even harsher wave of repression and persecution began, mostly against the students who were opposing the regime.

1974. Nadia Valavani, a 19 year-old student, was among them and was detained for five months in isolation by the Security Police, interrogated, tortured and sentenced by a court martial under Law 509 and was sent to Korydallos Prison in July, 1974 with 35 other dissidents, seven of whom were women.⁴⁸²

When women were transferred to Korydallos, they argued that this ‘modern’ and ‘perfect’ prison, as characterised by the international organisations, was in fact a ‘modern dungeon’, a place of inhumanity, mortification and fear.⁴⁸³ Women were detained in pairs in a narrow cell designated for one person. They were locked up for 12 hours and when the cells were unlocked they were allowed to walk only in a designated area, divided by iron bars from the rest of the prison, consisting of a small dark corridor. Most importantly, women were held in the narrow cells, with an exposed lavatory situated in the same area, where they slept.⁴⁸⁴

It is worth pointing out another parameter linked to the Colonels’ rhetoric of Communism as an ‘infectious disease’, which in fact was brought into effect as a government policy and was connected to the detention of the women with centrist ideological convictions, separately and in isolation, as well as the common law prisoners. According to archival material and the testimonies of female dissidents, the communist women were considered dangerous for transmitting communism, both to the women who belonged to the Left and the criminal convicts.⁴⁸⁵ Dora Koulmanda reveals that in both the Averof and later in Korydallos Prison, communist detainees were isolated from the other political and criminal prisoners (Interview, July 29th, 2010). Approximately 20 communists in the Averof Prison were detained in separate cells from the dissidents who belonged to the ‘Centre’. Similarly, in the Korydallos Prison, the criminal prisoners were detained in a ward; the 20-21 communists were in different cells and the centrists were placed in separate cells as well, in order to avoid the ‘communist contamination’.⁴⁸⁶

There is a noteworthy difference when comparing the junta female dissidents to those of the civil war period when it comes to their coexistence with criminal prisoners. Women who were incarcerated during or immediately after the Civil War describe their internment with prostitutes or common law prisoners as another form of political annihilation and degradation.

⁴⁸² During our interview (June 7th, 2010, Athens), Nadia Valavani talked about her arrest and detention in the premises of the Security Police and in Korydallos Prison, but she also provided useful information in relation to the arrest of the 135 students. Information on the case is also included in the article “Vasanizan, alla ohi epitides” [They were torturing, but not on purpose], Newspaper *TA NEA* (November 29th, 2005).

⁴⁸³ See the *The Black Book* (1971: 213, 215, 217) and “Women Prisoner’s Appeal”, MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners.

⁴⁸⁴ For more, see *The Black Book* (1971: 215-217).

⁴⁸⁵ See the interviews with Nadia Valavani (June 7th, 2010, Athens) and Dora Koulmanda (July 29th, 2010, Athens); also see “Women Prisoners in Korydallos Prison” (January 1972), MGA/infoXVI/Women Prisoners.

⁴⁸⁶ Dora Koulmanda provided the information during our interview (July 29th, 2010, Athens).

However, female junta dissidents regarded their detention with prisoners under common law as a valuable experience. This difference in attitude is linked to women entering the public sphere more decisively, in terms of political participation, employment and university education. It also reflects progressive Western perceptions in the context of the tumultuous 1960s, culminating in May 1968; albeit reluctantly and to a lesser extent, they still had an impact on the restrictive Greek societal structures and gender norms. Under this premise, Nadia Valavani describes her interaction with a young prostitute in the premises of the Security Police as a life lesson (Interview, June 7th, 2010). Similarly, Dora Koulmanda characterises her internment with common-law prisoners in the Reform Prison in Thessaloniki, and later in the Averof Prisons, as a tremendous experience primarily from a sociological perspective (Interview, July 29th, 2010). She emphatically states that “after my interaction with these women I have a different perception of delinquency, of how someone becomes a murderer” and she recalls the young girl who murdered her grandfather after he raped her (Interview, July 29th, 2010). Dora however, argues that the forced detention, ordered by the Prison Directorship, of an underage (17 year-old) dissident, Frida Liappa, with prostitutes and drug-addicts was another form of punishment, political intimidation and relegation. Nevertheless, the common-law detainees looked up to women dissidents and depended on them for their survival in prison, as they were in terrible economic and social conditions, were illiterate or poorly educated and isolated from their families.

4.3.4 The State and the Party in the exile and prison microcosm

Alongside the repressive mechanisms and terrorising practices of the junta regime, the experience of the political detainees and the quest for subjectivity was also affected by the often-exclusionary stance and problematic role of the Communist Party in the prison microcosm. As Voglis argues, political subjectivity is constructed by the practices and discourses of different agents; in the case of the political detainees, that would be the Prison Directorship, the Communist Party and the prisoners’ collectives (2002a: 12). Within the existing power hierarchies and societal norms, the control of sexuality and gender identities was imposed not only by the State, but also in several occasions by Party mechanisms, the family and other institutional frameworks.

Antonis Liakos, a Greek historian and former junta political detainee, characterises the role of the Communist Party in the prison microcosm as a ‘second prison’, as “the sphere of the ‘personal’ was completely subordinated to the sphere of politics, to the promise of the great upheaval. Identity was created at odds with subjectivity” (2001: 48). Against this background,

although the construction of subjectivity in prison camps, especially for women, was perceived as crucial in negotiating the experience of internment, it was not easily achieved even within prisoners' collectives. This was not only due to governmental strategies, but also because of Party directives.⁴⁸⁷ The Party, in terms of expected conformity to its hierarchies and directives, undermined the construction of 'self' and the struggle for 'selfhood' in internment camps.⁴⁸⁸ Even though male dissidents were also exposed to this double disciplinary scheme, for female detainees the construction of subjectivities was endangered and suppressed by the normative constructions of gender identity, femininity and sexuality since both the State and in some occasions the Party were normalising gender binaries and imposing social behaviours and norms. Therefore, for women it was not only incarceration and the resulting traumatisation that endangered selfhood, but also the prevailing system of power hierarchies that regulated gender identities and social roles.

Despite the Communist Party directives, Dora Koulmanda and Zoe Xenaki, exiled at Yaros as young students, argue that the relationships between women were good and, regardless of the 1968 split of the Communist Party in the Interior and Exterior Branch, women managed to form strong friendships.⁴⁸⁹ As in any small community, there were minor disputes in relation to daily activities; for instance, women who in the Civil War shared the same cell as moribund in the Averof Prisons, were at this stage fighting over the positioning of their truckle bed.⁴⁹⁰ In any case, controversies erupted after the split and became more apparent in the Averof Prisons, but to a much lesser extent than in the male exile camps and prisons.

The crucial role of the Communist Party in the prison and exile microcosm and the consequences of the 1968 rupture were often mirrored in the detainees' family relationships. After the 1968 tensions, in some cases, the pressure placed on the incarcerated women by their families to repent took the form of ideological guidance. Husbands, relatives, even friends and comrades instructed women through codified correspondence as to which branch of the Communist Party they should support.⁴⁹¹

In any event, as there were exiled female cadres of the Communist Party, the 1968 split precipitated a series of actions and derogatory attitudes towards women who openly disagreed with the official position of the Party, mainly in relation to the 1968 Soviet invasion of Prague. Elli

⁴⁸⁷ For more on the construction of subjectivity in prison and exile camps (of the civil war period), see Voglis (2002a,b) and Lambropoulou (1999).

⁴⁸⁸ This is imprinted on the stance of the Communist Party regarding those who signed Declarations of Repentance in the context of the Greek Civil War, see Voglis (2002a: 79-83; especially p. 82).

⁴⁸⁹ See the interviews with Zoe Xenaki (July 24th, 2009, Athens) and Dora Koulmanda (July 29th, 2010, Athens).

⁴⁹⁰ For more, see the aforementioned interviews.

⁴⁹¹ See Maria Karagiorgi's memoir (2007: 286).

Pappa, one of the most prominent figures of the Greek Left, disagreed with the official Party line while detained and was soon criticised and isolated by the well-known female members of the Party. However, Dora Koulmanda attributes Elli's isolation to her extra-marital relationship with Nikos Beloyiannis, an emblematic figure of the Greek Left, who was executed in 1952; thus, it was a social discrimination and not a political one (Interview, July 29th, 2010). This stance, even though it cannot be perceived as the official Party line, was based on the overall puritan attitude of the Party regarding sexual relations, in order to ultimately protect the cohesion of the anti-dictatorship Resistance Movement.⁴⁹² However, this control of sexual and gender relations did not end, as expected, after the fall of the dictatorship in 1974. During an interview with a student and junta political detainee, who remained politically active during the *metapolitefsi* within the ranks of the Greek Communist Party, she recalled being 'advised' by the person who was in charge of her communist guidance (*kathodigitis*) to postpone any plans to become pregnant, as the socio-political conjunctures were not proper and the young members of the Party should focus on political struggles, instead.⁴⁹³

Similarly, during the Resistance Movement and in the Greek Civil War, the unofficial directives of the Communist Party encouraged their female members to neither proceed with abortions nor get pregnant. This attitude, although it did not prevail as the official Party line, remained active even after the fall of the military regime. Nevertheless, there was a noteworthy control of sexuality; women were restricted from sexual relations, but these restrictions were projected onto men as well, set within the Communist puritanism and the expected loyalty to Party's authority, and not on patriarchal morality.⁴⁹⁴ The official rhetoric proclaimed equality in all aspects, meaning that women should participate equally in the political struggle, in student committees and during torture. Nadia Valavani, a student who participated in the Polytechnic Movement and who was tortured and imprisoned at the Korydallos Prisons, argues that the stance of the Party was not necessarily 'paternalistic', but that it was undoubtedly 'traditional' (Interview, June 7th, 2010). Therefore, the process of re-traditionalisation of gender roles and the attachment to these roles of both men and women within the context of nationalist movements, as described by Maja Korac (1998: 170) in the post-Yugoslav case, was also evident and often employed by the Party machinery.

As this was a time of crisis and turmoil, the Communist Party expected women to act as men. In fact, women participated equally and actively in the various anti-junta resistance groups

⁴⁹² Also see Voglis' discussion of the Party's stance regarding sexuality in the context of the Greek Civil War (2002a: 191-194).

⁴⁹³ The interviewee wished to remain anonymous.

⁴⁹⁴ Nadia Valavani made the statement in relation to the resulting control of male sexuality, during our interview (June 7th, 2010, Athens).

and for this reason were persecuted and tortured like men; however, particularly in relation to torture, there were specific gender characteristics which will be analysed later. On this matter, Youlia Linardatou ended our discussion by saying that the women who participated in the anti-dictatorial movement were undoubtedly given a chance to enter the public domain and to stand-out by participating in the socio-political struggles, but the proclaimed gender equality existed only on paper (Interview, March 11th, 2010). Despite women's active participation in various political formations, regardless of their nature and scope and whether they are nationalist, socialist, liberation struggles or dissident movements, when the objectives of the national male body politic are achieved, women are often disempowered and denied agency.

It should be pointed out that the outlined paternalistic and puritan stance of the Communist Party delineates the overall gender order and the power hierarchies of Greek society as a whole. The gender expectations and norms were more apparent in the countryside; Nadia Valavani talks about 'two versions of Greece', one in Athens and the other in the countryside, where, for example, the issue of virginity was still a prerequisite even after 1974 (Interview, June 7th, 2010). Accordingly, women's matters that had been resolved in the West were still considered to be private and taboo in Greece. Greek society, after a long period of socio-political unrest, resulting in oppression, persecution and silencing, was not in a position to keep up with the feminist movements of the West, but was reluctantly trying to enunciate a more assertive public discourse. In a still patriarchal society, governed by traditional structures and the important influence of the Greek Orthodox Church, issues such as dowry, abortion, equality and gender-based violence were considered controversial and were reintroduced during the *metapolitefsi*, but even then resulted in public reaction and dispute (Athanasiadis, 2007: 21).⁴⁹⁵

In a similar vein, with regard to the degree of communication and the actual interaction between female and male political exiles in the Yaros camp, there seems to be a noticeable inconsistency between the narratives which delineates the long-existing social norms, but also the proclaimed communist ideals in order to protect the cohesion of the Movement and the integrity of its members. Ilias Antonopoulos, who was a political exile for almost 20 years, explained that during the dictatorship contact between men and women was not allowed in the Yaros' camp, and stated: "we had dignity. There was not any contact with the women". However, Eleftheria Ganiti recalled that there was a kind guard who let her see her husband, Nikos, who was also exiled on the island. Another detainee, Theodoridis, who was incarcerated at the same exile sites and during the same period as Antonopoulos, reported that when women were exiled to Yaros, they managed to meet with their husbands and were afraid that if they got pregnant

⁴⁹⁵ Also see Chapter 5 of the current thesis.

they would be expelled from the Communist Party.⁴⁹⁶

As expected, the gender hierarchies are even more apparent and rigorous within the militaristic regime and rhetoric of the junta, as women “are in some way, always suspect; they are a symbol of purity of the nation, but always vulnerable to contamination; they embody the homeland, but are always a potential danger” (Ivekovic and Mostov, 2004: 14). Pettman also discusses the use of women as symbolic boundaries that make them susceptible to corruption, necessitating their control; the control and rehabilitation is both actual and symbolic through the politicisation of the female bodies (1992: 5-6 cited in Peterson, 1999: 49). Within the envisioned Greek Nation and in other national contexts, as argued by Ivekovic and Mostov, although women are considered to be responsible for the continuation of the nation, they are not equal members of the imagined communities, in terms of their political subjectivity (2004: 13). Under this premise, women involved in ethnic-national movements, militarisation, mobilisation and war not only experience limited participation due to limited access to power, but are also situated differently than men with regard to divisions of power, violence and resources (Peterson, 1999: 54; Korac, 1998: 169). Most importantly, due to the pre-assigned gender expectations, women “as symbols and child-bearers face a variety of pressures to support nationalist objectives” (Peterson, 1999: 53).

Within the Greek context, as women were relegated to a silent, invisible status in the private sphere and, in the case of the junta female activists, to a contested public role, they were not in a position to disrupt the gender order and the binary dichotomies of hegemonic discourses. Their political identities were considered to be symptomatic, easily transformed into the proper gender role, facilitated by institutional structures and dominant discourses about sexuality, femininity, motherhood and sexual differences. When it comes to the political subjectivity of women, female junta dissidents often found it difficult to perceive themselves as political subjects. In this framework, Youlia Linardatou argued that “back then I did not realise that we were political subjects” (March 11th, 2010, Athens). Similarly, during a pilgrimage trip to the exile camp of Yaros, Eleftheria Ganiti, one of the political exiles, made a similar comment while going back and forth in the women’s prison cells to the effect that she had not realised either that she had been incarcerated in this camp and that she had to go through all the difficulties of internment. She emphatically said: “I feel like it’s not me who was here back then” (Interview, September 26th, 2009, Yaros).

In a similar context, the Professor of Italian Literature, Massimo Lollini cites an extract

⁴⁹⁶ The discussions with Antonopoulos and Theodoridis took place in Yaros during a pilgrimage trip on September 26th, 2009; during the same trip I interviewed Eleftheria Ganiti.

from a letter sent by Gramsci while imprisoned: “after much suffering and many efforts at restraint, one becomes used to being an object without subjectivity vis-à-vis the administrative machine that at any moment can ship you off in any direction, force you to change habit” (1996: 521). The political inmates were in a constant struggle to “reaffirm their own identity as political prisoners”; as explained by Gramsci: “I am a political detainee and will be a political prisoner, I have nothing now or in the future to be ashamed of in this situation” (Lollini, 1996: 522). However, especially for women, the formation of political subjectivities was complicated by the gender expectations of the Nation, the Party and the Greek family. Although the political identities of the female dissidents were to a large extent formulated, their gender identities were entrenched, hence the quest for subjectivity was constant and frequently problematic.

Dora Koulmanda noted that women were treated equally with men in the camps and prisons; however, there were two notable classifications imposed by the authorities: women fell under the general categories ‘women and children’ and ‘all women are whores’ (Interview, July 29th, 2010). The demarcation of women as ‘mothers’ and of politically active women as ‘whores’ was employed by the state and further articulated in state rhetoric, both in the post-war and post-civil war Greek context, but also during the Colonels’ regime. When it comes to the period of the Greek Resistance, women who participated in the Movement were more easily ‘excused’, since they were fighting against the occupying forces, but during the Civil War and the military dictatorship, female activism became synonymous with female promiscuity.⁴⁹⁷

As Vesna Kesic stresses in relation to the construction of gender and ethnic identities in former Yugoslavia, “the traditional patriarchal/religious images and stereotypes embodying the traditional role of woman as mother, wife, nurturer-preferably a virgin...easily turned into a whore and a sinner — surfaced in public vocabulary and imagery” (2004: 78). The Colonels envisioned a “Greece of Christian Greeks” and within this national imagery it was the leftist women who had to be recuperated, since their political identity and Communist beliefs were perceived to be a contagious disease, a threat to the nation and to the ‘sacred Greek family’. The statements made by Brigadier Stylianos Patakos in the *Guardian* therefore come as no surprise; he proclaimed that the imposed censorship was necessary, since “the people must be protected from any contagious disease such as left-wing views or left-wing music, which could delay the day when they will all become true Greeks, following truly Greek policies and principles, ‘true’ Greeks who could be considered trustworthy enough to run their own government” (August 5th, 1967). As these women had primarily violated the sacred role of motherhood, the strategy of rehabilitation through incarceration and punishment primarily

⁴⁹⁷ See interview with Nadia Valavani, who makes a similar argument, June 7th, 2010, Athens.

focused upon them.

In these circumstances, when Patakos visited the women's ward in Yaros as the Minister of Interior, to a chorus of complaints from the imprisoned women with small children and the seriously ill, he shouted "Cut out their tongues" (August 18th, 1967, *New Statesman*). Furthermore, he pressured the political detainees to sign Declarations of Repentance; when they refused to do so, he described their behaviour as "unbelievable fanaticism and stubbornness" (August 30th, 1967, *Daily Mail*). According to the *Morning Star*, approximately 250 female political exiles 'chose' to remain in detention rather than promise to remain silent on political questions after their release (August 30th, 1967). Patakos also stated: "I told some of the women just to say that they will abstain from any demonstrations and I will set them free immediately. They even declined to do that" (August 30th, 1967, *Morning Star*). Women within the national project of regeneration and rebirth were expected to carry the national markers; thus, their political activism was not in accordance with this national plan and had to be controlled. The Colonels re-enforced a patriarchal social order that acted as a mechanism of socio-political reconstruction (Ivekovic and Mostov, 2004: 14); within this paradigm, the anticipated and proper stance for women was to remain silent.

However, this silence and conformity was demanded and imposed upon the detainees even after their liberation. The released political detainees were continuously harassed in their everyday social and family lives, at work, in every attempt to reconstruct their lives and put behind them the stigma of their internment. The post-prison harassment and repression was, in fact, institutionalised through Decree No. 12, issued by the Directors of Police in Athens and Piraeus in December 1971, designating the obligations and restrictions of the released detainees. The Amnesty International Report, "Human rights in Greece" states that the obligations entailed a thrice-weekly visit to the police station, that a curfew must be observed and that the released detainees "must not leave the urban district of their residence without permission" (1973: 15). Additionally, the released political prisoners were restricted from attending a demonstration and from distributing any written material that could be perceived as a threat to security or public order, which would result in the deprivation of any right to participate in public life or vote, according to the 1968 Constitution.⁴⁹⁸ As expected, the marginalisation and constant harassment was extended to the families of the political dissidents, who were also subjected to questioning, even interrogation, by the authorities without proceeding to an offence. They were harassed on a daily basis in their workplace, while their

⁴⁹⁸ More information on the restrictions and obligations observed by the released political detainees, as imposed by the authorities, can be found in the Amnesty International Report "Human rights in Greece 1973", March 1973, p.15-16.

children were threatened in school and monitored in their everyday lives.

4.4 *The female and political body in pain: the torture and terrorisation of female junta dissidents*

As in several dictatorial and nationalist regimes around the world, the Greek military dictatorship was also facilitated by the institutionalised and symbolic transformation of leftists into 'second-class citizens'. The residue of the civil war classification between the Greeks and the Communists, as the demonised political 'other', was re-activated by the junta rhetoric in order to justify the persecution, oppression and torture of suspect citizens. The designation of Communists as 'subhumans' was reflected in the most formal manner in the public pronouncements of the Minister of Interior, Stylianos Patakos; when asked by a group of European Socialists MPs about the condition of political prisoners in Yaros, he proclaimed that they are not political prisoners, but brutes and that he distinguishes between human beings and beasts (Clogg, 1972: 146). In these circumstances, the dictators' proclamations, the rhetoric about the Nation, the Greek race and the true 'Greeks' acted as a discursive mechanism of legitimacy and justification and were materialised in the torture and abuse of the dissidents.

The regime established a machinery of terror through the anti-communist ideology that was both necessitated and justified by the salvation of the 'decaying' nation. As the country was characterised by the dictator and Prime Minister, Georgios Papadopoulos, as a 'patient in a plaster cast' due to political instability, corruption and the lawlessness of previous governments, the ancestral values were re-articulated within state rhetoric and propaganda. In a similar way, the notable theoretical instructor of the regime, Georgios Georgalas, also a former Marxist, argued that the April Revolution was carried out in order to "materialise the dreams of the Race" (Clogg, 1976: 99).

