REFLECTIONS OF A NATION

Antigone on the Modern Greek Stage

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Andria Michael, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

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Abstract

This thesis is a study of performances of Sophocles' *Antigone* on the modern Greek stage, their political and social resonances, their cultural contexts and their role in the formation and presentation of modern Greek national identity. It is the result of research concerning the revival of ancient Greek drama, in accordance with modern Greek theatre history as well as with the broader history of the modern Greek nation. As a play political in its essence, *Antigone* has been widely used as a political statement in the Greek revivals from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards. To attempt an examination and analysis of such performances covering this long period of time means to simultaneously examine the key events of the country: the liberation from Ottoman Rule, the early process of formation of the new state, the hotly disputed conflict of the Language Question, the modernist Generation of the 1930s, the Greek Civil War, the Dictatorship of 1967-1974, as well as many other significant events and movements of modern Greek history. The approach of the work is qualitative rather than quantitative. The aim is to choose the specific moments when theatre and politics cross paths, to examine the connections between artistic choices and political incentives, and to highlight the moments which eventually reveal that *Antigone* has been repeatedly used as a platform for political or politically charged issues, conflicts and agendas. The ultimate goal of this research is to reveal that the intense political, rather than aesthetic, interpretations of modern Greek revivals have frequently neglected the performances as such, as well as the text of *Antigone* itself, and have instead concentrated on the issues and conflicts of each period in question.

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Contents

List of Figures

Introduction

Modern Greek *Antigones*: Where, When, Why and How

This thesis is the result of research concerning performances of Sophocles' *Antigone* on the modern Greek stage. The performances in question have been studied under the lights of the broader subjects of ancient Greek drama revival and reception, and the history of modern Greek theatre in accordance with the broader history of the modern Greek nation. By examining and discussing their political and social resonance and their cultural contexts, I attempt to show the role of these performances in the formation and presentation of modern Greek national identity and vice versa. The thesis covers a period of time of almost one and a half centuries: the first recorded Greek revival of *Antigone* dates back in 1863.[1] Since then, during the second half of the nineteenth century and throughout the whole twentieth century more than sixty productions of *Antigone* have been staged.[2] The aim of this thesis is not to provide a list with each performance of *Antigone* that has ever been produced on the modern Greek stage. It is rather to choose the specific moments when theatre and politics cross paths, the moments which eventually show that *Antigone* has been repeatedly used as a platform for political or politicised issues, conflicts and agendas. Therefore, a selection of these performances is closely examined and discussed mainly in chronological order and in accordance with the development of the social and political scene of modern Greece from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards. It is also worth noting that many of the performances during the period in question have been staged in many different places across the country as well as abroad. Without excluding from discussions any other performances, this thesis pays specific attention to the performances produced in Athens, the capital and cultural centre of Greece, as well as performances which were staged elsewhere but were produced by prominent Athenian theatrical companies.

The revival of ancient Greek drama in Greece has always been closely related to and influenced by the history of the formation and development of the modern

[1] Giannis Sideris, 'Η Πρώτη *Αντιγόνη*: Πριν Εκατό Χρόνια στην Πόλη', *Θέατρο*, 12(1963), 31-33.
[2] Anna Mavroleon, 'Η Διαχείριση του Αρχαίου Ελληνικού Δράματος από την Νεοελληνική Κοινωνία: Το Ιστορικό της Αναβίωσης της Αντιγόνης του Σοφοκλή στην Ελλάδα και τα Ορεστειακά' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Panteion University Athens, 2003).

Greek nation. The reasons behind this connection are clearer to understand when we pin down the link between the two matters. The process of the modern Greek nation formation begun after the end of the Greek War of Independence (1821-1832). In their efforts to discard all foreign influences received during the four hundred years under Ottoman rule, the Greeks sought a distinct and characteristic modern Greek national identity. For reasons which are discussed later in this thesis, the Greeks invested great efforts in proving their historical continuity between ancient and modern Greece and sought their modern Greek national identity in antiquity, in the ancient Greek world and in the works of those they considered their rightful ancestors.[3] As a result, the revival of ancient Greek drama, comedy or tragedy, was not political merely as it is political for the rest of the world. For the Greeks this was a political matter in its core; it was a national matter. And as such, it frequently resulted in intense conflict between opposing sides, each defending their own idea of Greekness. All subsequent conflicts regarding the revival of ancient Greek drama are in some way related to the attempt to define this Greekness as an integral element of the modern Greek national identity.