Within this nationalist and militaristic framework, the dissident, the enemy of the Nation and the Race, is always demonised, especially politically active women. Accordingly, gender differences, along with religion, ethnicity and morality, were once again prescribed in the official discourse. At the same time, the ideological propaganda was based on traditional perceptions of gender relations and sexuality, while paternalistic accounts of power hierarchies and social norms prevailed. In this ideological framework, female dissidents constituted a double threat; firstly, to the nation, as political opponents to the regime and secondly, as dangerous for the moral and gender code. Thus, the perceived threat that they posed had to be eradicated.

The inhumane treatment of the interrogated and imprisoned citizens did not comprise

sporadic cases of abuse due to the ardency of some officers (Alivizatos, 1995: 609-610). In fact, it was a machinery of systematic terror articulated in the nationalist narratives and official rhetoric of the militaristic regime, facilitated by the ideological, legal and constitutional frameworks of the Civil War. Within the framework of the annihilation of political opponents, not always communists or leftists, the assault of the body and the psyche became the vehicle of intimidation and assimilation. Furthermore, as the female body was deemed to carry most of the ancestral, religious and moral connotations, the control of sexuality and the coercion and punishment of the politically active women was instrumental for the decaying nation. Therefore, the familiar, civil war discriminatory status of the female dissident as the atheist, Communist, 'Bulgarian' prostitute re-emerged and was configured, symbolically and physically, on the tortured bodies of the women.

4.4.1 Approaching torture in the Greek junta

According to the Amnesty International Report on the "Situation in Greece" (1968), the torture and abuse that took place during the Colonels' regime was deliberately and officially performed as a state practice against suspect politically active citizens.⁴⁹⁹ Torture in the Colonels' Greece was practiced on an administrative basis,⁵⁰⁰ carried out by the Security Police (*Asphalia*) and the Military Police (ESA), but also in some cases by the army and the gendarmerie. In the case of the army and the gendarmerie, the Amnesty International Delegation (1968) states that it is difficult to determine if these cases of torture were isolated incidents or part of a standard procedure. However, the testimonies of the detained and interrogated dissidents throughout the junta, especially in the early stages and after the 1973 Student Revolts, indicate a systematic procedure closely associated with the abuse and torture that was officially conducted by the notorious interrogation units of the Military Police (EAT/ESA) and the Security Police.

Georgios Papadopoulos, as the leader of the regime, proclaimed that torture was not conducted in Greece and, if evidence of torture existed, he would commit suicide.⁵⁰¹ In fact, he gave his word on his military honour, which as he said "is closely connected to the Church and the Flag" (August 22nd, 1969, MGA/InfoXIV/Torture). At this point, it would be useful to define the term 'torture' itself,⁵⁰² according to the first article of the UN Convention against Torture and

⁴⁹⁹ Amnesty International prepared a Delegation (1968) based on accounts of the victims or on second-hand testimonies of the imprisoned dissidents; see "Situation in Greece", Amnesty International.

⁵⁰⁰ Sluka (2000: 3) who cites Chomsky and Herman (1979) employs the term 'administrative basis' in reference to the extent and commonality through which torture was practiced in the 1970s. In relation to the Greek case, the Amnesty International Report on Torture, approaches torture during the military junta as an 'administrative practice' (1973: 93); also see "Human Rights in Greece 1973", Amnesty International, p. 16 and Becket (1997: 23).

⁵⁰¹ Also see Amnesty International Report on Torture (1973: 92).

⁵⁰² Although incidents of torture and abuse have been addressed in previous chapters of the thesis, especially

Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984), torture is defined as:

Any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity.⁵⁰³

Torture was employed from the first day of the coup and, as the country was transformed into a police state, it became an instrumental component of the state mechanism for repressing dissent and opposition (Amnesty International Report on Torture, 1973: 77). Phaedon Vegleris, a Professor of Economics and a student during the Greek dictatorship, argued that “our dictatorship could not have stood without torture: this is the sad truth. It is more effective than killing, because a killing cannot be denied. It is done in secrecy and is always denied and a doubt always exists” (Interview conducted on December 31st, 1976, Amnesty International).

Social institutions under dictatorial regimes are transformed into ‘institutions of terror’ that provide technical and psychological support in order to carry out the organised terror and abuse (Robben and Suarez-Orozco, 2000: 9 n6). As argued by Suarez-Orozco and Robben (2000), these organised systems of terror are always guided by an intellectual and moral framework, through ideological structures. The role of cultural and social institutions, religion and education were constitutive elements of the nationalist project. The part played by the Greek Orthodox Church, in particular, was crucial in the formation of the new ‘Greece of Christian Greeks’, as articulated in the junta’s rhetoric of ‘national authenticity’.⁵⁰⁴ In this national effort to rebuild and regenerate the country as a Christian nation, the Colonels were closely collaborating with religious leaders and para-ecclesiastical organisations. In relation to the Polytechnic uprisings, one of the editors of the para-ecclesiastical magazine *Zoe* (Life) proclaimed that the students who protest are fighting against the family, morality and law and are in favour of a sexual revolution (Moustakis, 1983: 111). Education “in the spirit of the Hellenic Christian culture” was also institutionalised under 1971 Decree No. 651, in which an emphasis was placed on the ‘paternal authority’ of the Church, while traditionalist patterns were introduced, especially with regard to gender and sexuality.⁵⁰⁵

Chapter 2 which concentrates on gender violence during the Civil War, torture is defined and analysed at this point because, within the military junta, this act was transformed into a widespread state practice, institutionalised and executed by official perpetrators, instrumental to the militaristic machinery of terror.

⁵⁰³ The definition of torture can be found in <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cat.htm>.

⁵⁰⁴ Taylor (1997: 152) uses the term ‘national authenticity’ in reference to the Argentinean Dirty War.

⁵⁰⁵ For more on education under the military junta, see “Human Rights Report in Greece 1973”, Amnesty International, pp. 25-26, March 1973.

Looking at the control of sexuality and the traditional accounts of femininity in the context of nationalist indoctrination, at the beginning of the military junta the dictators banned mini skirts and also long hair for men, making these social prohibitions not only socially unacceptable, but hostile to the military regime and to Greek-Christian values.⁵⁰⁶ Consequently, Lieutenant Ladas arrested and sheared young long-haired students and justified this act on the grounds that their mindset was disastrous for the country. Non-conformist young men with long hair were considered to be homosexual and leftist female students were believed to be promiscuous.⁵⁰⁷ Moreover, the dictator Stylianos Patakos proclaimed that women who wear mini-skirts provoke men. This belief was reflected not only in the governmental official rhetoric and the propaganda of the period, but also in the judicial discourse. The following extracts from a trial in a military court in November 1971 highlight the traditionalist and stereotypical patterns of the period and are also indicative of the junta's prevalent attitudes in relation to the control of sexuality, the prevailing accentuation of sexual difference and the appropriation of femininity.

Accused: I am for democracy.

President: What democracy? When everybody is going around in mini-skirts and shorts and the country is full of consumer goods, what democracy are you talking about?[...]You may demand the right to go without trousers, too.

Judge: In what country is there more freedom than in Greece?

President: The government has a policy; you are not fit to question it [...] there can be no democracy as you want it, because the Greek people have not yet reached the necessary level ("Human Rights in Greece 1973", p. 14, Amnesty International).

4.4.2 Locating terror: sites and perpetrators, victims and practices of torture

Sites of terror and perpetrators of abuse

According to James Becket (1997), the perpetrators of torture during the military dictatorship were the police forces, namely the Security and the Gendarmerie, the army forces, the army police, the military police (ESA), and the Central Intelligence Agency (KYP). Besides the premises of the Athens Security Police (*Asphalia*) and the Greek Military Police (ESA), other sites of torture were the 401 Military Hospital, the Dionysos military camp, and the premises of the Security Police in Thessaloniki. International organisations such as Amnesty International and victims' testimonies report that interrogation and torture took place in other peripheral centres. There also seems to be collaboration and, at times, competitiveness between the

⁵⁰⁶ The banning of mini skirts was first initiated during the Pagalos Dictatorship in 1925. For more, see Clogg (1972: 113-114, 120-123; 1976: 82-83, 86-90), Meletopoulos (1996: 190-192) and "Human Rights Report in Greece 1973", Amnesty International, pp. 14, 25-27, 32.

⁵⁰⁷ See the TV programme *I Mihani tou Hronou* [The Time Machine], November 19th, 2010, NET. Also see Clogg (1972: 121-123; 1976: 87-90), Meletopoulos (1996) and "Human Rights Report in Greece 1973", Amnesty International, p. 32.

different police and military agencies in terms of the number of arrests and the extraction of loyalty oaths.⁵⁰⁸ Moreover, this was the first time in Modern Greek history that the armed forces arrested, interrogated and tortured citizens during peacetime (Becket, 1997). Even though the persecution and oppression of the leftists continued during the period of weak democracy, the phenomenon of torture during the military dictatorship had certain qualitative and quantitative characteristics that distinguish it from the previous periods. Torture became an official state practice, particularly prevalent in the context of interrogation and detention, with significant sexual features and gender parameters when exercised.

The most commonly known executioners or directors of torture were Vassilis Labrou, who was the Director of the Athens General Security and several police officers including Mallios, Babalis, Karapanayiotis, Gravaritis, Spanos and Giannikopoulos. In the Military Police, Major Theofiloyiannakos was in charge of the interrogations and abuse that often took place in the Dionysos military camp, outside Athens. A distinction should be made between the torturers of the Military Police (ESA), who were often young recruits completing their military service, and the officers in the Security Police, who were usually high-ranking officials;⁵⁰⁹ however, in both units the tortures were directed, supervised and occasionally conducted by highly placed officials trained in military schools and college educated, in Greece or abroad.⁵¹⁰ As the former political dissident, Dora Koulmanda argues, there was a difference between the torturer who conducted *falanga*⁵¹¹ and one who electrocuted the genital areas of the victim; in the second case, the torture was instructed or perpetrated by an officer who had been specially trained (Interview, July 29th, 2010). Nevertheless, the economic and professional motives and the significant privileges that the ESA men would enjoy after their incorporation into the unit should also be mentioned. These included double salaries and a bonus for every name they managed to extract during interrogation, as well as plenty of leave and promotion; given these inducements, it is understandable why a position in the Military Police was often preferred to two years military service (Becket, 1997: 105; Haritos-Fatouros, 2003: 38).

⁵⁰⁸ See Becket (1997; 1968).

⁵⁰⁹ The difference between the two units, the Military and the Security Police, is also imprinted on the second ESA Torturers' Trial in October 1975, where the sentences were considerably heavier in comparison to the Security Police Torturers' Trial in November 1975. Among the accused in the Security Police Trial were members of the Central Information Agency (KYP) and the Security Police leadership; therefore, the political risk was higher. Consequently, only four out of the 14 officers were sentenced to a few months imprisonment. According to the former dissident Nadia Valavani, the democratic constitution that emerged after the fall of the dictatorship did not need the military and army police mechanisms, whereas the officers of the Security Police would remain useful (November 29th, 2005).

⁵¹⁰ The dissidents have often argued that their interrogators and torturers were trained in the United States; see the interviews with Dora Koulmanda, July 29th, 2010, Athens and Nadia Valavani, June 7th, 2010, Athens. Also see Kabilis (2009) and Haritos-Fatouros (2003), who make the same argument and the excerpts of a letter written by a woman political prisoner and smuggled out of the Security Police (April 1968), Greek Committee against the Dictatorship.

⁵¹¹ Also known as *bastinado*, a common method of torture during the Greek Civil War and the junta that involved strapping the prisoner to a bench and beating the soles of the feet with wood or a pipe.

According to Mika Haritos-Fatouros (2003), who has examined the psychological origins of institutionalised torture, most of the recruits who were turned into torturers were educated, as it was a selection criterion for ESA. They came from lower or middle class families, but most importantly they and their families had to be of a conservative or right-wing and anti-communist political background (Haritos-Fatouros, 2003: 11-12). As she examined the role of training and the institutional structures that transformed ordinary men into torturers, she stressed the importance of the military training procedures, both official and unofficial (Haritos-Fatouros, 2003: 18-19). The recruits had undergone humiliation, brainwashing and often abuse as part of their training at the Military Police Training Centre (KESA), which undoubtedly played a vital role in their transformation into perpetrators of torture.⁵¹²

Similarly, researchers⁵¹³ exploring instances of torture and state terror have argued that perpetrators of atrocities under dictatorial regimes or during war are not born, but are transformed into torturers through hegemonic masculinity and militarisation and also through what Suarez-Orozco and Robben describe as institutional authority and rigid hierarchy (2000: 9 n6). As in the case of the ESA recruits, abusers were sometimes also victimised themselves in order to be transformed into dehumanised professional torturers.⁵¹⁴ Junior servicemen, especially in the Greek Military Police, were eventually dehumanised as they had witnessed or participated in numerous torturous interrogations and considered their acts to be just due to anti-communist propaganda and brainwashing.⁵¹⁵ Moreover, they gradually gained a sense of pride in serving in the Military Police, while developing solidarity with the other torturers (Haritos-Fatouros, 2003: 56-57).

Crucially, it was the militarist and dictatorial regime that facilitated or justified the atrocities, through the police and military agents that participated in or conducted systematic abuse against the dissidents. However, as aptly pointed out by James Becket, “though lack of restriction permits torture, it does not explain everything. A certain attitude is also needed” (1968: 119). Regimes and institutions that engage in systematic terror as an official or unofficial state policy should be held responsible (Martinez, 2005: 13), but there is also a significant degree of personal responsibility among the torturers themselves, regardless of rank when conducting or facilitating torture. As the dissidents have argued, there is always the matter of moral stance in terms of deciding to remain a torturer and facilitator or abandon the police or

⁵¹² For more, see Haritos-Fatouros (2003, especially pp. 38-65).

⁵¹³ Referring primarily to Scarry (1985); Taussig (1992); Suarez-Orozco and Robben (2000); Haritos-Fatouros (2003).

⁵¹⁴ See Haritos-Fatouros' (2003) excellent study.

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-65, 78-83.

military unit;⁵¹⁶ the worst-case scenario for refusing to torture or helping a victim was transfer or expulsion.⁵¹⁷

The immunity and impunity that 'enabled' the continuation of the arbitrary practices of coercion, intimidation and abuse is apparent in the testimony of an infamous police officer, Vassilis Lambrou of the Athens General Security. In the research conducted by the Committee of the Council of Europe for the violation of human rights in March 1969, he stated that "the arrests are left to our absolute initiative" and that "neither I nor my inferiors wait for the command by anyone. If I decide to arrest someone, I do not wait to get the relevant order, and that is provided by the standing laws" (cited in Alivizatos, 1995: 605 n14). In the same manner, when the Prime Minister of the regime, Georgios Papadopoulos, addressed the Armed Forces he rewarded their moral behaviour, but also the possibility of imposing when the circumstances demanded:

Having shown mercy towards all and having granted a forbearing pardon, you have taught everybody that moral grandeur does not lie in the acquisition of force but in its creative use. You have maintained unshaken the faith in the revolution, in the national ideals and in strict discipline (Becket, 1968: 118).

In any case, the military, as a predominantly male institution, had been cultivating and appropriating violence through what Martinez describes as 'institutional indoctrination' (2005: 12), while routine and 'moral disengagement' from torture had also facilitated the transformation of the ESA men into hyper-masculinised supermen (Haritos-Fatouros, 2003: 46-48, 59).⁵¹⁸ Additionally, within the junta's ideological framework, the leftists were perceived as a threat to Greek Christian tradition and values; hence, as women embodied the constituent elements of the Greek nation, the torture of female activists was justified in order for them to return to their nationally and socially-prescribed gender roles.

It is worth pointing out, however, that during the second Military Police Torturers' Trial in October 1975, the torturers denied that they had tortured women, despite the fact that there had been numerous reported cases of abuse of women, raised by both by the victims and by some ESA servicemen themselves. This denial is connected to the prevailing gender and social norms, where the torture of women would be degrading to the ESA men.⁵¹⁹ In fact, a former torturer revealed that it was the high-ranking officers who sexually harassed and terrorised

⁵¹⁶ See the interview with Dora Koulmanda (July 29th, 2010, Athens).

⁵¹⁷ In relation to expulsion, see Haritos-Fatouros (2003: 53-54); however, the torturers that Haritos-Fatouros interviewed describe the expulsion or transfer from EAT/ESA as degrading (2003: 53).

⁵¹⁸ Haritos-Fatouros (2003: 48, cites Bandura, 1990) uses the term 'moral disengagement'.

⁵¹⁹ For more on the testimonies of female abuse by the ESA servicemen, see Haritos-Fatouros (2003, especially pp. 59; also see p. 82).

women by saying: “We will tell the ESA men to fuck you” or “We will burn your cunt” (Haritos-Fatouros, 2003: 59).

The scenario is different when it comes to the victimisation of men; according to Haritos-Fatouros’ respondents, they used to beat men harder because they regarded them as being homosexuals (2003: 58). Even though the assault of men was not denied, the sexual dimensions of torture were not usually publicly discussed by the male victims or their torturers. As the young perpetrators were transformed into hyper-masculine torturers, their masculinity and/or heterosexuality was not in question. As one of Fatouros’ respondents states “they made us feel we were such supermen that we could also fuck men. Nobody will be able to stand against you; you will beat and fuck anybody you want”, they told us (Haritos-Fatouros, 2003: 59). Despite the hypermasculinised and heterosexualised training of the ESA men, there was also a distinct homosexual climate;⁵²⁰ in fact, the ESA service men occasionally had sexual relationships with homosexual men for money (Haritos-Fatouros, 2003: 58-59, 101). In a similar context, according to Haritos-Fatouros’ (2003: 82, 103) research, there were also instances of sexual harassment against women dissidents by ESA men who were having difficulties in engaging in sexual relationships with women.

Moreover, the Colonels’ regime, in an effort to control sexuality, exaggerated sexual morality and Greek-Christian ideals; morality was expected, sexuality was controlled and compulsory heterosexuality was imposed. Homosexuals were perceived to be a morally unacceptable group backed up religious and nationalist beliefs; hence, their punishment was portrayed as the just consequence of their immoral unchristian behaviour and misconduct. In fact, Ioannis Ladas, as the Minister of Public Order, has been characterised as a homosexual hater, since he directed attacks on homosexual meeting places (Clogg, 1972: 121). The torture of male and female detainees therefore needs to be examined through the crucial role of nationalist ideology and militarism. Within this scheme, politically active women were labelled as prostitutes and men as homosexuals and were targeted as dangerous, while the labelling and resulting stigmatisation served to fuel hatred and anger and rationalise violence.

The main detention centre in which the dissidents were interrogated, tortured and imprisoned for a short period was the premises of the Security Police (*Asphalia*) in Bouboulinas street, in the centre of Athens. The solitary confinement cells were 1.5mx1.80m; they were usually bare with cement floors and were extremely dirty, as the public toilets in the floors would often overflow, allowing the sewage into the cells, which lacked any ventilation or light. The strict solitary confinement meant the detainees would be incarcerated for up to four days without any

⁵²⁰ Joane Nagel describes military institutions as (masculine hetero)sexualised (1998: 257).

food or water, and would even be forced to use their cell as lavatory.⁵²¹ The officers used isolation as a tool in order to politically suppress the dissidents, but also to dehumanise them; for example, there were cases of women being deprived of water and food for up to twenty days, or they were forced to eat excreta.⁵²² The laundry room (*plystarío*), which often appears in the testimonies, was situated on the rooftop (known as ‘the Bouboulinas’ terrace’) of the premises of the Security Police and is the room where most acts of torture were perpetuated. It was a room measuring 2.50mx3.50m, which contained 2-3 showers. In the centre of the room was a workbench with ropes and a boiler, which was hit during torture to avoid the screams of the victims being heard; a machine imitating the noise of a motorcycle was also frequently employed for the same purpose.⁵²³ As Scarry aptly points out “in torture, the world is reduced to a single room or set of rooms, in the Greek junta, they were the ‘guest rooms’. The torture rooms are often given names that acknowledge and call attention to the generous, civilizing impulse normally present in the human shelter” (1985: 40).

When the dissidents were finally transferred to their cells after interrogation and torture, their chambers acted as shelters; they became their private space and were almost sacred.⁵²⁴ Their few resources, a mattress, a table, some paper, provided them with some sort of sense of self and intimacy. Against that background and in relation to female political detainees in Northern Ireland, Aretxaga approaches the violation of prisoners’ “only private space: the cell” as a constituent element of the “technology of control” within the sexual and power relations (2001: 20). During my interview with Zoe Xenaki, she began her narration with a very detailed description of her cell. On this ground, “the prisoner’s physical world is limited to the room and its contents; no other concrete embodiments of civilization pass through the doors” (Scarry, 1985: 41). This is evident in Anastasia Tsirka’s case, who despite having a miscarriage after her torture in her cell (No. 3), she stated: “from that point on I didn’t have a name, from that point on I was No. 3...the cell was pitch dark, dirty, full of bedbugs...then I started loving this cell, I laid down and I slept naturally, as I didn’t have anything” (1974: 18).

Victims and practices of torture

In terms of the victims of torture, the targets were usually students, members of the various

⁵²¹ The description of the solitary confinement cells is based on Kitty Arseni’s testimony (in Becket, 1997: 45); also see her memoir (Arseni, 2005) and “Letter from Athens Security Police Station”, Amnesty International.

⁵²² For the conditions in solitary confinement, see the cases of Angeliki Sotiri, “New evidence on Greek Tortures”, *The Sunday Times*, June 16th, 1974, MGA/InfoXIV/Torture and Dora Konstantinidou, Beikou Archive, Box 9: Youra, ASKI and the excerpts of a letter written by a woman political prisoner and smuggled out of the Security Police (April 1968). Also see Arseni’s memoir (2005) and Becket (1997: 45).