One of the most intense conflicts, especially related to the revivals of the second half of the nineteenth century as well as of those during the first years of the twentieth century, is that regarding the language. The similarities and the continuity between ancient and modern Greek have frequently been used as evidence in the Greek attempts to prove the desired historical continuity. As a result, the conflict between the use of the original ancient Greek texts and the use of translation in later forms of the Greek language escalated to a national matter. The matter escalated even further as a result of the conflict between two different forms of modern language, *katharevousa* and demotic*,* which resulted in the death of several people in two sets of riots in central Athens, in 1901 and 1903.[4] The second set of riots was directly related to the revival of ancient Greek drama, as the tension was caused by the translation used for the purposes of an *Oresteia*

[3] Michael Herzfeld, *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology and the Making of Modern Greece* (New York: Pella Publications, 1986)

[4] Peter Mackridge, Language *and National Identity in Greece*, 1766-1976 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp.247-254.

performance. In the case of the *Oresteia*, the revival of ancient Greek drama seemed to be used as a platform for the hotly disputed *Glossiko Zitima* (Greek Language Question).

As this thesis aims to show, throughout the whole twentieth century, the performances of *Antigone* have been repeatedly used as a battlefield between opposing sides of left and right wing supporters, conservatives and progressives, royalists and anti-royalists, supporters and opponents of religion, and many more. In addition, a great majority of the people involved in the production and reception of modern Greek theatre, from directors to actors, translators, composers, critics, students and the public at large, have been directly and openly involved with the political scene of the country. The performances in question have very rarely been discussed within artistic or aesthetic frames, as one would normally expect; they have rather been mainly received, analysed, and discussed in politically inspired, politically orientated or politically driven contexts.

One last issue that I would like to address in this introduction is the Greek response to the European revivals, which was usually negative and competitive. This negative attitude towards the *foreign* or the *foreigners* ('*to xeno*' or '*oi xenoi*' as commonly referred to by the Greeks) has a double root. First, the Greeks would repeatedly challenge the ability of the other Europeans or other non-Greeks to appropriately revive ancient Greek drama especially when themselves, the rightful heirs of the ancient Greek heritage, were facing difficulties in doing so. Second, the Greeks feared that foreign influences would potentially compromise the authenticity of their heritage and, by extension, their modern Greek national identity. Surprisingly, this is a phenomenon which did not decline even during the second half of the twentieth century. As the discussions of this thesis aim to show, this will be a recurring theme in the interpretation of *Antigone* productions which adapted and incorporated themes or elements from non-Greek theatrical traditions.

The ultimate aim of this research is to show that the intense political rather than artistic or aesthetic, interpretations of Greek *Antigone* performances have repeatedly used the revival of ancient Greek drama as a platform for conflicts

which have always had their roots in the pursuit of a national identity justified by a much desired continuity between antiquity and modernity.

Part 1: Why Tragedy, Why Antigone

In this attempt to draw lines between modern Greek revivals and the social, cultural and political events of the time, I have decided on a study of tragedy as the most appropriate genre, at least as far as the discussions of this thesis are concerned. This is not to suggest that ancient Greek comedy is not political or that it could not have been used in the context of an interpretation of modern socio-political events. On the contrary, the surviving comedies of Aristophanes are political by definition, and they do address immediate political issues of the Athenian life of his time, and beyond.[5] Specific attention should be drawn to Van Steen's *Venom in Verse: Aristophanes in Modern Greece* published in 2000, as she examines and discusses performances of Aristophanes' plays in their social and political contexts on the modern Greek stage.[6] However, tragedy has traditionally been seen as a more 'serious' genre and, in that sense, it has frequently provoked political commentaries and discussions from antiquity onwards.[7] Tragedy, though, is political not only because it directly addresses political figures, political issues, political conflicts or political events; it transcends political matters which are concerned merely with the polis or, in later interpretations, with the state. It is political because it also addresses, directly or indirectly, political issues of many kinds. These issues might derive from or relate to the polis or the state, but they are, in their essence, issues that extend further and beyond the very particular political figures or strictly political events of the time in question. In that respect, the revival of ancient Greek tragedy in modern Greece has frequently been interpreted through immediately related political figures and events but also through other politically inspired or politically driven issues of the time. It is worth noting though that both tragedy and