⁵²³ See Arseni (2005: 72-75) and especially her testimony (in Becket, 1997: 46-47).

⁵²⁴ According to Feldman, the cell is the relatively ‘safe sector’ in prison (1991: 209).

illegal anti-junta organisations such as 'Rigas Ferraios', 'Patriotic Anti-Dictatorship Front' (PAM) and 'Communist Youth of Greece' (KNE).⁵²⁵ As they were not well-known members of the Communist or leftist parties, or of the Greek intelligentsia, they were more easily subjected to torture, since even if their cases were made public, the levels of interest and clamour, both in the country and abroad, would not be that great. The authorities used torture in order to obtain information on anti-junta activities; the victims were also selected on the basis of their vulnerability under interrogation and torture. Zoe Xenaki, who was held incommunicado for 2.5 months in the premises of the Security Police, argues that "when you were called for interrogation your stance needed to be direct, non-negotiable...you had to make them realise that you were determined not to break" (Interview, July 24th, 2009).

As in the case of female detainees in the Mechanics School of the Argentine Navy, political prisoners in the police and interrogation centres were given numbers in order to conceal their identities during torture. Although these were also the guidelines in the Greek military regime in terms of the compulsory anonymity of the victim, Nadia Valavani was subjected to what is referred to as 'hard beating' such as punches and kicks in front of other prisoners, but the perpetrator, in a burst of anger, revealed her name.⁵²⁶ The anonymity also served as a vehicle to help the perpetrators to disassociate themselves from the victims and from the torture; the torturers in certain cases wore black masks at the time of interrogation.⁵²⁷ As the victim was conceptualised as being less than human, worthy of assault, the torture increased and was eventually transformed into routine and became normal.

The Amnesty International report (1968) on the situation in Greece states that, even though the physical beating of prisoners is a common practice of intimidation, it can only be classified as torture if it is conducted in a systematic way. In the Greek junta, the physical and psychological violence against the detainees was systematic and deliberate, and targeted the political and gender identities of the dissidents. The prisoners were tortured for hours, on a daily basis, usually naked or half-naked, in some cases with their eyes covered; 5-6 officers took the role of torturers and many more were present.⁵²⁸

According to junta dissident, Pericles Korovessis, who was brutally assaulted, there were two types of interrogation: the 'civilised' and the 'scientific'. The 'civilised' involved psychological pressure to denounce communism or reveal names and information in relation to anti-junta activities, whereas 'scientific' entailed physical and sexual abuse (2007: 31-43). In fact, the

⁵²⁵ For more information on the victims, see Nadia Valavani's speech in the *Association of Imprisoned and Exiled Resistance-Fighters 1967-1974* (SFEA) Symposium (April, 21st, 2007, Athens) and Kitty Arseni's testimony (2005).

⁵²⁶ Interview with Nadia Valavani, June 7th, 2010, Athens.

⁵²⁷ That was the case at the Piraeus Security Police Station.

⁵²⁸ Indicatively see *The Black Book* (1971) and Becket (1997).

methods of physical abuse were given names such as ‘wood’, ‘iron’, ‘peanut’, which referred to different degrees and levels of torture.⁵²⁹

Besides *falanga* (bastinado), a widespread technique of torture, other methods entailed the beating of naked bodies with wires, burning with cigarettes and electroshocks. Incidents of sexually-related assaults were also reported. In the case of women, these involved rape or attempted rape and genital penetration with objects and water. In the case of men, sexual torture entailed excessive beatings and electroshocks on the genital area.⁵³⁰ Additionally, the micro-technologies of torture included the employment of specially designated ‘tools’. In fact, when Penelope Savinidou was tortured, her torturer Andrikos opened a drawer and showed her his ‘tools’ saying that if she did not talk, he would use them (1971: 36). There was also a lesser-known case of torture, namely that of a young woman, Afroula, who was plunged headlong into the sea from a helicopter; a method of torture common to the Latin American dictatorships.⁵³¹

Special attention needs to be paid to the sexual nature of torture. It is primarily in the sexual abuse of women where the process of torture is transformed into what female political inmates in Argentina have described as a ‘diabolical ceremony’ (Actis *et al.*, 2006: 61). Primarily young women, usually students, were the victims of sexual abuse and terrorisation. This type of violence was executed by the Special Students’ Division (*Spoudastiko*) in the premises of the Security Police under the Directorship of Karapanayiotis and Gravaritis, who was an expert on sexually oriented tortures (Becket, 1997: 49-50). Cases of rape in the Military Police (ESA) have also been reported, but the victims (usually students) were afraid to denounce their perpetrators, especially women from the countryside.⁵³² Pericles Korovessis, who was also sexually assaulted during interrogation, mentioned in an interview incidents of rape involving the use of fish that were not publicised by women, even when the victims were well-known

⁵²⁹ These names –mentioned by Korovessis in his memoir (2007: 39)– were used by the officers and torturers during Korovessi’s interrogation and torture.

⁵³⁰ See Amnesty International Reports (1968, 1973) and the memoirs of Korovessis (2007) and Arseni (2005). In fact, one of the most famous incidents of torture was the brutal assault against Pericles Korovessis and Kitty Arseni that was made public abroad through their testimonies in the Council of Europe and which caused international outcry and pressure on the regime. The testimonies facilitated the condemnation of the military regime for human rights violations by the Council of Europe in December 1969. The military government decided to ‘voluntarily’ withdraw from the Council of Europe, as conviction was certain. Incidents of sexual torture can also be found in “New evidence on Greek Tortures”, Greek News Agency, MGA/InfoXIV/Torture and in the Greek magazine *Odigitis* (Body of the Central Council of the Greek Communist Youth-KNE), December 1973, p.6, ASKI.

⁵³¹ The well-known director and writer, Roviros Manthoulis, discusses incidents of torture in Latin America, where the victims were plunged headlong into the sea, in his novel *Lilly’s Story* (2002) (initially a film) based on the torture of a woman in the Greek junta. However, he argues that there are no similar cases in the Greek dictatorship. Nevertheless, Dora Koulmanda, whom I interviewed (July 29th, 2010), disclosed Afroula’s story without providing her surname, as she was shattered for a long time and avoids discussing the torture that she had to undergo. Even though Afroula’s case is similar to methods of extermination employed by other regimes, in the Greek case it primarily functioned as an intimidation technique.

⁵³² For more information, see the Greek Magazine *Odigitis* (Body of the Central Council of the Greek Communist Youth-KNE), December 1973, p.6, ASKI.

members of junta-resistance groups, because of the shame that extended to their local communities.⁵³³ In the same context, incidents of forced impregnation conducted by specially-designated perpetrators remain covert and are rarely discussed.⁵³⁴ At the age of eighteen, a young woman was sexually abused with a stick, which was later used to hang her on the wall; her torture took place on the terrace of the Security Police, where she was left naked for two days (Korovessis, 2007: 108). Similarly, the breasts of women were whipped with wooden sticks and ropes and they were also sexually penetrated with objects.⁵³⁵ All these forms of sexual violence and the technologies of torture, according to Aretxaga, replicate the scenario of rape (2001: 6).⁵³⁶

In these circumstances, the tortured body becomes an instrument of shame, especially the exposed naked body. Melpo Lekatsa describes the first bath she took after a whole month as a traumatic experience. She recalls:

Three soldiers took me to an outdoor bathroom...and made me undress. For a whole month that I was imprisoned I didn't have any contact with water. The dirt had stuck on my skin and I looked like a leper...suddenly the dirt is superseded by something worse. Three pairs of insatiable glances are setting eyes on my body...the drops of water are falling like barbs on me. The pains and spasms are intensified. I feel tragically. I feel like screaming... (November 17th, 1997).

In most cases of torture, the female body was naked; it was a quite common practice to pressure women to strip off their clothes, bathe or use the toilet in front of guards or soldiers. Maria Kallergi, a 24-year-old student, was dragged into the snow naked at Dionysos camp, while frozen water was poured onto her body.⁵³⁷ There was also a significant ideological parameter associated with the naked body, eagerly employed by the militaristic and patriarchal domination. Nakedness was systematically employed during torture and interrogation, and was a significant way to flout social norms and cultural connotations. Furthermore, it amplified the victim's sense of vulnerability, fear and humiliation, while at the same time aiming to dishonour the gender and political identity of the dissident. In this "idealised iconography of penal

⁵³³ Pericles Korovessis discussed those cases in the television programme *I Mihani tou Hronou* [The Time Machine], focusing on the tortures that took place on the terrace of the Security Police in Bouboulinas street (November 19th and 26th, 2010, NET).

⁵³⁴ Maria Piniou-Kalli, a doctor and former political detainee, mentioned in the above television programme (November 26th, 2010) an incident of forced impregnation, by a specific guard who was 'assigned' with this task. She argues, however, that even though similar cases of sexual assault did take place, they were not publicised.

⁵³⁵ These incidents of sexual violence can be found in "New evidence on Greek Tortures", *The Sunday Times*, June 16th, 1974, MGA/InfoXIV/Torture, Arseni (2005) and Becket (1997: 171).

⁵³⁶ It is worth pointing out that, until 1984, rape in Greece was only recognised as a criminal act against morality; it was only transformed into a crime against sexual freedom and economic exploitation of sexual life under Law 1919 in 1984.

⁵³⁷ For more on Maria's case, see "Averof Prison", a clandestine report, MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners and *The Black Book*, 1971: 27-30.

hegemony” (Feldman, 1991: 186), the naked colonised female body was vulnerable, exposed, penetrated, easy to assault and women were transformed into a disposable, disoriented human mass.⁵³⁸ Begona Aretxaga, in her analysis of the IRA female prisoners’ strip searches in the high security prison of Maghaberry, argues that “the political and gender identities of the prisoners are re-inscribed with the power of a state acting as a male body politic” (2001: 1). The enforced nakedness, the strip-searching, the total lack of privacy, the sexual insinuations thus constituted a gendered form of political domination, where sexual violence played a key role (Aretxaga, 2001: 1).⁵³⁹

Non-physical methods of terrorisation and torture proved to be equally traumatic, such as witnessing or listening to the cries of other inmates being beaten, being deprived of water and food and suffering solitary confinement. In the Colonels’ regime, the threat of ‘defenestration’ (being thrown out of the window during interrogation and torture) was also quite common. Mock executions and the signing of declarations under absolute fear and physical force were also standard techniques of terrorisation. Maria Kallergi, who was arrested by the Central Intelligence Agency (KYP) and transported to the General Security Police, recalls another method used during her interrogation, the employment of dogs.

The interrogation began again. They called in the Communist hater who brought a large dog. The dog took an active part in the doings. The tortures continued in the same fascist manners for 25 days [...] Manousakakis [Major, the head of the command of the brigade] himself burned me with cigarettes and with a hot iron on the hands, the buttocks, and the legs. They would put their pistols to my head daily (1971: 29).

The majority of arrests took place at the homes of the political dissidents, in front of their family members, late at night, in order to intensify the fear and intimidation, but also in an effort to shatter the important role of the private domain within the Greek culture.⁵⁴⁰

According to the testimonies of former dissidents and victims of torture, in many cases of interrogation, doctors were either present or assisted with the process of torture.⁵⁴¹ Elaine Scarry discusses the co-existence of medicine and law, health and justice as institutional elaborations of the body and the state that were consistently inverted in the concentration camps (1985: 42). The troubling role of the two institutions was also imprinted on the atrocities that took place during the Greek Civil War and in the post-civil war period. One typical example is that of Dr. Kofas, who supervised the abuse of the junta dissidents. Aspasia Karra, a

⁵³⁸ For the colonisation of the female body, see Aretxaga (1997: 131-136) and for the male, see Feldman (1991: 195-198, 199-205).

⁵³⁹ For more, see Aretxaga (1997: 122-145, especially pp.123-133).

⁵⁴⁰ Similarities can be found in other military regimes such as that of Argentina; see Robben (2000: 74-76).

⁵⁴¹ Indicatively, see Arseni’s testimony (2005: 73) and the Averof Prison Report (MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners).

Professor of Philology, semi-paralysed as a result of poliomyelitis, revealed that she was severely tortured during her interrogation and was, in fact, electrocuted with the permission of the doctor who was present.⁵⁴² Similarly, Kitty Arseni, who was arrested as a member of the 'Patriotic Front' for distributing handbills, in addition to being extensively abused, was also taken to an isolated area and threatened with having to undress and be subjected to a 'truth drug'. She later found out that the 'truth-drug' was in fact electroshock, conducted primarily at Dionysos camp or in the 401 Military Hospital and supervised by doctors, who claimed the method was necessary because the detainees were supposedly diagnosed with mental illnesses (Arseni, 2005: 69). In a similar vein, Allen Feldman approaches the "deployment of medical paradigms" in Maze prison of Northern Ireland, as a 'ritual purification' of the male political prisoners, while the presence of doctors in prison's 'rehabilitative paradigm', "provided a medical legitimation for collective violence" (1991: 190).

Most of the female detainees who were tortured argue that, even though the physical pain is almost unbearable, the feeling that prevails during interrogation is not pain, but a compound of fear, terror and psychological torment.⁵⁴³ Dora Koulmanda also describes the uncertainty and fear before the torture of electroshock: "you don't know what it is, where it is coming from, you are in their mercy, you are unable to realise if you are feeling pain or if they are ripping you apart" (Interview, July 29th, 2010). The experience of interrogation, according to Nadia Valavani, is traumatic, but the trauma is mostly psychological. Furthermore, as Nadia had to wait for more than four months in complete isolation in the premises of the Security Police before being interrogated and tortured herself, she found that hearing and watching the abuse of other inmates was even worse than the actual physical pain of *falanga* and the cigarette burns that she suffered (Interview, June 7th, 2010).

Scarry draws an insightful parallel between the interrogation and pain as "a way of wounding", which is also transformed into "a vehicle of self-betrayal" (1985: 46-47). She argues that torture consists of "a physical act", "the infliction of pain", and "a verbal act", in the form of interrogation, during which the body can often betray the person who is being tortured (Scarry, 1985: 35). Kitty Arseni also writes in reference to her interrogation and torture:

I am not afraid of the perverted executioners, Spanos' paranoiac face, the counter with the ropes, the darkness of the terrace and the waters of the wash house. I have the taste of the mop in my mouth, the noise of the motorcycle in my ears. I see Spanos' face in front of me, but above

⁵⁴² See the Averof Prison Report (MGA/InfoXVI/Women Prisoners).

⁵⁴³ Kitty Arseni (2005) argues that the fear of torture outweighs the physical pain. Additionally, see the interviews with Dora Koulmanda (July 29th, 2010, Athens), Zoe Xenaki (July 24th, 2009, Athens) and Nadia Valavani (June 7th, 2010, Athens); also see Valavani's speech (April 21st, 2007, Athens).

all I hate my body for weakening. And I wait for them. As long as they come. I am ready. Now I don't care that my mind isn't working. I don't need it. Now, that I have decided it, now I know how you encounter with them" (2005: 70-71).

Similarly, when Melpo Lekatsa was detained in the white cell of EAT/ESA in January 1974, she recalls: "I was constantly trying to subject myself to the idea that I should not surrender, that I should endure [...] but then I got anxious again. Maybe I don't have the quality of a heroine" (November 17th, 1997). For the same reasons, Dora Lelouda tried to commit suicide with her eyeglasses out of fear of 'breaking' during the interrogation.⁵⁴⁴

Through the interrogation of women, the torturers revived social and cultural prejudices, perceptions and fears. The physical and sexual abuse, along with the psychological terrorisation and the sexual obscenity, were intended on one level to discredit and propagate the long-existing derogatory status of politically active women as immoral pariahs.⁵⁴⁵ However, the subjugation and torture of women targeted their morale and their self-image as women and dissidents in order to make them more vulnerable during interrogation and ultimately 'break' them. Nadia Valavani recalls that the Security Police asked psychologists to produce psychological profiles of the detainees to be used during the interrogation. Nadia was tormented when, after her long detention in solitary confinement, she was presented during her interrogation with the psychologist's conclusions, according to which she was supposedly a rather anti-social woman who joined the 'Communist Youth of Greece' (KNE) in order to feel that she belonged somewhere and not because of her actual belief in communist ideology (Interview, June 7th, 2010). The psychological profiles created by the Security Police targeted the self-esteem of the dissidents; in fact, they succeeded in causing trauma that remained unfiltered for years. Nadia continues by divulging: "it took me years to be at peace with this period, due to the lowered self-esteem and not because of the torture, which can be logically reassessed" (Interview, June 7th, 2010).

4.4.3 Torturing women: gender, nation and sexuality

Within the Greek dictatorial regime, the militaristic narratives, along with paternalistic attitudes, facilitated the establishment of state mechanisms of violence against women, consigning them at the same time to the 'private' domain. In the Greek junta, as in the post-war period of political persecution, female political activism was equated with promiscuity and offered a valid justification for their abuse. Thus, female junta activists who did not conform to the appointed

⁵⁴⁴ Maria Karagiorgi narrates the incident in her memoir (2007: 258).

⁵⁴⁵ See Nadia Valavani's speech (April 21st, 2007, Athens).

gender roles had to be assaulted in order for them to recuperate. Along these lines, Kitty Arseni was told during her interrogation: “parasites like you should be killed. What is your business interfering with politics?” (2005: 80). Diana Taylor, referring to the Argentinean case, argues that the system of torture and murder “during the Dirty War served fundamentally to reconstruct the Argentinian population and turn it into a docile, controllable, feminine ‘social’ body” (1997: 151). In the Greek case, the nationalist mechanisms entailed a system of political persecution, confinement and torture in order to exterminate political and social dissent and ensure the new, Greek, Christian and moral national body.

In a similar vein, Begona Aretxaga, argues in relation to the sexual mortification of female political detainees in Northern Ireland that the “penetration of the prisoners’ bodies enacted the penetration of their political identities” not only as an exercise of control, but also in an effort to “reconfigure the prisoners’ subjectivity – from political to conforming prisoners” and “from rebellious to subordinate women” (2001: 18).⁵⁴⁶ The subjugation of the gender and political identities of the dissidents was situated within a hierarchical gender system, where the female and political body was violated within the ‘male body politic’ in order for the envisioned moral code and power structure to be restored.⁵⁴⁷

It therefore becomes apparent that “torture happens not because it must, but because it can, as an expression of power over those in bondage” (Rosenberg, 2006: xi). The atrocities that took place during the military dictatorship were linked to the predominant power and gender hierarchies, as a climate of impunity and anonymity prevailed. Accordingly, Nadia Valavani situates her attempted rape by a guard in the Security Police as a by-product of this overall immunity during the junta.⁵⁴⁸ Nonetheless, her attempted rape was not an isolated incident, as Nadia later discovered while confined in Korydallos Prison, since the same guard had attempted to rape her co-prisoner Maria, and also a young British female prisoner detained in the premises of the Security Police for possessing drugs.⁵⁴⁹

With regard to female dissidents, the control of their bodies and sexuality was also an attempt to shatter their political subjectivity.⁵⁵⁰ As Nadia Valavani recalls, during *bastinado*, the torturers used to pull the pubic hair of women; the victim, however, “does not record the physical pain, but the uncomfortable intimacy of this gesture that was aiming not to cause physical pain, but to psychologically break them up” (Interview, June 7th, 2010). Torture functions as “a double

⁵⁴⁶ Also see Aretxaga (1997: 122-136).

⁵⁴⁷ For more, see Aretxaga’s excellent analyses (2001, especially p.18; 1997).

⁵⁴⁸ See the interview with Nadia Valavani, June 7th, 2010, Athens.

⁵⁴⁹ Nadia mentioned the last name of her co-prisoner during our interview, but I have decided to keep her anonymous.

⁵⁵⁰ See Aretxaga (2001, especially p.18).

act of inscription: first in the sense of *writing the body* into the nationalist narrative and, second, in the sense of *writing on the body*, taking a living body and turning it into text; a cautionary message for those on the outside” (Taylor, 1997: 152, her emphasis). Foucault argues that torture also functions as ‘a policy of terror’ in order to make everyone aware of the absolute source of power, control and dominance, constituting at the same time ‘part of a ritual’ (1991: 49, 34). Moreover, “it is an element in the liturgy of punishment”; it should “mark the victim” either literally “by the scar it leaves on the body” or visually, when transformed into a ‘spectacle’ (Foucault, 1991: 34). Therefore, the sexual torture and terrorisation of women was enacted on the actual bodies of women in order to intensify the gender and political differences of the victim, but most importantly the assaulted female body was symbolically transformed into a ‘mirror’ and functioned as a vehicle of punishment, discipline and prohibition; consequently, the female body was penalised in every sense.

The nationalist discourse of the junta re-articulated the dichotomy of woman as the ‘whore’ and the ‘virgin’. On the one hand, women were projected as the continuation of the nation and, on the other they were considered to be lesser political subjects and circumscribed within the private domain in order to be monitored. Ivekovic and Mostov argue that “women as mothers” are the “reproducers of the nation”, but they are also perceived as possible threats or enemies to the nation (2004: 11). Within the nationalist regimes, gender nonconformity provides justification for the political exclusion and social marginalisation of female dissidents.

Female dissidents of the period were the ‘destroyers’ of the nation and of the Christian traditions of the *ethnos*; thus, the bodies and sexuality of women had to be regulated and controlled.⁵⁵¹ Ivekovic and Mostov describe this process as ‘state fatherhood’, in the sense that the nation is equated with family and the associated concepts of motherhood and reproduction, as “political acts”, are “under the control of the state” and its institutions such as the church and the family (2004: 11). In the Greek junta, as elsewhere, the aforementioned state practices were also regulated by the long existing gender hierarchies and patriarchal structure. Ivekovic and Mostov argue that “the instrumentalisation of national body politics facilitates the consolidation of the nation-state through regulatory practices rooted in the sexualisation of women and their vulnerability to sexual assault” (2004: 11).

Within this framework, I would like to discuss the case of Kitty Arseni, who was arrested in 1967 as a member of the Patriotic Anti-Dictatorship Front and tried the same year by court-martial. During her interrogation by the Security Police, she was sexually assaulted with a gun-barrel. In her memoir she states:

⁵⁵¹ Also see Ivekovic and Mostov (2004, especially p.11).

A blond one was doing falanga, while the others jumped on top of me, stepping on my stomach, gripping my neck; they lit matches to burn my eyes. I insisted on seeing while I was tortured...so Spanos shouted: "no light, since she wants to see, she will stay in the dark. Burn her eyes"...and he started tearing up my dress. My mouth was shut with a mop. They were banging my head. And then they turned on a machine that imitates the noise of a motorcycle, "Don't shout, no-one will hear you, no-one, talk". That was when I got very scared. Only for a moment, Spanos said: "we should throw her off the terrace to turn her in pieces". Then I breathed, I wanted so much to die (2005: 72).

She continues:

Twenty days have passed since my arrest...I was brought to the terrace...I was beaten, but I don't feel pain. I want to shout but I don't have a voice [...] I want a candescent iron to burn the parts of my body that were touched (2005: 70).

Now I remember when you said that, the fear of pain is bigger than the reality of pain. I didn't see anything rational on them, something that I could explain in my mind. I saw how they wanted to rip me in pieces, looking like cannibals. They were hedonic while I was writhing. That was their job. They didn't know me at all...I wish they had left a part of my body free so that I could somehow resist...(2005: 72).

During torture, the victim seeks for an explanation, not only for the reasons of abuse, but also of the 'rationality' of torture. However, the methods and the machinery, especially of sexual torture, went beyond their wildest imagination. Accordingly, Kitty Arseni felt that her torturers did not consider torture to be part of their usual onerous working hours, but looked upon it as a time of pleasure and sexual gratification (Becket, 1997: 47).

In the repressive and patriarchal Greek state, the role of motherhood was projected as integral to the traditional and religious values of Greek society. Especially when it came to reproduction, a woman's role as a mother was emphasised and political activists were pressured to reveal information or sign loyalty oaths in order to avoid the torture of their children. The use of children and other family members was a common form of psychological pressure and political intimidation during the interrogation. Dimitra Apostolou was told that the Security Police had arrested her husband and daughter. Actually they interrogated her daughter in the next room, so she could hear her (*The Black Book*, 1971: 23). Similarly, Kitty Arseni recalls: "I was hallucinating, having nightmares, with my family being tortured, my mother beaten and my sister raped" (2005: 76). At the same time, their abuse entailed gender-specific markers and was justified, since female dissidents had denounced the saintly role of motherhood and adopted an active role in the political arena. In Argentina, women were tortured in front of statues of the Virgin Mary, in order to be recuperated and to stress the violation of the acceptable social and gender roles (Taylor, 1997: 152). In the Greek junta, torture entailed national and gender markers that were imprinted on the bodies and psyches of the dissidents; it

was, in fact, an effective instrument for the envisioned regeneration of the national female body, but also the political body. This is apparent in the case of Aspasia Karra, who was electrocuted on the parts of her body that were healthy, as she was suffering from poliomyelitis, while her torturers were shouting: “Right arm, left foot, navel...On the navel so that you will not give birth to any communist children” (2006: 25). Similarly, Anastasia Tsirka was extensively tortured and when she informed the torturers that she was three months pregnant, they responded: “What do we care? If it’s going to be like you, it is better off dead” (1974: 17); after her torture, she was thrown off the stairs and had a miscarriage the next morning in her cell.

Women’s sexuality and reproduction was crucial within the Greek dictatorial regime, as in similar nationalist frameworks, and that is why it needed to be controlled. With regard to sexuality, “we must bear in mind how the patriarchal system constructs women’s sexuality and women’s bodies” (Gomez, 2005). Concomitantly, when absolute and uncontrollable power prevails, ‘a culture of violence’ is formed.⁵⁵² Maria Angelaki recalls that, during her interrogation, the torturers kicked her in the genitals and struck her breasts. Furthermore:

They told me that they would torture me in such a way that I would never be able to become a mother. They tore off my clothes, stripped me naked and then stood around me talking obscenely laughing coarsely and threatening me with shameful innuendos or with unmentionable words. They told me that they would subject me to a torture instrument, which they called ‘the little machine’ (1971: 22).

It thus becomes apparent that political activism was considered synonymous with subversive behaviour and promiscuity. During her interrogation, Melpo Lekatsa, a pharmaceutical student, was pressured by the well-known torturer Spanos to reveal details of her personal life.⁵⁵³ In a similar context, a female student was detained and interrogated for ten days for attending a poetry gathering; the interrogation soon took the form of moral abasement and degradation “If you were not plotting, then you were having an orgy. Come on speak up. Who was sleeping with whom?” (Clogg, 1972: 129).

Alongside the explicitly sexual dimension of torture and abuse of women, the indirect practices of sexualised terror and domination proved to be equally powerful mechanisms of control, from both a political and gender perspective. In the narratives of female detainees who were severely tortured, the gendered dynamics of their abuse and traumatisation concentrate on some exclusively female functions such as menstruation and pregnancy. In addition to the previously discussed cases of sexual terrorisation and victimisation, female political inmates

⁵⁵² Sluka (2000: 7, cites Rummel, 1994: 23-24) employs the term.

⁵⁵³ See the Greek Newspaper *TA NEA*, November 17th, 1997.

emphasise the subjugation and degradation they experienced when they were forced to bathe in front of their guards, or when they were menstruating and were dragged into their cells after torture, without being allowed to use the toilet or wash themselves. Aspasia Karra says: “I assumed for a minute that they did it, in order for me to hate my body and give them my soul. Maybe...but I loved it even more, because it endured” (2006: 26). The attempt to politically discipline the female body was carried out through the ‘technologies of power’, while the control targeted the unrepentant women; at the same time the bodies and psyches of women were terrorised and assaulted, with the aim of turning them into docile detainees.⁵⁵⁴ Therefore, as the junta was aiming to create a new nation of pure Greeks, the political dissidents were the primary targets, as they were potential threats due to their supposedly ethnic (Slav) and political (Communist) identities. As “hegemonic gender and national identities” are “constructed around difference” (Bracewell, 2000: 563), female junta dissidents in particular carried the ‘burden’ of ethnic, political and sexual differences.

4.4.4 Militarisation and masculinisation: the feminisation of the male body

The female body is tortured, abused and taunted mostly due to the pre-assigned national fantasies and expectations. It is sexually assaulted and humiliated, simultaneously 'contested' and 'perforated', easily accessible; the male body on the other hand, is disciplined by transforming it into a feminine, vulnerable body. By feminising the male body, the act of torture is normalised and naturalised, while the object of attack is not only the physical body of the victim, whether male or female but also the political locus that it represents. The victimisation serves not only as a punishment, but also as a method of political abasement which remained active and extremely effective throughout the 1946-1974 period.

Male sexual abuse needs to be examined in relation to female victimisation, since it is tightly connected to a hierarchical system of power and gender relations. The bodies of men, not always perceived as male, were also sexually and physically victimised within a nationalist and extreme militaristic context that prescribed masculine and feminine ‘countertypes’.⁵⁵⁵ The sexual abuse of men, not only linked or attributed to the general climate of immunity and not necessarily serving sexual gratification, as in the case of women, was closely connected to the nationalist and militaristic discourse that facilitated or rationalised this type of violence.

⁵⁵⁴ For an interesting discussion on the ways in which torture is literally and symbolically inscribed on the body, see Foucault (1991: 23-24) and Aretxaga (2001: 5, 8); in relation to these modern technologies of power, also see Foucault (1991).

⁵⁵⁵ For more on these countertypes, see Nagel (1998, especially p. 246).

Male dissidents of the military junta were severely victimised, as they were psychologically humiliated, physically and sexually assaulted and politically degraded. One of the most well known cases of abuse is the torture of Pericles Korovessis and Petros Vlassis, who were sexually assaulted with wood and iron pipes.⁵⁵⁶ In the premises of the Security Police, Gravaritis, an officer, used to beat male sexual organs with sacks full of sand and he also pulled them with ropes and iron whips and spat on them; this practice was also common in the torture of women.⁵⁵⁷

In the context of the militaristic regime, as aptly pointed out by Spike Peterson, “male-male rape exemplifies heterosexism’s objectification of the feminine even though no females are involved” (1999: 40). In these circumstances, the torturers and perpetrators of sexual assaults against male detainees did not consider them to be homosexual sexual acts, since these men were considered prior to their attack as feminine due to their political identity and, after the attack, were supposedly feminised as a result of their sexual abuse. Female dissidents were already the ‘other’ in the civil society and envisioned national community; thus, their torture acted as a means of guarding the nationalist ideals and mandatory hierarchical relations.⁵⁵⁸ For the Greek junta, the ‘feminised’ or perceived as homosexual political detainees consisted of “‘subordinated’ forms of masculinity” (Connell, 1987: 186 cited in Nagel, 1998: 246). Therefore, in these imagined communities, men are also assigned expectations and ‘masculine countertypes’; these countertypes can be social, political and sexual (Nagel, 1998: 246).

Male sexual abuse targeted the masculinity of the detainee and did not only serve as a method of political control. Gerasimos Notaras was detained with homosexual common-law prisoners, who were encouraged by the authorities to sexually harass him.⁵⁵⁹ The sexual torture of men transcended the private and was perceived as an assault on their ‘male honour’, on their family and community. It was quite common for the perpetrators to threaten the victims by saying that they would bring family members to watch the abuse, or would sexually assault their wives, mothers or daughters. One prisoner revealed that, during his interrogation and torture, he was threatened that the torturers would rape his fiancée and send her to the brothel that the dictator Papadopoulos had supposedly set up for his soldiers.⁵⁶⁰

The sexual harassment and psychological pressure targeted the male detainees’

⁵⁵⁶ See Korovessis’ (2007) and Vlassis’ (2009) memoirs; also see Becket (1997).

⁵⁵⁷ See Beikou Archive, Box 9: Youra, ASKI and Becket (1997).

⁵⁵⁸ Also see Peterson (1999: 45).

⁵⁵⁹ Notaras’ case can be found in “Torture of political prisoners in Greece”, Second Report by Amnesty International and Becket (1997: 88).

⁵⁶⁰ Similar incidents were reported in the Greek Newspaper *Rizospastis* (August 2nd and 3rd, 1975) and can be found in Lilly’s Zografou account (1975: 27) and in Korovessis’ memoir (2007).

masculinity, while the intention was also to discredit their political identity. The victims were called 'Bulgarians' and 'traitors', their sexual orientation was questioned, and the female members of their families were characterised as whores. Some common interlocations during torture were: "where is your mother and your wife, the whores?", "Bulgarian traitor, Communist, Atheist, homosexual, tonight you will die," "Where is your Party now?"⁵⁶¹ The terrorisation and torture were endless and included cigarette burns, electrocution, mutilation and emasculation. The signing of loyalty oaths was equally traumatic for the dissidents, who were forced to denounce their ideals and political beliefs. A detainee mentioned that when you are arrested, you are either physically destroyed by imprisonment and torture or you are morally destroyed by signing (Becket, 1997: 174).

Within nationalist movements, masculinity emerges as the ideal image: that of the dominant, heterosexual man that is turned into the oppressor and victimiser, if necessary, while the feminine image of vulnerability and passivity is exaggerated (Bracewell, 2000: 569-570). In the Greek military regime, the Greek 'macho' man resurfaced and was integrated in the nationalist regime, as militarisation seems to go hand in hand with masculinisation. At the same time, the envisioned and prescribed image of the passive female is materialised in the abuse of female dissidents, but also in the assault of men, turning them into feminised and submissive victims. Joane Nagel discusses the connection between manhood and nationhood through the concept of sexualised militarism, where "over-sexed 'enemy' men" (rapists) and "promiscuous 'enemy' women" (whores) are simultaneously constructed (1998: 242).

This hyper-masculinisation manifested in military settings and regimes also encapsulates what Peterson (1999: 40) approaches as 'heterosexist masculinity', which, along with hegemonic masculinity, was employed in order to sustain gender hierarchies. Within the context of the military dictatorship, compulsory heterosexuality as an expression of power and control was in correlation with a "system of hierarchical dichotomies" (Peterson, 1999: 40), where the assault of female bodies was naturalised on the basis of controlling sexuality, re-appropriating femininity and sexual differences, while male bodies were violated due to their supposed feminisation, closely connected to their political affiliation.⁵⁶²

As with the abuse and terrorisation of women, the target was to weaken the morale of the dissident and reconceptualise them as enemies in order to transform them into lesser

⁵⁶¹ For more on the nature of threats against male dissidents, see Pandelakis' account in the "Campaign for the abolition of torture", Amnesty International; also see Koroivessis (2007) and Becket (1997).

⁵⁶² For a particularly interesting and important analysis of how heterosexism is employed by nationalism, see Peterson (1999), where she stresses the need to explore nationalism, not only as gendered, but also as heterosexist.

subjects and rationalise the torture.⁵⁶³ There was a hierarchical gender system; male prisoners were assaulted in order to turn them into vulnerable, controllable subjects, and women dissidents were tortured as a punishment for violating the prevailing norms of femininity.⁵⁶⁴ Even though men were also tortured and, as previously discussed, sexually abused in some cases, it was through the abuse of women and female bodies or feminised male bodies that these gender markers were evoked as national fantasies and expectations within the idealised nationalist male body politic.

Therefore, the torture and terrorisation of political detainees was justifiable on the basis that the torturers were not attacking fellow Greeks, but communists, heathen and ethnically 'allogeneic'. Moreover, the (sexual) victimisation of women was acceptable on the basis of attacking atheist Communist women, socially unfit and immoral, while the abuse of men did not cause the torturers to question their own masculinity, as it was an attack against unworthy, lesser men who were feminised due to their political identity.

Begona Aretxaga approaches the body of the politically rebellious women not as a neutral body, but as "a body already invested with the meanings of sexual difference" (2001: 6-7) and, in the Greek case, political differentiation. Georgia Sarigianidou-Papadopoulou (2006: 21) argues in her testimony that men and women were treated equally during their internment, in terms of deprivation and methods of torture. However, the verbal abuse, the sexual insinuations and sexual abuse of women was distinct, since, in the eyes of the torturers, female dissidents were 'promiscuous women' (Sarigianidou-Papadopoulou, 2006: 21). Consequently, the experience of internment, sexual terrorisation and torture of women dissidents carried gender-specific differentiations that were integral to their victimisation and thus need to be analysed within a nationalist and militaristic context that controlled and punished the bodies, actions and beliefs of women who were in a position to challenge the prevailing gender and power hierarchies.

⁵⁶³ Also see Taylor (1997: 44, 83, 86).

⁵⁶⁴ For an interesting discussion on the linkage between femininity and political subjecthood in Northern Ireland, see Aretxaga (2001: 21-22; 1997).

4.5 Conclusion

During the 1967-1974 period, state persecution and gender violence were not isolated incidents of the Colonels' regime, but a constituent element of the nationalist ideology. State anti-communist propaganda necessitated not only the coup, but also the validity of re-appropriating gender roles. In this way, the "engendered nationalist narratives"⁵⁶⁵ resulted in a culture of violence that was naturalised and justified for the preservation of the nation, while women were projected as the guardians of ethnicity and morality.

This chapter focused on violence, imprisonment and political persecution of female dissidents during the military dictatorship. As in previous chapters, gender-based violence is not considered to be asymptomatic to the overall political and social context, but it was not simply a result of political conflict and unrest. On the contrary, the phenomenon of gender violence and sexual torture was integral to the nationalist, militaristic and patriarchal discourse and framework.

The victimisation and resulting traumatisation of the politically active women are discussed, not only through the mechanisms of state repression that become apparent in their testimonies and experiences of incarceration in exile and prison camps, but also in relation to the role of social norms and the Communist leadership directives, often acting as oppressive dynamics for the detained women.

Particular emphasis was given to the process of torture, as practised mainly in the temporary detention centres and during the interrogation of dissidents. Torture, sexual terror and the moral degradation of female detainees is not considered to be simply a method of political annihilation of the political opponents of the regime, but is viewed as a way of reviving traditional gender roles and nationalist expectations. Male abuse is also approached through this lens, in which emphasis is placed mainly on the role of militarism and hegemonic masculinity.

In any case, the political persecution, confinement and the distinct sexual nature of the torture of politically active women during the military junta occurred as a result of a deliberate and systematic strategy of political annihilation. It was mainly aimed at a violent reinsertion of these women into the private sphere, within the prescribed gender order and power hierarchies, as usually envisioned and revived within misogynist, militaristic, idealised and nationalist entities.

⁵⁶⁵ Hart (1996: 273).

Chapter 5

Conclusion: discussing trauma, memory and silence in women's stories

“Silence is not gold, but mercury. And when gets lost in the listening ear, we die”.

(Tsoukalas, 1999: 31)

If it is true that war never ends, as no war ever does, in the words of the famous Greek poet Manolis Anagnostakis (1945),⁵⁶⁶ this is especially true for women: the persecuted, confined, abused and silenced women of the Greek Civil War, the period of weak democracy and the seven-year military dictatorship. The stories of these women – stories of loss, trauma and silence, but also of survival and struggle – are usually set aside in the “official construction of history-making” and collective processes of memory, in order to enable the creation of an “‘acceptable’ national history” (D’Costa, 2004: 227). Scholars, primarily feminist researchers, who explore the traumatic memory of women, emphasise the marginalisation and overshadowing of women’s voices in the context of national memory and restitution politics;⁵⁶⁷ this exclusion or marginalisation is embedded in a ‘culture of silence’ that surrounds and defines gender violence within the prevailing gender order.⁵⁶⁸ This chapter seeks to discuss the ways gender is performed in the official narratives that were privileged in the *metapolitefsi* (post-junta period) and within the national reconciliation processes, as well as in the context of unofficial, personal narratives of trauma. Therefore, it deals with the intersection of gender, memory and trauma through the narratives of women, and their experiences of persecution, internment and terror within the context of the post-1974 period.

⁵⁶⁶ Also cited in Karamanolakis (2009).

⁵⁶⁷ Indicatively, see Kassem (2011, especially, pp. 2-5), Jacobs (2008), Leydesdorff (2005), Kaplan (2002), McKay (2000), Simic (2007).

⁵⁶⁸ For the culture of violence as reinforced by the military dictatorship in Guatemala, see Blacklock and Crosby (2004), where they provide a feminist analysis of silence not only as form of political domination, but also as a form of resistance among the indigenous communities. Cynthia Cockburn has also discussed silence as a political medium in her analysis of women’s activism, with an emphasis on Women in Black (2007: 172-173).

The first part discusses the historical and political context of the post-1974 period in Greece, a period of democratisation that enacted a series of important political developments and social transformations (particularly for women), delineating the societal position of women and the gendered complications of the national reconciliation agenda. The next part analyses memory, trauma and reconciliation through the scope of gender, applied not only to Greece but to a broader theoretical framework, drawing on the growing body of feminist research on gender and memory. The reasons and resultant complications for the silencing and trauma as imprinted on the personal and collective memory of war, internment and abuse are traced in the stories and experiences of the women who were victimised and traumatised, but who also resisted and survived during the Greek Civil War and the subsequent periods of weak democracy and military dictatorship. The final section of this chapter outlines the conclusions of the thesis and the possible contribution to and impact on particularly the field of gender studies, especially in relation to women, through the intersection of gender, violence and nationalism in war or conflict-affected contexts.

5.1 Setting the Background: national reconciliation and women in post-1974 Greek society

The fall of the military junta in July 1974 gradually led to the normalisation of political life, stability and democratisation in Greece, putting forward at the same time the national reconciliation agenda. Although the majority of changes, measures and policies came about in the context of political expediency, a number of important initiatives for the restoration of the political and civil rights of leftist citizens were enacted. On these grounds, the Karamanlis transitional government legalised the Communist Party in 1974, which had been declared illegal in 1947, and released the remaining junta political prisoners. Ironically, Konstantinos Karamanlis, who was appointed in charge of the transition government (from military rule to pluralist democracy), was considered a scourge of the Communists (Clogg, 2002: 168). At the same time, the *apohountopoiisi* (de-juntification) of the public life, that is the removal of the junta appointees and collaborators, went into effect, even though never fully applied (Clogg, 2002: 170). Karamanlis won the November 1974 elections with his newly formed conservative party, *Nea Dimokratia* (New Democracy), and was elected prime minister, and the monarchy was abolished, based on the referendum, while the Hellenic Republic was established. One year later, the leaders of the military coup were tried and sentenced to death, but the death sentences of the junta *troika*, namely Colonel Georgios Papadopoulos, Colonel Nikolaos

Makarezos and Brigadier Stylianos Patakos, were commuted to life imprisonment.⁵⁶⁹

In October 1981, a new political party, the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), situated at the centre-left of the political spectrum, came to power under Andreas Papandreou, and a number of reforms took place in the context of national reconciliation.⁵⁷⁰ First, National Resistance against the occupying forces during the Second World War was formally recognised in 1982, and a year later, a ministerial decree granted political rights and allowed the repatriation of tens of thousands of political refugees, who by the end of the civil war had fled into the former Eastern bloc.⁵⁷¹ However, the governmental measure regarding the repatriation of Communists was intended only for 'Greeks by descent', excluding, therefore, a large number of Slavic-speaking Greek citizens, who comprised the majority of the guerrilla fighters of the Greek Democratic Army (DSE) (Close, 2004: 266; Clogg, 2002: 180). Moreover, pension rights were granted to public servants who had been dismissed due to their political beliefs and to disabled resistance veterans, while an end was put to the ceremonies commemorating the victory of the National Army over the communists (DSE) in the Civil War (Close, 2004: 266; Clogg, 2002: 180).

The policies and political reforms of the *metapolitefsi* period had both an actual and symbolic impact, because the status of the leftists and Communists and their families as 'second-class citizens', which had resulted in a longstanding and multidimensional stigma, socio-political and economic marginalisation, gradually began to subside after more than 40 years. But beyond the symbolic articulations and conceptual formations of the leftists as miasmas, there was also a practical aspect that had to be addressed. For instance, the official appointment of Communist sympathisers or left-wingers was unthinkable prior to 1981 (Close, 2004: 263). In reality, there was a complex parallel existence of symbolism and political necessity; this coexistence is evident in the governmental cohabitation of the Right and Left political forces, often referred to as the 'Dirty 1989', but also in the burning of personal files of former dissidents, political detainees, and their persecutors or torturers, in the context of national reconciliation. The coexistence of the Left and Right in the governmental 'throne', hitherto unimaginable, was justified in the context of the purification of the political life plagued by the scandals of the PASOK government. On these grounds, in 1989, the new leftist alliance, the Coalition of the Forces of the Left and Progress (comprised of the Communist Party and the Greek Left, the former Communist Party of the Interior) and the rightist New Democracy Party on the basis of *katharsis* and *symfiliosis* (cleansing and reconciliation) led to the formation of a

⁵⁶⁹ See Clogg (2002: 170–171).

⁵⁷⁰ See Clogg (2002: 180–181).

⁵⁷¹ See Close (2004: 265–266).

short-lived coalition government (Close, 2004: 269, 270; Clogg, 2002: 197). Under these new conditions of unprecedented cooperation between Left and Right, the use of the term ‘bandit war’ in reference to the Civil War was officially abandoned, transforming “reconciliation” to an “official state policy” (Close, 2004: 271–272).⁵⁷² In a similar context, in August 1989, the government burned a large number of police personal dossiers of leftist citizens who had been persecuted from the 1940s until the mid-1970s. The action was considered necessary by the Communist Party, but also by the New Democracy Party, in order to eliminate any fear or suspicion of a biased and exclusionary stance at the expense of the leftists and Communists. In reality, PASOK and the former Communist Party of the Interior opposed this artificial national reconciliation, as did the intellectuals, historians and scholars of the country, who abhorred the destruction of valuable material that documented the 50 years of persecution, repression and abuse of the Communists and their families, as well as evidence about their persecutors and torturers.⁵⁷³ For the Left and its members and sympathisers that were still haunted by the long-standing banishment and intimidation, a new opportunity to enter into the public sphere without fear, harassment or threat was before them. However, the obliteration of this dark and traumatic past was seen primarily to benefit the conservative political forces. In a parliamentary speech in 1990, Prime Minister Konstantinos Mitsotakis and the leader of New Democracy stated a prevalent position among those in power: “There exist aspects of our national history which we prefer not to know about” (Close, 2004: 273).

Nevertheless, the fall of the junta did not lead to the immediate incorporation of the leftists in the public life and to their integration as equal members of civil society. In fact, the oppression of the leftists continued until the late 1970s and was apparent in several aspects of everyday life, not only in the countryside but also in urban centres.⁵⁷⁴ For example, in at least 29 public and private enterprises, the employees were required to submit declarations of repentance, and left-wing gatherings and ceremonial celebrations of the National Resistance were forbidden (Close, 2004: 263). As poignantly stressed by David Close, “at the grassroots level, police repression persisted to some extent, and in a manner that was not merely irksome but intimidating, until PASOK’s accession to power in 1981” (2004: 263). It is worth mentioning that when Papandreou as Prime Minister and leader of PASOK delivered in 1982 an

⁵⁷² David Close argues that “the Greek word for civil, *emfyllos* (intra-racial), is more expressive” – and perhaps, more accurate –; “than its equivalent English word and conveys the strong sense of ethnic identity” (2004: 271). He continues by arguing that it is the ethnic identity (except for the *slavophones*) that united both sides, namely the Right and Left (Close, 2004: 271); however it was exactly the ethnic identity (or the ethnic demarcations) that was employed both in practice and in rhetoric for the persecution of the Left.

⁵⁷³ For the burning of files, see Close (2004: 272–275).

⁵⁷⁴ David Close (2004: 263) mentions several incidents of oppression and harassment of the leftists that took place between 1977 and 1980.

enthusiastic speech officially recognising the National Resistance, the deputies of *Nea Dimokratia* abandoned the parliament in dissent, believing that the Papandreou government was, through this recognition, granting amnesty to the Communists for their crimes (Close, 2004: 266).

This clearly demonstrates the superficial dimension of national reconciliation, in that it was apparent that all political forces, both the Centre and the Right, in one or the other way, used the heritage of the Left to their own benefit.⁵⁷⁵ In fact, as aptly noted by Close, “in no other country, perhaps, has manipulation of the past been more ruthless and ingenious than in Greece, where it has continued until quite recently” (2004: 258). Similarly, women dissidents were also cited to the benefit of the official discourse, as one of PASOK’s leaders emphatically stated: “The finest hour for the women of our country, the first breath of freedom, was our National Resistance [...] After the victory of the Right, the ramparts against them were restored” (cited in Close, 2004: 265). Communist and leftist political organisations also used women in their own post-junta rhetoric.⁵⁷⁶ Women served as a white canvas for state objectives and nationalistic imperatives to be fulfilled not only during war, but also in post-conflict settings of democratisation and peace.

In the context of *metapolitefsi*, feminism became part of the social discourse only after three decades of silence, “as a congeries of ideologies, a contested cultural symbol and a social movement” (Cowan, 1996: 61), bringing into the fore the ‘woman question’. Furthermore, with the fall of the military regime, the women’s movement “gained strength from the public denunciation” of the ‘subaltern experiences’ of women, that is, the “silencing, censorship and physical restraints” that dominated women’s lives during the junta (Van Dyck, 1994: 46; 1998: 121). The second wave of feminism, along with the historical and sociopolitical circumstances of the *metapolitefsi*, triggered a heated public debate, leading to substantial changes in terms of women’s rights and gender equality, perhaps the most important rights for women since winning the right to vote in 1952.⁵⁷⁷

The *metapolitefsi* period, and the subsequent democratisation, along with the revived feminist movement, set the basis for implementing a series of important policies that were to

⁵⁷⁵ This is also argued by David Close (2004); he still opines however, in reference to the Greek Civil War and the politics of memory, that these ‘fragmented memories’ are a better alternative to absolute silence or ‘neglect of the past’ (2004: 275-277).

⁵⁷⁶ For more on the integration of women into the rhetoric of the leftist (youth) organisations, see Repousi (1996); for an interesting analysis of the complexity of gender relations as indicated and prescribed within the rhetoric of the youth communist and leftist party organisations during the *metapolitefsi*, see Papadogiannis (2011).

⁵⁷⁷ A number of scholars have dealt with the feminist movement in post-1974 Greece from a variety of theoretical perspectives and standpoints, anthropology, history and feminist studies; see Papagaroufali (1995–1996), Stamiris (1986), Repousi (1996), Cowan (1996), Poulos (2009), Mihopoulou (1995–1996), and Kaklamanaki (1984).

substantially improve the lives and status of women in Greece. The most important development was the 1983 revision of family law based on the 1975 Constitution, which, despite the constitutionally defined equality contained therein, had continued the strong traditional and patriarchal structures of Greece.⁵⁷⁸ Until the 1983 revision, the husband was the *de facto* head of the family and exclusively determined all decisions that regulated family life (Athanasiadis, 2007: 21–22). In addition to the amendment of family law, civil marriage was introduced, in the face of fierce criticism and opposition from the Church; the law also allowed divorce by consent, decriminalised adultery, and abolished the dowry system, though the latter was, however, only in theory (Clogg, 2002: 181). Furthermore, this social upheaval allowed a unique opportunity for Greek society to analyse and resolve issues that had until then been considered personal and taboo: for instance, reproductive freedom, recognition of children born out of wedlock and the legalisation of abortion (Athanasiadis, 2007: 22),⁵⁷⁹ the latest being the most controversial. At this time of upheaval and hope, when 500 Greek women spoke openly about the need to decriminalise abortion (as part of the campaign for the legalisation of the abortion, which began in 1983), and publicly declared that they had had abortions — despite knowing that it was against the law — seven of the women were brought in for questioning by the police (Athanasiadis, 2007: 22 n10).⁵⁸⁰

Even though the role of the feminist movement was significant at this time of change, Greek society was still deeply conservative, rooted in the prevailing patriarchal structures and the eminent position of the Greek Orthodox Church. The role of religion and the institution of family, along with the codes of honour and shame, were still dominant, primarily in rural areas. John Campbell, in the edited volume *Greece in the 1980s*, argues that, despite the urbanisation and the changing attitudes that were brought in the Greek societal structure, “changes on the central personal values of popular culture have not yet been fundamental” (1983: 184). Campbell’s argument is linked to the notion of honour (*timi*), which is approached in parallel to the concept of *dropi* (shame).⁵⁸¹ As Campbell writes, “*Timi* itself is applicable to the individual and to any group to which he or she is morally committed, particularly in Greek rural society to the family, the village and the nation” and to the Greek Orthodox Church (1983: 186, 189). Campbell’s analysis stresses the preservation of the value system, not only in the expected rural communities, but also in the cities, and particularly in view of the wider system of family and in relation to issues evolving around the household, for instance the institution of dowry

⁵⁷⁸ For more, see Repousi (2004).

⁵⁷⁹ For more, see Stamiris (1986), Petrinioti (2006), Varikas (2000) and Repousi (2004).

⁵⁸⁰ For an insightful analysis of abortions in relation to sexuality and national identity, see Halkias (2004).

⁵⁸¹ For the honour and shame paradigm in the Greek context, indicatively see Avdela (2006), Papataxiarchis (1998: 44-49) and the edited volume by Jill Dubisch (1986); also see Chapters 1 (section 1.5) and 2 of the thesis.

(1983: 199). From the oral testimonies of women, primarily the junta dissidents, it is apparent that besides the strictly and traditionally defined gender roles of the rural communities – where dowry and virginity were often a prerequisite for the marriage of young women – the political (youth) organisations of the Left in their own respect were traditionalist, in the sense that although proclaiming gender equality, in reality they were demonstrating a noteworthy control of sexuality and femininity, both in terms of practice and rhetoric.⁵⁸²

Under the new political scenery of the *metapolitefsi*, women, particularly those who participated in the anti-dictatorial struggle, a generation of young, educated and politically active women, became the subjects of competition not only by the Left, to which they traditionally belonged, but also by the governmental parties (primarily by PASOK).⁵⁸³ As aptly pointed out by the historian Maria Repousi, despite the changes made to the Greek society in terms of gender rights and roles, the new political space appears uniquely prohibitive in terms of the gender demarcations of its subjects (1996: 125). In line with Repousi's (1996) analysis, which mostly refers to the leftist political youth organisations (primarily that of 'Rigas Ferraios'),⁵⁸⁴ the women of the period, exchanged in a sense, their active political involvement with a male, neutral status of active subjects; this neutrality, inherently based on sexism and misogyny, traditionally cultivated power and gender hierarchies.⁵⁸⁵ Both in terms of practices and attitudes, but also in relation to the leftist rhetoric, issues related to the private sphere and to the closely defined family life domain, such as having children, motherhood and sexuality, were politicised, while women's concerns and feminist demands were once again marginalised.⁵⁸⁶ This disposability of women first became apparent in the civil and post-civil war contexts, as women's narratives clearly demonstrate, but was also evident during the military dictatorship and, surprisingly, even during the democratisation processes of the *metapolitefsi*.⁵⁸⁷

Unavoidably, one question that emerges, is why female active participation, political engagement and the resulting persecution, incarceration and victimisation has been marginalised or ignored by the official rhetoric and public histories? On a first level, this

⁵⁸² Referring particularly to the interviews with Nadia Valavani (June 7th, 2010, Athens) and Youlia Linardatou (September 18th, 2009 and March 11th, 2010, Athens).

⁵⁸³ For more, see Repousi (1996: 121-153).

⁵⁸⁴ 'Rigas Ferraios', was a student (anti-junta) organisation, affiliated to the Communist Party of the Interior, founded in 1967 that remained active, despite political transformations and tensions with the most important one that of 1987, until 1999.

⁵⁸⁵ For more, see Repousi (1996: 125-126,137).

⁵⁸⁶ This becomes apparent in the memoirs and interviews of women dissidents, referring primarily to the interviews with Nadia Valavani (June 7th, 2010, Athens); particularly useful were also the interviews with Patra Hatzisava (February 7th, 2009, Athens; also see her unpublished memoir) and Youlia Linardatou (March 11th, 2010, Athens). Also, see Repousi (1996: 137).

⁵⁸⁷ See the interviews with Patra Hatzisava (February 7th, 2009, Athens), Youlia Linardatou (March 11th, 2010, Athens) and Nadia Valavani (June 7th, 2010, Athens), and the memoirs of Anna Solomou (2004), Patra Hatzisava (unpublished) and Manolkidou-Vetta (1997).

exclusion is attributed to gender; these are stories, experiences and traumas of women, and, therefore, are deemed by men as not always worthwhile discussing, critiquing or addressing, since, according to popular beliefs, women have participated in the political struggles to a lesser extent, and were detained for less time and suffered less. Secondly, there was – and still exists in certain areas – a limited access for women to knowledge and power. At the same time, both after the end of the Civil War and the fall of the junta, women returned to their past lives and tried to restore relations with their children and family members. This restoration and return to family life was not negotiable, but was raised as a priority within the social and gender prescriptions of the period, which were still strictly defined. On a third level, the marginality of the experiences of women dissidents and political detainees is connected to the feminist movement that did not manage to fully recover after the fall of the junta regime and which, in fact, began to subside in the early 1990s.⁵⁸⁸ Furthermore, in the context of ‘national reconciliation’, a public and open debate on the persecution, and particularly on the (sexual) abuse of women, would resurrect the passions and bring to light the mistakes of the past that all the political forces were trying to sweep under the carpet. On the one hand, the Left was trying to leave behind its participation in a fratricidal and brutal civil war, and on the other, the conservative, right-wing political forces constituted not only the principal persecuting and repressive authority (for 30 years), but were also the ideological successors of national-mindedness, upon which state and nationalist mechanisms of oppression, banishment and terror against democratic and left-wing citizens were based.

In this situation, oblivion seemed for both sides to be the perfect remedy; thus, oblivion became the best medicine, namely the repression of truth to the dark side of consciousness (Elefantis, 2003: 124, 151). As emphasised by Konstantinos Tsoukalas (1999: 30), the Civil War “defines” modern Greeks, and we shall forever be “a nation which emerged from a civil war”. However, “the symbols of national reconciliation, a prerequisite of the democratic process, cannot take place through oblivion” (Tsoukalas, 1999: 30). Or as David Close points out, since the Greek Civil War is still not taught in schools, a national memory of the Civil War is not feasible, leaving only fragmented or private memories (2004: 275). However, as noted by Aggelos Elefantis (2003: 151), there will always be visible a back crippled by torture, to remind us of the fear, terror and abuse that has subsequently been submerged in the national memory. But what about women and the female experience of suffering and abuse, what about their private and traumatic memories? Their voices and experiences of persecution and imprisonment have been silenced in the interest of national reconciliation, in the official

⁵⁸⁸ The argument that the feminist movement subsided in the 1990s is also made by Margaret Poulos (2009: 182).

discourse, primarily of the right-wing and conservative political forces. This silencing was not motivated solely by guilt, but also by political necessity. What would have been the political cost for the Right, the guardians of family and Christian values, if it was revealed and openly discussed that in the context of rampant anti-communism, national-mindedness and nationalism, hundreds of women – some underage, even elderly or young mothers, some with their children – were persecuted, imprisoned and sexually abused due to their family's political affiliation or their own?

In light of the public and societal silencing and suppression of women's experiences, histories and voices, the private oral and written testimonies of women are revealing. Pagona Stefanou (1998: 49-50), a former political detainee, wonders what happened to the women – to the invisible, as she characterises them – namely, the women who grew old in camps; who were abandoned by their husbands when they were released from prison; who had to reunite with their estranged children; who were once again found guilty, this time for abandoning their families; who were once again the stigmatised and the social outcasts, struggling to find a job; whose studies, dreams and aspirations were put aside, since their family and the Party were once again prioritised. Stefanou continues:

Why did no one talk about the pregnant women who struggled with poverty, fascism, contempt and irony? Who ever thought of talking about the hundreds of young women who only remember their marriage as an unfortunate event...or about the women who were left without a child...and never dared to marry again as their husbands easily did, because that would cause even their mother's outcry in the countryside? (1998: 49).

These were the women who had forgotten how to walk outside the prisons, who did not remember how to interact with people who were not detainees, who felt the new clothes as something strange on their bodies – they were the invisible, the silenced, the subaltern.⁵⁸⁹ Fatma Kassem, in her analysis of the gendered memories of the Palestinian women, argues that in order to challenge the multiple marginality, oppression and invisibility of women, the experiences of ordinary women must be documented and incorporated, otherwise “we will remain silent even as we speak, and paralyzed even as we act” (Warwar, 2002: 118, cited in Kassem, 2011: 9).

On this ground, in her influential essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1988), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak discusses the suicide of a young Bengali woman, Bhuvanewari Bhaduri, whose death was attributed to an illicit love. Notably, the young woman committed suicide while menstruating, in order to counter peoples' assumptions that the suicide was a result of a

⁵⁸⁹ See the memoirs of the former dissidents: Stefanou (1998: 49-50, 101-102), Sideri (1981: 146-147) and Hatzisava, unpublished memoir, interview (February, 7th, 2009) and speech at Vervenioti's book presentation.

pregnancy. In fact, it was discovered that she was a member of the Indian independence struggle against British rule, assigned with a political assassination; unable to carry it out, she decided to hang herself. In her discussion of Bhuvanewari's story, Spivak engages in a groundbreaking critique of patriarchy, imperialism and nationalism, concluding that the subaltern within the colonial and neocolonial context cannot speak (1988: 271–313). Even though Bhuvanewari's suicide was a political act, Spivak concludes that "between patriarchy and imperialism, subject constitution and object formation, the image of the woman disappears...There is no space from which the sexed subaltern subject can speak" (1988: 306–307). In the Greek context, the subaltern female stories of the dissidents not only include narratives of suffering and trauma, but also of silencing and exclusion, imposed by the official state rhetoric and, in some cases, by the Communist Party.

Paradoxically, the long-anticipated gender equality, emancipation and individual freedom envisioned by women activists and proclaimed by the Left as early as the 1940s, was not to be fulfilled in the context of the *metapolitefsi*, since the priorities established both on the level of politics and reconciliation rhetoric never fully incorporated gender issues, neither on the Left nor on the Right. On this subject, the words of the former dissident Youlia Linardatou come in mind; she argues that it took her years to realise that women's participation in the resistance organisations and the Civil War, and their resultant exile and imprisonment, was profoundly political, and that, once again, women were being used...since nothing had substantially changed for women, even as we speak (Interview, March 11th, 2010). In a similar way, the former political detainee Fani Manolkidou-Vetta (1997) eloquently stresses in her memoir the exploitation of women in the post-civil war political settings of the Left. In her chapter "*Metapolitefsi*", she writes about the ways women within the leftist and Communist political organisations, referring primarily to the Greek Communist Party and the United Democratic Left, were exploited:

They decided about your life. Whether you will continue your studies or not...if you were allowed to have a relationship with a comrade or not. They would also pressure you to marry a specific person [who belonged to the Party] in order to solve your problems, as they used to say...They were the ones ultimately deciding whether you would sign a declaration of repentance in order to be released from prison. And when they did not use you, you were left with the characterisation of 'repentee' (1997: 216–217).

These women, in addition to the trauma, the silence and the stigma, were also carrying guilt, principally the guilt of leaving behind their children. The trauma and guilt in connection to the shattered relationships with their children is evident in both the oral and written narratives of

these women. Fani Manolkidou-Vetta writes:

Our society, our people, tried and try to heal the wounds [the Civil War] left behind. Do we know how many dramas, how many psychological traumas were created in these stone years that were never healed? How many family relations were dissolved, how many broken relations between parents and children were never restored? Small children who grew up in orphanages...children who were estranged from their mothers. Children that were found in Hungary while their parents lived in other socialist countries and did not have any communication with each other (1997: 218–219).

Children that only met their parents through the prison gates or through photographs, where there was always a big unanswered question, ‘Why did you leave me’? (Manolkidou-Vetta, 1997: 219).⁵⁹⁰ In a similar way, Patra Hatzisava writes in her memoir: “My older daughter keeps me at a distance; she does not talk to me. She does not forgive me for leaving her. She only resists me for being guilty for everything, for every occasion, for every difficulty that she runs across in her life” (Hatzisava, unpublished).

5.2 The Politics of Remembering in Post-1974 Greece: Gender, Memory and Trauma

Through these narratives and stories of women, I make an attempt to interpret memory: both personal and often traumatic and collective, while emphasis is placed on the gendered complications of reconciliation and ‘coming to terms’ with a traumatic past.⁵⁹¹ Women around the globe who have become politically active, or have been persecuted and abused during conflict within the “structures of political transition”, are typically excluded, manipulated or downplayed in the “official story of memory”, while the stories of other actors, usually men, are institutionalised in order to achieve national reconciliation (Hackett and Rolston, 2009: 362).⁵⁹² The exclusion and invisibility of these women is apparent in the lack of acknowledgement of their active participation, political activism and, ultimately, persecution and suffering in the same events commemorated for men; this is directly linked to the male dominance in historiography and decision-making, and to the fact that history is written by the (male) winners.⁵⁹³ Furthermore, historically, access of women to power and knowledge has been limited, and

⁵⁹⁰ ‘Maria’ shares in her unpublished memoir her experience as a child sent to the former Socialist Republics, and brought up in orphanages after her father was exiled and her mother was instructed to work for the illegal Communist mechanisms in Greece-I thank ‘Maria’ for entrusting me with her manuscript; also, see the memoirs of Solomou (2004), Manolkidou-Vetta (1997), Hatzisava (unpublished) and the interview with Eleftheria Ganiti (September 26th, 2009, Yaros Island and her account, 2009: 28-33), all of whom talk about the difficulties in re-approaching their children after their release from the exile camps and prisons. Riki Van Boeschoten also discusses the dissolution of the families because of the Civil War in the context of a Greek village (1997: 188-193).

⁵⁹¹ Also see Ashplant *et al.*, (2000).

⁵⁹² See Kassem (2011, especially pp. 3-4) and McKay (2000, especially p. 565); also see Leydesdorff (2005: xii-xiv).

⁵⁹³ See Kassem (2011: 3-4, 9-10), who makes similar arguments in relation to the Palestinian women; also see Leydesdorff (2005).

“canonical history typically does not consider women’s actions and experiences as fit or desirable to be integrated” into that history (Kassem, 2011: 4). As Alison Baker writes, “Women are recognised neither as important agents of history, nor as reliable reporters and interpreters of history” (1988: 1, cited in Kassem, 2011: 4). Moreover, when they are included in national historiography or in official versions of collective memory, women are depicted as symbols of unity, honour, continuity and stability.⁵⁹⁴ During times of war or violent unrest, women are incorporated into the national discourse, into nationalist or state movements and projects, initially portrayed as necessary elements for the attainment of the national goals; however, as soon as these nationalistic objectives are achieved, women’s issues are immediately submerged or subverted, and the women are then expected to return to the private sphere.⁵⁹⁵ In this respect, the specific and different hierarchal positions held by women in society cannot be ignored; this gender hierarchy is apparent in both the public and private domain, where violence is used to sustain the status quo of the social and gender order (Peacock, 2003: 371).⁵⁹⁶ It is for this reason that the anthropologist Victoria Sanford points out the urgency to include the voices of survivors, particularly women, “in analyses of violence, not simply as descriptive contextualization but as lived experiences that provide interpretation and give meaning to the very structures of state violence” (2003: 27). As this lived experience of violence becomes part of the public and collective memory, or in Sanford’s words, a ‘living memory of terror’, the analysis of the interconnectedness of memory, history and violence is essential, “wherein the memory of surviving a past physical or psychological act of violence is as real and current as today’s experience with an act of violence or its threat” (2003: 143).

5.2.1 Re-approaching memory and trauma

Over the last two decades, what has been described as Social Memory Studies has gradually become a prominent field of scholarly discourse and debate (Olick and Robbins, 1998). Drawing on Nora’s (1989) work, Jeffrey Olick argues that now memory is a special topic, since where once we were immersed in *milieux de mémoire* (worlds of memory), we moderns now consciously cultivate *lieux de mémoire* (places of memory) (2007: 8). The study of memory,

⁵⁹⁴ Also see Kassem (2011, especially p. 4).

⁵⁹⁵ See Peacock (2003) and Alexander and Mohanty (1997), who draw on Partha Chatterjee’s (1992) discussion on colonialism and Indian nationalism (cited in Peacock, 2003: 368). Also see Koonz (1987) and especially Butalia (2004), who in her analysis of gender and nation, within two contexts, Kashmir and the Partition in India, emphasises the role of patriarchy and honour in relation to gender violence as enforced not only by state nationalism, but also within the private sphere and in the family domain.

⁵⁹⁶ For more, see Peacock’s analysis in relation to women in South Asian societies and the reasons why violence against women is considered acceptable in those settings (2003, especially, pp. 371-372).

initially within the field of sociology through the work of the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, now comprises one of the most significant areas of research within the field of oral history and anthropology of memory. Halbwachs was among the first to interpret memory within the social context, arguing that even though individuals are the ones remembering, their memories are constructed within social frameworks (1950: 33, cited in Paradellis, 1999: 28). Halbwachs stresses that “it is through membership of a social group – particularly kinship, religious and class affiliation – that individuals are able to acquire, to localise and to recall their memories” (Connerton 1989, 36).⁵⁹⁷ Jasna Dragovic-Soso argues that “memory is never fixed, but is constantly being constructed and reconstructed”, and even though “it is the individual who remembers, the process of remembering itself is inter-subjective” (2010: 30). In a similar context, Jeffrey Olick stresses that memory “occurs in public and in private, at the tops of the societies and at the bottoms, at reminiscence and as commemoration, as personal testimonial and national narrative, and each of these forms is important” (1999: 346).

When examining societies in transition or countries and social groups that have experienced extreme violence, violations of human rights and atrocities leading to a personal and collective trauma, narrating and/or analysing memory and trauma through autobiographical accounts and life histories or personal narratives becomes particularly important.⁵⁹⁸ In this discussion, trauma is approached as the inability of perceiving an event when it is happening, since the intensity of the experience hinders the understanding of the incident (Caruth, 1991, cited in Vidali, 1999b: 89); comprising therefore, what Van Alphen describes as a ‘failed experience’ (2002: 210-211, cited in Hackett and Rolston, 2009: 359). On this basis, “traumatic memory” is so much “different from normal, everyday memory” that it cannot even “be called memory at all” (Hackett and Rolston, 2009: 359).

When it comes to the Greek context, Anna Vidali argues that even though the Greek Resistance and the Civil War had a traumatic effect on people’s lives, especially throughout the 1950s and 1960s, it was absent from the official historiography and public discourse, and until 1974, the post-war period could only be interpreted through the official, ethnocentric version of history (Vidali, 1999a: 14). Vidali also states that even when the Greek Communist Party was legalised and the National Resistance was recognised, the politics of the period, charged with the events of the 1940s, still had a dramatic effect on the personal lives of the citizens (1999a: 14). In this context, she interprets the 1967 *coup d’état* as a “repetition” of the “civil war trauma”

⁵⁹⁷ Joanna Bourke, however, seems quite sceptical when it comes to the “over-used phrase ‘collective memory’”, arguing that individuals remember, forget and are traumatised, not societies (2004: 473); “the collective does not possess a memory, only barren sites upon which individuals inscribe shared narratives, infused with power relations” (Bourke, 2004: 474).

⁵⁹⁸ Also see Weine (2006).

that was returning in a “compulsive way”, “repeating the violence” (Vidali, 1999a: 14). However, the silence surrounding the events of the Civil War (and the military dictatorship) was not a personal or collective choice, but was imposed in the context of a war that did not end with the official termination of the civil strife; therefore, an official silence was adopted, not necessarily or always imposed from above but in some cases self-imposed out of guilt, grief and the fear of recalling a past that was connected to death, violence, defeat and humiliation, especially for the leftist citizens (Karamanolakis, 2009).⁵⁹⁹ This silence, in some cases, provided the time and space to process the trauma, to grieve and to reconcile.⁶⁰⁰ In any case, as Ashplant *et al.* point out:

only when memories have been woven together into a narrative which is both widely held and publicly expressed do they have the potential to secure political effects. Such publicly articulated sectional memory may be subordinate, if accorded only limited or partial recognition; marginalised, if simply neglected or not deemed worthy of recognition; or suppressed, if treated by the nation-state as incompatible with the parameters of the dominant narrative (2000: 20).

This three-levelled analysis on the functioning of memory and national narrative, effectively mirrors the way women’s memories and experiences were incorporated into the official discourse of collective memory and national reconciliation; in some cases marginalised, while in others subordinated or suppressed.

Despite the interesting research on social or collective memory, in which gender is also integrated as an analytical category, the field still remains largely unexplored in Greece, partially due to oral history that has not fully developed (Van Boeschoten *et al.*, 2008: 23).⁶⁰¹ Nevertheless, there have been some studies that deal with collective or social memory that are gradually addressing the trauma of the Civil War, without, however, adopting a gendered perspective. Anna’s Collard (1993) paper on the social memory in Greece is the first attempt to explore memory and oblivion in relation to the Greek Civil War. Riki Van Boeschoten (1997), in *Anapoda Hronia: Syllogiki Mnimi kai Istorika sto Ziaka Grevenon* [Troubled Years: Collective

⁵⁹⁹ In relation to the guilt, especially the guilt of survival, it is worth looking at the ways Primo Levi and Jean Amery, survivors of the Nazi death camps, have analysed their survival as complicity, as being in a way responsible for those who died; for more, see Sebald (2009: 205–216).

⁶⁰⁰ Luisa Passerini (2005) addresses the complicated relationship between memory and oblivion, arguing that silences, oblivions and memories are aspects of the same process, and that the art of memory can also be an art of forgetting. Therefore, she agrees with the Spanish scholar Paloma Aguilar Fernandez (2005), who in her analysis of the role of silence in establishing democracy in Spain, argues that a charged silence in the public sphere can have a positive meaning (Passerini, 2005).

⁶⁰¹ In discussing the integration of memory and trauma in the Greek academic debate, particularly useful were the following edited volumes: *Diadromes kai Topoi tis Mnimis, Istorikes kai Anthropologikes proseggiseis* [Paths and Sites of Memory: Historical and Anthropological Approaches], edited by Benveniste, R., and Paradellis, T. (1999); and *Mnimes kai Lithi tou Ellhnikou Emfyliou Polemou* [Memories and Oblivion of the Greek Civil War], edited by Van Boeschoten *et al.* (2008).

Memory and History in Ziakas Grevenon] deals with the social memory of Ziakas village, with an emphasis on the events of the Resistance and the Civil War. Anna Vidali (1999a,b) introduces the relationship between trauma and personal memory through the life histories of four women who have been affected by the events of the Greek Resistance and the Civil War, using the lens of psychoanalysis and oral history. Venetia Apostolidou (2010) in the recently published *Trauma kai Mnimi. H pezografia ton politikon prosfygwn* [Trauma and Memory: The Literature of the Political Refugees] discusses trauma and memory as imprinted on the fiction writing of the political refugees of the Greek Civil War, and emphasises the comforting role of literature, since, as she argues, literature functions as a 'social arena', where individual memories trespass the private sphere and, thus, ensures public recognition (2010: 53). Tasoula Vervenioti (2003) in *To Diplo Vivlio* [The Double Book] uses the narration of the former political prisoner, Stamatia Barbatsi, and the published memoirs of women political prisoners of the Civil War period to reconstruct the history and memory of these women. In a similar framework of analysis, Konstantina Bada, in the recently published edited volume *Mnimes kai Lithi tou Ellhnikou Emfyliou Polemou* [Memories and Oblivion of the Greek Civil War] (2008: 103–129), explores in her paper history and memory from the perspective of women, through archival research and oral histories of women who experienced the Civil War in the Agrinio area. Throughout, Bada stresses the need to view women as historical subjects.

The incorporation of women in these studies – despite the often-academic reluctance – is a step towards a more systematic analysis of the interconnectedness between gender, memory and trauma. However, the gender parameter is, to a large extent, absent from the academic discussion of the civil war and post-civil war traumatic memory, while the period of the military junta, despite the extreme suffering, sexual victimisation and torture that took place, is totally ignored in the scholarly debate. The trauma of women and the memory of lived experience are closely linked to the repressive state mechanisms and the nationalist and militaristic discourse that highlighted gender differences and imposed gender and power hierarchies. Women's positioning within this gender order and power structure was, however, related not only to their political activism during the civil strife, but was based on an extant patriarchal and exclusionary paradigm of social and gender roles, which remained active during the 1946–1974 period and was employed by all the political forces, including the Left. Therefore, the traumatic memories of women were not only related to the fear of internment, abuse or death in the context of a conflict, war or military dictatorship, but were important aspects of a complex process, where nationalist ideology and gender hierarchies, have to be taken into account. In the context of the thesis, through the analysis of the political violence against

women in relation to the nationalist ideology and the gender expectations and national markers imposed on the bodies and psyches of women, the basis is set for a further articulation of the intersection between gender, memory and trauma in war, nationalist movements and social upheaval.

Within this expanding area of research, “issues of gender and memory have become particularly salient, as feminist scholars have begun to question the way in which women, as a category of remembrance, have either been represented or erased” from historical and national narratives of violence (Jacobs, 2008: 212). These are “the histories of women who do not fit in with the heroics of national histories” (Leydesdorff, 2005: xiv), comprised of stories related to female victimisation, as it is primarily women who experience extreme violence, sexual abuse and torture, oppression and marginalisation as a result of war, conflict and unrest. This discussion leads us therefore to memory; memory, according to Selma Leydesdorff, is “a tool women use to come to terms with a traumatized past, either as individuals or as a specific group, for instance after a collective trauma” (2005: xii). Leydesdorff (2005: xiv) aptly points out, as feminist researchers have also emphasised, that “civil war always brings a special type of suffering for women”; rape is rarely mentioned in written sources and it can only surface through victim’s narrations of trauma, a dimension that also became apparent in this research (Leydesdorff, 2005: xiv).

On this ground, an attempt has been made in this thesis to better understand “how gender functions as a category of traumatic memory” and to explore the gendered implications connected to the “historical construction of women as subjects” of trauma, torture, incarceration and death (Jacobs, 2008: 213). Leydesdorff also points out that in the “theoretical works on memory”, particularly in the field of feminist theory and feminist oral history, “gender has become an integral part of the analysis” of gendered memories that allows for “counter-histories” and “omitted histories” to be integrated into the research spectrum; these “counter-histories” and “counter-memories” are instrumental in the writing of oral history (2005: viii, x). In light of this understanding, a growing body of research is increasingly attempting to engender memory, or in Sayigh’s words, to reconstitute a “female collective memory”, as “the discrepancy between women’s participation and their marginalization in national politics and histories has fuelled specific forms of feminism” (1996: 146, cited in Kassem, 2011: 5). However, in order to understand the gendering of memory, we need not only to examine the individual, personal dimensions of memory, but also the ways gender roles are naturalised within the power

hierarchies that reinforce or cultivate the silencing of women.⁶⁰²

5.2.2 Reconciliation and storytelling: The gendered implications

Olivera Simic (2007: 1, 4) approaches reconciliation as a long-term and complex process, where the quest for truth, justice, healing and forgiveness is crucial; additionally, she urges an engendered, broad and inclusive process, due to differences in experiencing and suffering during war and peace. In the Greek case, national reconciliation, despite its institutional character, does not include those gender-based indicators that are necessary for achieving gender justice and meaningful reconciliation. Therefore, the relatively new phrase in the Greek context, 'coming to terms with the past',⁶⁰³ may be more applicable in terms of integrating silent, subaltern stories of those who are usually not included in the official history-making, namely women, and especially women guerrilla fighters, political detainees and junta activists. Jasna Dragovic-Soso argues that the process of coming to terms with the past "takes place after periods of state terror or repression, as well as after periods of violent intra- or inter-state conflict", while "its principal aim is to counter denial and achieve broad public acknowledgement not just of what happened, but also the victims of the crimes and these crimes' perpetrators" (2010: 34). In the context of the Greek Civil War and the junta regime, both the victims and the perpetrators – especially of the sexually-related crimes – have so far not been fully acknowledged, due to the silence involved not only from above, but also, in some cases, the self-imposed silence imposed by the still-dominant cultural and social beliefs. The silence or concealment of the traumatic past is well illustrated in the previously discussed burning of the personal files, that being only one example, while the self-silencing is well understood, keeping in mind the prevailing gender and social norms. This silence, which is apparent even today, is also reflected in the relative paucity of oral and written accounts of women's experiences, especially in relation to the sexual nature of abuse. Furthermore, there are aspects of women's experience as guerrilla fighters and/or political prisoners that remain unknown even among family members, either out of shame or in order to avoid transmitting the trauma or the shame to their children. Stavroula Toska, a young actress and filmmaker who is in the process of producing a documentary on the exiled and imprisoned women of the Greek Civil War, explained that her mother had only recently disclosed that her grandmother had been a political prisoner at the Female Averof Prisons; both her mother and grandmother had concealed it in

⁶⁰² Also see Leydesdorff, Passerini and Thompson (2005: 13–14).

⁶⁰³ Also see Cohen's, *States of Denial: Knowing about Atrocities and Suffering*, where 'coming to terms with the past' becomes an urgent and fateful question (2001: 13).

order to protect Stavroula, since this aspect of her grandmother's history conveyed trauma and shame, and was considered private and 'taboo' in the town of Northern Greece that they were living (personal communication, January 10th, 2011). As argued by Temma Kaplan in relation to Pinochet's Chile, the shame that results from sexual abuse, political incarceration and torture effectively places the victims in "a conspiracy of silence with their persecutors and torturers" (2002: 180–181).

Nevertheless, many women believe that their stories, voices and experiences must be documented. Nitsa Gavriilidou (2004), a former political exile, decided to write a memoir about the incarceration of women at the Makronisos concentration camp after reading in an article on the insert magazine *Tahydromos* of the Greek centrist newspaper *TA NEA* that "in the years that Makronisos was a 'national penitentiary', there weren't any women" (September, 2003). In a similar way, the former junta dissident, Zoe Xenaki, during our interview noted that even though she understands that there are particularly difficult and traumatic dimensions of women's victimisation during the military dictatorship, the personal testimony is particularly important (Interview, July 24th, 2009).

As Anna Vidali argues in relation to what it means to narrate, to listen and to have access to the past, that "for a history of traumatic experience to come into being, someone else needs to listen, even though this unique opportunity of transmission carries the risk of injury for those listening" (1999a: 16). Additionally, "while the recitation of the trauma alters the status of the witness, it creates the possibility for a new kind of listening" (Vidali, 1999a: 16). However, in this "paradox of historical experience" in which "only silence can maintain its uniqueness", these personal histories "must be narrated in order to offer the specific place and time in the future" (Vidali, 1999a: 177). The Greek historian, Antonis Liakos, himself a junta political prisoner, points out that through the relation of trauma and history, we can answer the question about why we do history, evoking however, a new question: "Do we write history to repress our traumas or to heal them? In any case, in attempting to heal them...our traumas return as history" (2001: 57).

Therefore, even when the truths are fragmented or incomplete, not touching upon silenced or never-discussed aspects that usually involve gender violence, sexual abuse and shattered personal relations, along with guilt and trauma, these 'half-truths' seem a better alternative than absolute silence. Perhaps they are a first step for coming to terms with this painful past, forming in a way, a 'counter-memory' as defined by Foucault (1977), in the sense that "memory is activated under the pressure of a personal recollection or as resistance to the official 'call' for oblivion" (Benveniste, 1999: 21). This paradigm becomes apparent in Maria's

testimony. 'Maria', who for years carried the burdens of a broken family due to the political participation, persecution and internment of her parents, painfully struggled to interpret and find consolation for the separation and disintegration of her family, and, under the instigation of her daughter, decided to write a testimonial of her feelings and experience as 'a child of the Civil War'. This memoir, which took her years to act upon, was completed within a month, and ultimately helped her to better understand her parents, especially her mother, and to eventually forgive her. However, she clearly states that there are aspects that are not revealed, since "you cannot share everything. I need to keep some things for me" (unpublished memoir). In Maria's words: "So many years of silence. When something hunts and hurts you, you don't speak. You live in silence. I am not silent. I kept silent because I had to. How can someone turn silence to speech? I tried to let go of the past, by living in the present. However, how can you face reality without being freed from the past?" (unpublished memoir).

Stanley Cohen stresses the complex intersection and contestation of personal accounts and public histories; without the "comparisons and discrepancies between the public and the private" Cohen argues, "collective memory would become what it can never be: the arithmetical sum of the identical memories shared by all survivors, perpetrators and bystanders" (2001: 124). Given that, it becomes apparent that whatever voices of women are recorded, despite the pauses or through partial silences, their existence is a far better alternative to absolute silence or invisibility. Temma Kaplan (2002:180-181), through the testimony of the former Chilean political prisoner, Nieves Ayress, analyses the gendering of memory as a form of political resistance. She argues that the testimonies of gender violence are able to reverse the shame that the state apparatus, the government or the dictatorship attempted to impose on the victims through torture, sexual abuse and humiliation, enabling, in this way, a process of gendering memory (Kaplan, 2002: 180–181, 187). Through this gendering of memory, both private and collective, the testimony or narration of trauma becomes a mode of political resistance and empowerment, transforming private shame into political dignity (Kaplan, 2002: 180-181, 195; Agger, 1992, cited in McKay, 2000: 564). In a similar context, Victoria Sanford has analysed the testimonies of Mayan women who have survived the Guatemalan genocide, as a step towards creating a new public space for discourse and agency; stressing at the same time the need for researchers, anthropologists, historians and sociologists to incorporate the stories and voices of victims and survivors of violence as actors in their own history; otherwise, "they commit a discursive silencing of human agency that has serious historiographic impact" (2003: 209).

In the 'psychotic universe', as approached by Anna Vidali (1999a: 168) drawing on

Holocaust studies, the realities of women were formulated by a microcosm comprised of death, extreme torture, sadism and sexual humiliation, but also by guilt – mostly for their children, who also suffered in silence and darkness – as well as guilt induced by rigid patriarchal structures.⁶⁰⁴ These patriarchal patterns regarding gender roles, sexuality and femininity were not only instigated by the state apparatus and the official rhetoric, but also by cultural and religious norms that indoctrinated proper female behaviour. The state remains a male-dominated and masculine construction, in Pettman's words (1996), while in light of norms of cultural and religious reticence, women who have undergone suffering and trauma due to gender violence, are expected to 'forgive and forget' (McKay 2000: 565). This philosophy is exemplified in the following incident: when the *Association of Women Political Exiles* sought the permission from the then-Bishop of Demetrias in Volos, Thessaly (and the later Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens), to place an honorary plaque in the monastery on Trikeri Island, where women had been detained during the Civil War and in the years to follow, the bishop proclaimed that it was time to forgive past discord and tolerate the other's peculiarity, in order to avoid repeating in the future the mistakes of the past (July 7th, 1994, personal archive of S. R.). As aptly pointed out by Tina Rosenberg (1994): "Faced with the issue of dealing with the past, most governments have made the political call that leaving the past alone is the best way to avoid upsetting a delicate process of transition or to avoid a return to past dictatorship" (cited in McKay, 2000: 566). Through such actions, women's experiences and stories of suffering and trauma, in the Greek context and in most others, are not only marginalised, but are often silenced under the pretext of forgiveness and a narrowly defined national reconciliation.⁶⁰⁵

The silencing is not only expected in relation to gender suffering during war, but also in terms of the long-anticipated gender demands and contestations set in the post-conflict period that reveal an "asymmetry of gender power" (Simic, 2007: 4). This asymmetry becomes evident – and was also the case in post-junta Greece – in the transitional, post-conflict periods and processes of justice and democratisation, where gender justice and gender matters, in general, are not established as a priority.⁶⁰⁶ Furthermore, the transformation from war to peace, or in Greece's case, from occupation, Civil War and military dictatorship to democracy, usually reveals "a highly masculinised society", where the preservation of patriarchy is always a prerequisite (Simic, 2007: 6). Accordingly, women dissidents who were deeply affected by and

⁶⁰⁴ For more, see Vidali's conclusion (1999a: 207-210).

⁶⁰⁵ McKay discusses a number of cases where women's memories and experiences have been left out of the historical scope and omitted from the official processes of justice and reconciliation, such as the Japanese women who were held in American concentration camps during the Second World War, even with their families (2000: 565–566).

⁶⁰⁶ Also see McKay (2000: 564, 566).

participated in the Resistance Movement were detained during the Civil War, or actively joined the anti-dictatorship struggle and ultimately suffered in camps and prisons of the junta regime, had willingly or not entered the public sphere, thus redefining their gender and political identities. Through this prolonged period of conflict, unrest, political activism and persecution, women came to the fore, while “the patriarchal structures of society that degrade and confine political, civil and other liberties of women” were consequently revealed and contested (Simic, 2007: 8). However the newly formed political space for women was soon abandoned in the post-conflict society, as the ‘demobilisation’ of women required a “return to the gender status quo” (Simic, 2007: 8).⁶⁰⁷

Despite these setbacks, progress has been made in relation to the democratisation processes and the attempt to ‘come to terms with the past’ and to ensure national reconciliation in other countries that have experienced war, conflict, terror and violation of human rights, through war tribunals, such as the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and Truth Commissions in Latin America and Africa, or through the recent exhumations in Spain.⁶⁰⁸ Although these initiatives constitute a first step towards the democratisation process, the attempts to ensure peace and justice have often erupted into an intense public debate and caused concern and criticism.⁶⁰⁹ In any case, the process of openly and publicly testifying to atrocities, gender violence, sexual abuse, and torture in the context of truth commissions and tribunals is not unproblematic as these processes are not always ‘gender sensitive’ (Simic, 2007: 5); neither is the incorporation of these memories and accounts of trauma and suffering into the research agenda of scholars and into the discourse of human rights and national reconciliation within these apparatuses.⁶¹⁰ Too “often, the patriarchal nature of judicial proceedings” which politicises “post-conflict justice and reconciliation” encourages women to “forgive and forget” (McKay, 2000: 569). This was also the case with the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), where, despite its success – women participated to a large

⁶⁰⁷ Ana Christina Ibanez (2001) discusses the ‘shock of peace’ in terms of the painful demobilisation of women guerrillas of El Salvador and the processes of reconstruction and national reconciliation.

⁶⁰⁸ The bibliography on reconciliation and especially war tribunals and truth commissions is extensive; for the acknowledgment of a difficult or traumatic past in general, see Cohen (2001: 222–248); for the gender complications of the reconciliation process (including silencing) and ‘coming to terms with the past’, see Butalia (1997), Cockburn (1998), D’Costa (2004), Simic (2007), Hunt (2004), Nikolic-Ristanovic (2002); for the reconciliation process in the post-Yugoslav context, see Dragovic-Soso (2010: 29-46) and Dragovic-Soso and Gordy (2010:193–212); for the truth commission (Commission for Historical Clarification) and exhumations in Guatemala, see Sanford (2003; 2006; 2008b); for the South African Truth Commissions and reconciliation politics, see Wilson (2001) and Krog (2001).

⁶⁰⁹ See Dragovic-Soso (2010: 43) and Petrovic (2003).

⁶¹⁰ Also see Hackett and Rolston (2009). Kaplan (2002: 195-197) stresses the attention required by historians and scholars in general who record or analyse testimonies related to abuse. Petrovic (2003, especially pp. 3-4) is also sceptical in relation to the principal terms that TRCs primarily employ; the criticism is primarily developed in relation to the concept of ‘truth’ and the persistence around the truth that ultimately is converted to a ‘truth culture’ (for this term, she is based primarily on Cowan *et al.*, 2001).

percentage (55 per cent) – they only talked about the suffering of men and children and not their own, while men spoke directly about their own experiences (Simic, 2007: 5). There were also cases, for instance in Uruguay, where women were willing to testify, but their stories were ignored, while men's stories were more likely to be documented (McKay, 2000: 565). This comes as no surprise, since, if wars are gendered, so are peace processes, negotiated usually by men or military men (Lentin, 1997, 1999), where militarisation, patriarchy and 'the living memory of terror' continues to shape the realities of women (Sanford, 2003: 123).⁶¹¹ This 'living memory of terror' is not only related to the suffering that they experienced during war or conflict and to the overt, physical and psychological abuse and terror with distinct gender characteristics, but also through the resettlement, refugee, insecurity and fear that often comprises their everyday reality during peace. Consequently, reconciliation or coming to terms with the past is a complex process that brings relief and justice, perhaps even healing, but needs to be engendered and contextualised, keeping in mind that in some cases it can also cause stigma and shame for women (Simic, 2007: 5).⁶¹²

Therefore, the process of reconciliation is comprised of two main dimensions: the personal – through the narration and testifying of the traumatic experiences and stories of violence, fear and loss that constitutes according to Kaplan (2002: 195) an act of political resistance and the official – the recording and documentation of these stories through processes of international organisations, tribunals and truth commissions in order to achieve peace and justice.⁶¹³ Both stages, however, involve risks and raise concerns, especially for the victims and the communities affected. Moreover, criticism is also expressed in relation to the language employed by these institutions, often characterised as problematic or insufficient. In this context, Petrovic (2003: 2-3) states – despite noting the social and political benefits of truth commissions – that the coherence of their principal terms, such as truth, accountability, reconciliation, memory and 'international morality' requires further exploration. The language and rhetoric of the commission processes is purposely based on abstractedness and political correctness, in order to appear neutral and inclusive, whereas, in fact, especially in relation to the quest of a truth that is set as the primary goal and in a way takes the form of a 'culture of truth', is in fact becoming exclusionary or even hegemonic, serving political necessities (Petrovic, 2003: 3-4). For this reason, the narratives of national truth and reconciliation that emerge from the truth commission processes must be further assessed in order to avoid

⁶¹¹ Victoria Sanford (2003: 123) talks about what she approaches as 'the living memory of terror', which comprises the last stage of the seven phases of the 'phenomenology of terror'.

⁶¹² Also see Kaplan (2002).

⁶¹³ See Hackett and Rolston (2009: 356-357).

institutionalising “obligatory memory, reconciliation” and forgiveness (Petrovic, 2003: 4). In any event, attention must be focused on storytelling or providing an equal testimony *per se*, in both official and unofficial processes, both for the narrators (victims) and the listeners (researchers, officials).⁶¹⁴ Furthermore, because this is not an ‘unproblematic’ or ‘apolitical’ procedure, it requires a “political context in which to operate” in a way that is not going to de-humanise or further re-traumatise the narrators (Hackett and Rolston, 2009: 355, 357).⁶¹⁵ This brings us again to the discussion of the narratives and testimonies of, primarily, abuse, sexual torture, and gender violence, where healing, forgiveness and coming to terms with this kind of past, should not be taken for granted or perceived as one-dimensional, uncomplicated process, regardless of gender, class or, race.

Ronit Lentin (1999: 4.5) stresses that “the feminist strategy of employing women’s personal narratives as primary sources is one way of making visible women’s experiences of victimisation and resistance in our scholarship and writing”. Most importantly, “it is a way of de-linking the feminised images and the larger political context of genocide, war and violence, and restoring women’s agency”, while “re-claiming the depth of the trauma, not from a site of a collectivity’s honour, but from each woman’s own human experiences” (Lentin, 1999: 4.5). Beyond victimhood and universal subordination, Lentin emphasises the need for theorising and contextualising “the construction of gender” and “perceptions of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’” in tandem with constructions of nation, in order for feminist social scientists and activists “to break the silences and close the memory gap between catastrophic events and the discourses available to represent them, and thus embody experience, which is at the heart of feminist epistemological processes” (Stanley, 1995, 1996 cited in Lentin, 1997: 5, 14; 1999: 4.10).

5.3 Conclusions

This chapter aimed at uncovering and engendering the processes of memory and trauma through women’s narratives and painful memories related to the Greek Civil War, the subsequent political persecution, and the abuse and torture of the military regime. The stories related to the traumatic experiences of women are usually omitted from history and the official public discourse, while the academic scholarship also tends to treat them reluctantly, especially within the Greek academic dialogue, where the issue of gender and political violence remains

⁶¹⁴ See Kaplan (2002: 195-197) and Hackett and Rolston (2009, especially, pp. 355-360). The term ‘victim’, is used with caution, especially when it concerns women, in order not to essentialise and equate the female discourse and the female experience solely with pain, fear and violence.

⁶¹⁵ Also see Kaplan (2002).

largely unexplored. This thesis attempted not only to deal with these traumas, stories and silences of women dissidents as female experiences closely and solely related to war, but on a larger, global plane, based on a wider theoretical ground. In this vein, women dissidents are presented as “full subjects” of sexual and political violence, repression and exclusion during war, and often peace,⁶¹⁶ but also as actors and agents of their own history. Furthermore, in the context of this thesis, gender violence was contextualised and theorised within the role of the state and nationalism, not only in instigating and perpetuating acts of political repression and abuse against women, but also in terms of retraditionalising gender roles and naturalising the gender order.⁶¹⁷

The PhD thesis: *Engendering the Nation: women, state oppression and political violence in post-war Greece (1946-1974)*, examined the phenomenon of gender-specific political violence in relation to nationalism and nationalist ideology, not only as an instrument of domination and control, but mainly as a means of rationalising and legitimising this type of violence. With post-war Greece as the case study, I explored and highlighted the gendered dimensions of political violence, state oppression, persecution and sexual abuse aimed at the women who participated in the National Resistance, the Greek Civil War and in the anti-dictatorship struggle respectively as partisans, guerrilla fighters, political activists, Communist sympathisers or junta dissidents. The gendered demarcations inherently linked to the preservation of patriarchy and power hierarchies as cultivated or reinforced by the state and nationalist framework were also approached as instrumental in the victimisation of women within state and nationalist formations. Therefore, the aim of the thesis was to analyse the phenomenon through its gendered characteristics and nationalist connotations, and on a second level to reveal the micro-dynamics of political violence, state oppression and sexual victimisation. Attention was thus paid to the experiences of women as political internees and victims of torture and sexual abuse, but also as political activists. For this reason, the various camps and prisons in which women were incarcerated throughout the 1946–1974 period were also discussed, in order to reveal the strategies of power and control as instigated by the state and its mechanisms and agents, including the other dominant political and cultural or social formations, namely the Communist Party, the family and religion.

What this discussion and analysis of gender violence against women during the 1946–

⁶¹⁶ Rhonda Copelon (1998: 75) stresses the need to surface women as “full subjects of sexual violence in war”, but also to analyse rape and sexual crimes against women during peace through the lens of gender; see Copelon (1998: 63-77).

⁶¹⁷ In Bracewell’s analysis of the role of motherhood in nationalist rhetoric and politics, within the Serbian nationalist context, Yugoslav socialism was perceived as a threat to the nation and family, by upsetting the ‘natural’ gender order (1996: 27).

1974 period has to offer today – not only within the Greek academic context but also to the overall theorising of gender violence in war-affected, militarised contexts, nationalist or ethnic conflicts – is a deeper understanding of the political and social underpinnings of the period, in terms of the role and positioning of the politically active women, within the Greek societal structure and patriarchal order. Most importantly, it reveals the role of patriarchal and gender hierarchies and elucidates the gender component of political violence within the nationalist framework. Moreover, the crucial role of nationalist ideologies and power relations of gender that dictated certain behaviours, indicated the proper role of both sexes and legitimised the control and punishment of those who went against these norms, not only during conflict or unrest, but also in the post conflict settings, is further addressed. As argued by Jacobson *et al.* (2000: 1), the “analysis of women’s experiences must always be appropriately contextualised”, while Brah also points out that “feminism cannot be framed without reference to the international context” (1996: 168, cited in Jacobson *et al.* 2000: 1-2). On this ground, the phenomenon of gender political violence was contextualised and analysed within a platform of three layers that are complementary to each other: the local, that comprises the Greek case; the international, in terms of the international theoretical framework and the discussion of other contexts, thus enabling comparative analyses; and the personal, through the analysis of women’s narratives and lived experiences.⁶¹⁸

Women’s suffering, trauma, abuse and fear related to their activism during the 1946–1974 period has been often approached as either a marginal subject or an isolated incident of war, conflict and socio-political unrest – ultimately, of minor importance. For this reason, this thesis attempts to contextualise, historicise and engender the experiences, traumas and silences of women within the nationalist ideology and the prevailing ideological forces.⁶¹⁹ Emphasis is thus placed on the state-organised and officially tolerated violence and terrorisation of women that often leads to a culture of violence, with distinct gender characteristics, embedded in patriarchal structures and militaristic and nationalist frameworks, that remains intact, providing once again a terrain for normalising contemporary acts of violence, sexual assaulting and psychological oppression, misogynism and coercion.

The state-perpetuated violence and oppression against the dissenting women, during the 1946–1974 period, despite the political transformations and social conditions, was exercised in a systematic way, as official state policy, often assisted by para-state mechanisms that operated under the tolerance or support of the state. State political violence was not

⁶¹⁸ See Jacobson, *et al.* (2000: 1).

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

uncontrollable, sporadic or anarchic, especially after the official ending of the civil strife. On the contrary, it was linked to a nationalist narrative with certain characteristics – gendered, national, religious and patriarchal – which was used as a legitimising background for the political persecution, banishment and abuse of the leftists. The persecution, oppression and abuse of women were not only exercised during the Greek Civil War and the military dictatorship, but there was also a noteworthy continuity throughout the 1946–1974 period. Feminist scholars have examined the continuum of gender violence in different contexts, in order to address the impact of this type of violence on women and gender relations – not only during war, but also in peacetime – where the reintegration of women into the public sphere is complex and particularly painful.⁶²⁰ In a similar way, in the Greek case, despite the fluctuations regarding the intensity of exercised violence, political persecution, internment, harassment and often torture, bearing distinct gendered dimensions, were noteworthy and continuous in all three periods investigated in this thesis, while the integration of women former political detainees in the social fabric involved a great deal of fear, uncertainty and stigmatisation.

Political violence and state oppression was specifically planned and adjusted to gender and sexual differences, on the symbolic and physical connotations of the female body and on the supposed or actual social roles in which women political internees engaged. Therefore, gender within the structural formations of political violence and state nationalism was acting as a red flag for the national objectives of the envisioned Greek Nation. This type of violence, based on a specific gender order and power hierarchies within it, was fuelled by the nationalist ideology and anti-communist propaganda. Demarcations of gender and power with regard to prescribed roles, social norms and sexual difference was providing the nationalist agenda and state apparatus with ‘valuable’ material to set up boundaries – imaginary, symbolic and real – in order to control and punish those who stepped outside these national, gendered markers and social roles, the leftists, mainly the politically active women.

In this framework of analysis, state nationalism did not only act as a form of punishment or annihilation of women's political identity, but also as correctional mechanism for the reintegration of women within the prescribed gender norms and social roles within the nation during war and social upheaval, but also in peacetime. Women were not only abused, imprisoned and exiled, oppressed and tortured due to their political identity, but also because of their gender. Women who were considered Communists or leftists, therefore, entered the public sphere and acted outside the strictly defined social norms and gender roles, and they had to be reformed. The rehabilitation was both political and social, but also national and religious.

⁶²⁰ For the gendered continuum of violence, indicatively see Moser (2001), Cockburn (2004) and Sanford (2003).

Accordingly, women dissidents not only were expected to denounce their Communist beliefs and political affiliation, but also to return to the family, the nation and religion; thus, both their political and gender identity were at stake. These were, after all, the pillars of the ethnos, while Communism and politically active women in the ranks of the Communist Party or the Left were considered as a threat to all three. In this clearly nationalist context, women became the cornerstone of the nationalist ideology: on the one hand, women political activists were considered promiscuous, dishonest, and inappropriate as mothers, and had to be punished in order to return to the nation, religion and family, purified and truly Greek. On the other hand, they were embodying the essence of the Greek Nation, as ‘mothers of the nation’, protectors and symbols of honour.⁶²¹ As argued by Vesna Nikolic-Ristanovic in the context of nationalism in the former Yugoslavia, during wartime, women’s bodies become “sites of contention”, while at the same time women are glorified “as biological regenerators of the nation combined with a disregard for women as people” (1998: 235). In a similar way, Wendy Bracewell points out the ways idealised images of motherhood have been employed by nationalist politics and nationalist ideology, in order to “justify state intrusion into the ‘private’ sphere of sexuality and reproduction and the assertion of state authority over the individual” (1996: 32).

Although the control of sexuality and appropriation of femininity within the permissible boundaries of the gender order and power hierarchy was a key component of the nationalist ideology and was materialised during the torture and sexual abuse and humiliation of women dissidents, hegemonic masculinity and/or hyper-masculinity was also decisively integrated into the nationalist state rhetoric.⁶²² The construction of manhood and the ‘minimum required degree’ of manliness within the nationalist and militaristic context, primarily during the Greek military dictatorship, entailed a specific type of ‘hetero-national masculinity’ (Hague, 1997), which was expected by the torturers during their training and then imposed on their victims during the torture; revealing at the same time that “power-positioning” is not “common to all masculinities” (Lentin, 1997: 7).⁶²³ In this vein, Cynthia Enloe argues that “paying attention to women’s experiences of nationalism”, besides making women visible, allows researchers to see men (1998: 52). Even though that is the case, the re-appropriation and control of both femininity and masculinity within nationalist, militaristic and oppressive settings, requires further exploration. On this ground, Bracewell stresses that “the relationship between men, masculinity and

⁶²¹ For more on the symbolic articulation of women as the mothers of the nation, indicatively see Koonz (1987), Bracewell (1996), Yuval-Davis (1997), Mayer (2000), Mostov (2000), Ivekovic and Mostov (2004), Kesic (2004); also see De Grazia’s (1992) influential and nuanced analysis of the role and experiences of women in fascist Italy (1992) and chapter 2 of the current thesis.

⁶²² Also see Nagel (1998: 247, 249, 258).

⁶²³ Also see Peterson (1999), who not only engenders nationalism, but emphasises its heterosexist nature.

nationalism is not a simple one” and therefore men and masculinity, should not be treated “as stable, undifferentiated categories” (2000: 566); but rather critically examined within “the totality of gender relations” (Jacobson, *et al.*, 2000: 11).

Through the female experiences of internment, terror, loss, trauma, but also survival, the machinery of power and control is revealed as reinforced by state apparatus and cultivated by nationalism, militarism and patriarchy. However, the inscribing of women’s selfhood in specific gender and social roles were not only imposed and articulated by the dominant nationalistic discourse, but also in some cases by the official, main political body of the political detainees and activists, namely the Greek Communist Party. Furthermore, besides the technologies of domination as instigated or nurtured by the state or the leadership of the Communist Party, the oral and written narratives of women revealed other dimensions that have not been touched upon, comprised of issues related to the complex web of personal and family relations. Women were expected, especially after the end of the war or the fall of the junta, to readopt the previous traditional and natural roles as wives and mothers, based on the prevailing social and cultural inscriptions. Besides the attempt to rehabilitate women to the private sphere, imposed by the state, the Party and the family, women themselves often struggled with guilt and trauma, as a result of shattered personal relations, especially when it came to the alienation from their children. Consequently, the role of the Communist Party, in terms of rhetoric and political practices, but also the lived experiences of women both during their suffering and after their release, had not been examined in depth and in its gendered implications.

Women political detainees and dissidents have experienced not only physical violence and psychological abuse and coercion, but also sexual abuse and torture. Especially when it comes to atrocities of sexually-related violence, rape, sexual torture, forced impregnation or mutilation that were used as political instruments, any acknowledgement is largely absent in the official public discourse and unexplored in current (Greek) academic debate. This discussion entails not only an acknowledgment of the actuality of these types of victimisation of women and men, but also a closer look at the dominant forces – state, nationalism and patriarchy – that reinforce, accept, rationalise or disregard sexually-related crimes. Furthermore, this kind of abuse is primarily treated as incidental to war, conflict or military regime, while it is also considered as taboo, causing stigma and isolation to female victims within the Greek societal structure. Rape and sexualised violence is an assault not only on a woman’s body, but also on her integrity, self esteem, security and autonomy, “ultimately affecting her standing in her community” (Copelon, 1998: 66). This particularly painful and traumatic aspect of women’s experience, covered with silence and, in some cases, self-imposed silencing, makes it difficult to

transform it into narrative or discourse, thereby allowing for visibility and healing. Therefore, it is vital to reconceptualise these lived experiences of women and analyse them not only as solely female experiences, but also through a gendered perspective, in order to reveal the power structures that not only rationalise rape and sexualised violence, but also silence the women who are victimised.

Women have attempted through their narratives, their oral and written testimonies and memoirs, to deal with their experiences, involving pain, fear and trauma, but also resistance and struggle, articulating in this way a counter-discourse.⁶²⁴ In a similar way, they enter the mnemonic public sphere, through commemoration practices,⁶²⁵ pilgrimage trips to former exile sites or through the publishing of memoirs. However, one can also discern in these personal narratives subtle shades of self-censorship or silencing in order to avoid further traumatisation of their families or even communities. Therefore, women's lived experience of incarceration and violence should be considered as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, calling for an analysis of these women not only as victims, but also as agents. Concomitantly, "victimhood and agency" need to be analysed "in tandem" (Lentin, 1997: 11) or through what bell hooks describes as a 'paradigm of domination' (1989, cited in Lentin, 1997: 12) in order to expose and challenge the multiple layers and agents of power and control. Through the reconstruction of the experiences of women as political detainees in various camps and prisons during the 1946–1974 period, besides the suffering, the fear and trauma, women attempted to survive and resist; therefore, various counterstrategies and coping mechanisms were also revealed by the analysis of memoirs and interviews, for instance through artistic expressions, the secretly held lessons, plays and feasts. At the same time, these micro-narratives of lived experience demonstrate other neglected aspects, such as the complex relations among the women detainees, the power dynamics within the Communist Party and the complicated personal relations. The silencing and self-censorship in narratives, as well as the multi-layering of women's experiences as imprinted on the published and unpublished memoirs and oral testimonies, is also another aspect that is worth further investigation. On this basis, the imprint of memory and trauma in the narratives and life-histories of women calls for a closer look, with regard to issues of power, and truth, while emphasising on the pauses, the utterances, and even the silences in order to interpret these complex female micro-realities.

This thesis analysed, theorised and contextualised the state-perpetuated oppression and political violence exercised against the politically active women in post-war Greece, and the

⁶²⁴ Also see Hackett and Rolston (2009, especially p. 355).

⁶²⁵ See Kassem (2011: 3-4).

ways women dissidents were incorporated into the nationalist ideology and within patriarchal attitudes to aid in political and national recuperation, reinstating them at the same time in their traditional and acceptable gender roles. Consequently, a question comes to mind as to why the roles, experiences, memories and voices of women are suppressed and what these stories have to offer today. What does the appreciation of women's narratives offer today in the official production of history, but also in the official processes of dealing with the past? Acknowledging the role of women during conflict and unrest, their activism, resistance and struggle, but also extreme abuse, sexual terror and degradation creates a space for the voices to be heard,⁶²⁶ while setting the foundation for a new political discourse to emerge. Furthermore, it can shed light on similar experiences among other oppressed groups, based on race, gender or ethnicity,⁶²⁷ and in other contexts of nationalist uprisings and state terror, where gender also provides a discursive ground of victimisation. Rhonda Copelon argues, primarily in relation to sexual crimes against women in times of war, that torture, rape and gender violence in general "takes many forms, occurs in many contexts, and has different repercussions for different victims", while "every rape is multidimensional"; it is not, however, "incomparable" (1998: 76). Therefore, we must be aware of and acknowledge "the situational differences without losing sight of the commonalities", as "to fail to make distinctions flattens reality and to rank the egregious demeans it" (Copelon, 1998: 76).

This thesis has adopted a feminist reconceptualisation of the role of nationalist ideology and power hierarchies in the perpetuation of gender violence in order to move beyond or to expand traditional definitions and understandings of power and violence and to emphasise the gendered structures and implications of violence and nationalism that affect women in particular. I believe that through the extensive archival research, the in-depth and semi-structured interviews, informal discussions and contacts with former political detainees and the pilgrimage trips, as well as the incorporation of the influential theoretical discussion of feminist and gender studies on the intersection of gender, violence and nationalism, I was able not only to historicise the female experience of abuse, internment and torture, within the three political and historical moments that are investigated, but most importantly to reveal the gendered aspects of the 'synergetic coexistence'⁶²⁸ of political violence, state terror and nationalism, in the hope of establishing a platform for agency, justice, truth and fewer silences.

⁶²⁶ Also, see Kassem (2011: 10) and Hackett and Rolston (2009: 362); also see Simic (2007: 5, 8).

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁸ Victoria Sanford analyses "the synergetic structural relationships among terror, memory, and history" in the Guatemalan context (2003: 25).

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7. APPENDIX

7.1. Tables

Table 1: key dates and events

1923-1940	Interwar period
1941-1944	German, Italian and Bulgarian Occupation
February 1945 - February 1946	“White-terror’ phenomenon
1946-1949	The Greek Civil War
1950-1967	The period of ‘weak democracy’
March 30th, 1952	The execution of Nikos Beloyiannis and his three comrades
August 14th, 1954	The execution of Nikos Ploumpidis
May 22nd, 1964	The murder of Grigoris Lambrakis
1967-1974	The Military Dictatorship
April 21st, 1967	The military coup
November 13-17th, 1973	The Polytechnic uprisings and the army’s bloody suppression
July 24th, 1974	The fall of the military dictatorship, leading to the restoration of parliamentary democracy (<i>metapolitefsi</i>).
July-November 1975	The Trials of the instigators of the coup, the Polytechnic uprisings Trials and The Trials of the torturers of the Military (ESA) and Security Police
1982	Recognition of the National Resistance with Law 1285/1982

Table 2: main exile sites, prisons and concentration camps of the civil war period*

Sites	Type
Averof	Male & Female
Kallithea	Male, Female & Underage
Kifisia	Male & Female Underage
Kastoros	Female & Underage
Rhodes	Male & Female
Patra	Female & underage
Lamia	Female, Male & underage
Volos	Female, Male & underage
Larisa military camp	Female, Male & Underage
Thessaloniki	Female & Male
Vourla, Piraeus	Male
Intzedin, Crete	Male & underage
Mytilene, Lesvos	Male & Female
Tripoli, Peloponnese	Male, Female & underage
Ikaria	Female & Male
Trikeri	Female
Makronisos	Female, Male and underage
Chios	Female
Antikythera	Female & Male
Ai-Stratis	Female & Male
Yaros	Male

*The Civil War period refers not only to the 1946-1949 period, but in most cases it also includes the early 1950s or in some instances the early 1960s. The list is not exclusive; it primarily notes the sites of internment that appear in the thesis.

Table 3: prisons of the civil war and post civil-war periods*

Prison/Institution	Type of Prison	Active Periods	No. of imprisoned
Averof	Male & Female-Central Female Prisons	2.1945 - 15.12.1950	3,282 women & 119 children
		6.1950	775 women 22 children
		10.1950	760 women
		12. 1950-1957	300 women
		10.1959	57 women
		1961-1962	27
		1962-1967	20
Kallithea	Male, Female & Underage	10. 1950	400 women
		29.12.1950	419 women & 25 children 300 underage women
Kifisia	Male & Female Underage	6. 1951/1952	207 underage women
		1952	98 underage women
Kastoros	Male, Female & Underage	1950	163 women
		1953-1955	70 women
Patra	Female-Central Female Prisons	1948-1949	1,000-1,200 women
		10.1950	540 women
		End of 1950	500 women & 7 children
Lamia	Female	End of 1950	47 women & 4 children
Volos "Alexandria"	Female	End of 1950	18 women
Larisa	Female	End of 1950	16 women & 2 children
Thessaloniki "Vita"	Female	11.1.1951	96 women & 2 children

* Sources for Tables 2, 3, 4: Vervenioti (2003, 2008); Dalianis-Karambatzakis (1994); Kamarinou (2005); Voglis (2002a); Theodorou (1976); Apostolopoulou (1997); *Istoriko Topio kai Istorikh Mnini, To Paradeigma tis Makronisou* [Historical Site and Historical Memory, the Makronisos Example] (2000); Newspaper *Rizospastis* (February 3rd, 2008); "Appeal from Women prisoners in the Averof Prison", "Women Exiles on the island of Chios", MGA/Info/XVI/Women Prisoners, *League for Democracy*.

Table 4: sites of exile

Exile Island/Camp	Type of Camp	Active Period	No. of exiles
Ikaria	Male & Female	1947-1948	9 women
Chios	Female	12.1948	1,900 women
		3.1948-3.1949	910-women & 44 children-1,316 women & 55 children
Trikeri (1 st period)	Female	4.1949-9.1949	1,200-5,000 women & children
Makronisos	Female & Male	1949-1950	3,700 women & children
		1.1950-7.1950	1,200 women & children
Trikeri (2 nd period)	Female	7.1950	544 women
		4.1953	19 women
Ai-Stratis	Female & Male	4.1953	16-19 women
		9.1953-1957	50-100 women
		1956	33 women

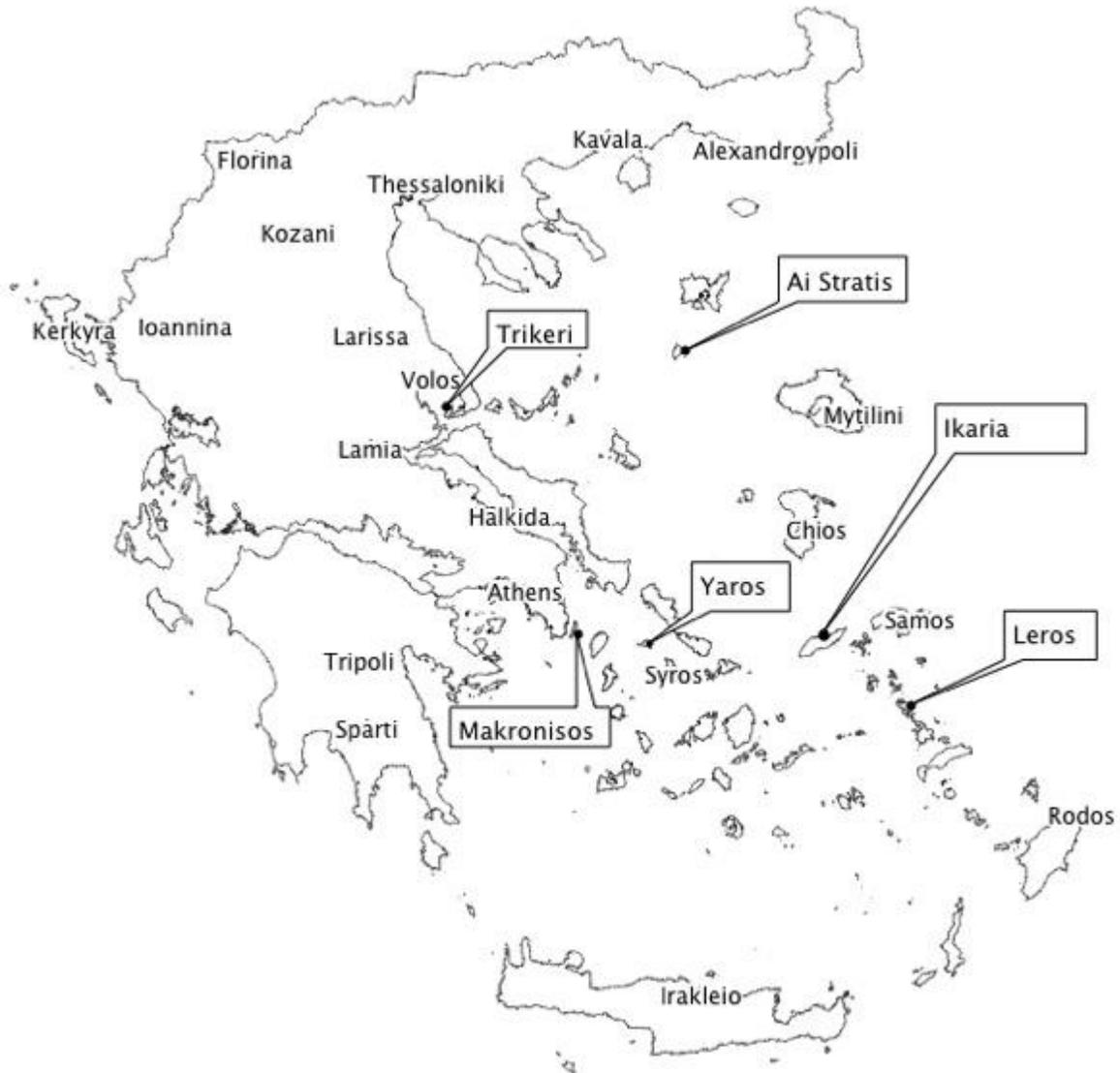
Table 5: main exile sites and prisons of the Military Dictatorship (1967-1974)

Sites	Active period	Type	No of pol. detainees/period	
Alikarnasos Agricultural Prisons, Crete	1968-1970	Female	1968-1970	168-170
Leros	1967-1971	Male	1971	1 woman
Yaros	1967-1974	Female & Male	(1967-1968)	260-300 women
Averof Prisons	1968-1971	Female & Male	(1968-1969)	21 women and 2 awaiting trial, 180 common law prisoners
Korydallos Prisons	1971-1974	Female & Male	1971	17 sentenced and 19 women arrested
			05.1973	27
			1974	7
Oropos Agricultural Prisons, Athens	1970-1971	Female & Male	1970-1971	10 women

Table 6: main torture and detention centres of the Military Dictatorship (1967-1974)

Security Police Station (Asphalia), Bouboulinas street, Athens
Greek Military Police (ESA), Athens
Ippodromos, Athens
Security Police Station, Piraeus
401 Military Hospital, Athens
505 Naval Unit, Dionysos camp, Athens
Reform Prisons, Thessaloniki
Third Army Corps, Thessaloniki
Karatassos Camp, Thessaloniki
Zaharo, Peloponnese (enforced residence, 1970-1971)
Messini, Peloponnese (enforced residence, 1970-1971)
Sparta, Peloponnese (enforced residence, 1970-1971)
Arta (deportation)

7.2. Map



7.3. Photographs

Picture 1: former political exiles, Ai-Stratis pilgrimage trip, July 2007 (personal archive).



Picture 2: women and children, mainly from the island of Lesvos, exiled at Chios in 1948 (E. Hatzisava's archive).



Pictures 3, 4: women at the Makronisos concentration camp, little Fotoula in a basin at Makronisos (*Association of Women Political Exiles, Gabriilidou 2004*).



Picture 5: women exiled at Ai Stratis (*Museum of Political Exiles-Ai Stratis*).



Pictures 6, 7: Ai Stratis concentration camp (*Museum of Political Exiles-Ai Stratis*).



Picture 8: visitation at the Averof Prisons (1959)
Elli Protogerelli with her niece
(Protogerelli's personal archive).



Picture 9: my grandfather, Vassilis Stefatos at the
Averof Prisons (personal archive).



Picture 10: the release of women political prisoners from Averof Prisons in 1966
(*Rizospastis*, January 23rd, 2005).



Picture 11: Yaros concentration camp. **Picture 12:** 'Censorship Room' at Yaros (personal archive).



Picture 13: Bouboulinas' terrace at the Security Police Station (Giourgos and Kabilis, 2009).



7.4. Archival material

Yaros concentration camp wards. Drawing by Takis Tzaneteas (*Museum of Political Exiles-Ai Stratis*).



Extract from a Declaration of Repentance during the military junta
(League for Democracy in Greece collection, Kings College London Archives)

organised by them or their member-groups and under what circumstances?

4. Have you ever been a subscriber to or reader of newspapers, periodicals or any publications issued by the above-defined parties, organisations, etc, or which reflect their views? If so, which?

5. Has any member of your close family circle participated in any of the above-mentioned activities or collaborated with the Occupation Forces? If the answer is affirmative, state who and whether you share their views and activities.

6. Have you ever been arrested, summoned or interrogated by any authority for any matter connected with national security or public order and, if so, for what specific action?

7. If you have ever been resident abroad, were you a member or have you in any way been associated with any organisations, movements or activities of any kind and, if so, which?

8. Have there been any incidents in your previous life not specifically covered by the above and in any way connected with issues of a law-abiding existence or of National Ideals and, if so, what?

9. Are you prepared to serve our country, our National Ideals and the legally-established authority with faith and devotion and to carry out the will of the State?

10. Have you anything further to add or to explain which, in your opinion, will help to form a clearer opinion of your moral character, uprightness and national outlook?

Being aware of the consequences of any false statement according to Article 2 of Statutory Decree 105/1969 "on personal responsibility of signatories", I hereby certify that the above declaration, freely made and without outside influence, conforms fully to the truth and that I have not concealed any relevant facts.

Date Place

Signature

(Resolution signed by): The Prime Minister
The Vice-Premier
Members of the Council of Ministers
Certified accurate copy: Athens, 20th January 1972
(Sgd.) S. K. Baltas
Secretary to the Council of Ministers

FOR THE CLERGY

1. From TO VIMA (Athens daily newspaper) 5.v.72.
DECLARATION OF LOYALTY FOR ORDINANDS

Candidates for ordination are required to complete the special printed questionnaire and the responsible declaration of loyalty, and to submit these to the metropolitans of their diocese.

The metropolitans will then send these printed forms and declarations to the General Directorate of National Security.

ORDINATION
Metropolitans will ordain as priests only such candidates who, after the relevant investigations, are regarded as loyal

provided, of course, that they have the requisite qualifications.

The above provisions are laid down in circular E.P.1449 of 3rd April 1972 from the Ministry of Education* to the metropolitans of the country. The full text is as follows:-

"As is well-known, parish priests are agents and functionaries of the Church and also of their parish church, that is of establishments which, according to Article 1 (Para. 4) of Statutory Decree 126/1969, constitute legal entities of Public Right. As such, they come under the provisions for investigation of loyalty laid down by Article 1 of Decree MTh/1948 in conjunction with those of Statutory Decrees 1015/1971 & 1048/1971.

As a result of this and since Para. 3 of Article 4 of Statutory Decree 1015/1971 cannot be applied in the case of parish priests, we have the honour to ask you, in accordance with Article 3 of Statutory Decree 1015/1971, to send the responsible declarations of the ordinands to the Ministry of Public Order (General Directorate of National Security, Directorate 1, Section 2) before their ordination. The Directorate, after conducting the relevant investigations, will inform you accordingly. If this investigation shows that the ordinands are loyal and, provided that they have the necessary legal and other qualifications, you can then proceed to their ordination as priests and to their appointment to parishes."

(Sgd.) K. Kourkoulas
(General Director)

II. From TA NEA (Athens evening newspaper), 15.5.72).
The Archbishop of Athens states: "The Church of Greece has regained her Authority".
Aims: Ecclesiastical Education and Finance.
[In an interview published in yesterday's daily press, the Archbishop of Athens, the Rev. Ieronymos, states amongst other matters that, in the five years of his archiepiscopate, the following have been achieved:

1. The Church has regained its authority which had sunk to an unprecedentedly low ebb, on one hand by getting rid of those clerics who were responsible for this degeneration and on the other hand by the achievement of a social-task worthy of its mission.

2. **THE LIBERATION OF THE CHURCH FROM A RESTRICTING DEPENDENCE ON THE STATE**: The Church has obtained freedom of action with the right to legislate on her own affairs. Already, thanks to the Constitutional Charter of the Church (1969), all Church matters are settled by the Church without the co-operation of the State.

3. The Permanent Holy Synod has encompassed a "legislative achievement", in producing a vast amount of legislation in the space of three years (1969-72) in order to enable the Church "to adapt herself to her new state of freedom".

As regards prospects for the future, the Rev. Ieronymos said that emphasis would be given to ecclesiastical education and also to the solution of the Church's financial problem.

* Church matters are under the jurisdiction of the M. of E.
‡ Our Capitals.

A woman political exile at Trikeri, drawing by Katerina Hariati-Sismani
(Hariati's personal collection, *Museum of Political Exiles-Ai Stratis*).



The transfer of women to the Makronisos concentration camp, drawing by Katerina Hariati-Sismani
(Hariati's personal collection, *Museum of Political Exiles-Ai Stratis*).