[5] Niall Slater, *Spectator Politics: Metatheatre and Performance in Aristophanes* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002)
[6] Gonda Van Steen, *Venom in Verse: Aristophanes in Modern Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).
[7] Simon Goldhill, *How to Stage Greek Tragedy Today* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007); David Carter, *The Politics of Greek Tragedy* (Bristol: Bristol Phoenix Press, 2007).

comedy were revived during the same period of time in modern Greece.[8] Even though the Greek reception of tragedy performances has been more frequently associated with political conflicts, there are a few exceptions in the history of modern Greek revivals when the staging of comedies evoked intense political discussions similar to those evoked by the revival of tragedy. One of the most characteristic examples, which I briefly discuss later, is Karolos Kouns' 1959 production of Aristophanes' *Birds,* which Van Steen characteristically describes as 'perhaps the biggest landmark in the modern Greek reception history of Aristophanes'.[9]

As to William Allan and Adrian Kelly's article entitled 'Listening to Many Voices: Athenian Tragedy as Popular Art', in *The Author's Voice in Classical and Late Antiquity*, in its original Athenian context, 'tragedy [...] used its inherent polyphony to encourage its audience not only to think about the values of their society, but also to appreciate its benefits'.[10] Accordingly, the revival of tragedy in modern times served as an ideal genre for the encouraging of the modern Greek audience to think about their society and to appreciate its benefits, far beyond the use of direct analogies between the specifics of the Sophoclean play and explicit political events of the country. According to Allan and Kelly, modern scholarship (and, by extension, modern revivals) has frequently seen tragedy in two distinct ways. On the one hand are those who are reluctant to tie tragedy too closely to its social and historical context and thus focus on its aesthetic qualities as poetry and drama. On the other hand, those who see tragedy as intrinsically political, where the terms political and politics have a very restrictive definition (for example Griffins who accepts political interpretations of tragedy only under a pro-Athenian rhetoric or near-explicit contemporary political events). But we do need to bear in mind here that the ancient Athenians themselves construed the 'political' broadly beyond human beings in a polis, and did not separate politics from other aspects of life. And it is in the light of the above that we should observe, analyse and discuss the modern

[8] Gannis Sideris, *Το Αρχαίο Θέατρο στη Νέα Ελληνική Σκηνή 1817-1932* (Athens: Ίκαρος, 1976), p.57.
[9] Van Steen, *Venom in Verse...*, p.135.
[10] William Allan and Adrian Kelly, 'Listening to Many Voices: Athenian Tragedy as Popular Art', in *The Author's Voice in Classical and Late Antiquity*, ed. Anna Marmodoro and Jonathan Hill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 77-122, p. 78.

Greek revivals of tragedy in this thesis: neither in an aesthetic context where poetry or drama prevails, nor in an intrinsically political context where near-explicit or direct political events are deployed, but rather in a context where the 'political' takes dimensions way beyond its restrictive definition, and 'politics' become part of all aspects of modern Greek life. And last, we should not forget that the original Athenian audience of tragedy 'represented a broad spectrum of fifth century Athenian society and not a narrow elite, and therefore the likelihood of a poet seeking to win first prize by setting at risk the core values of his audience is vanishingly small'.[11] In this respect, modern Greek producers would also not want to risk the core values of their audiences. Therefore, we would assume that their choices as far as tragedy revivals are concerned, somehow represent the core values of their society, in order to satisfy the needs of their audiences, which is in itself a political act and a political statement.

The choice of *Antigone* is not coincidental; the play is political in its essence and it has been read, interpreted and analysed as such repeatedly in history.[12] *Antigone* has been widely popular in Greece from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards. The fact that the staging of *Antigone* in Greece has been frequently used as a platform for direct or implied political conflicts does not simply lie in the conflicts which the Sophoclean text itself provides the reader with. The frequency of the staging of *Antigone* in Greece as a platform onto which different kinds of conflicts should be resolved lies in reasons which find their roots in the European interest for *Antigone*. Much of this European interest lies in Hegel's influential reading of the play in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, first published in 1807.[13] The cult of antithesis and conflict which is intensively promoted by Hegel finds its roots in the philosophy of Heraclitus. Howard Williams mentions:

> Heraclitus believes that conflict is at the root of all that is vital and worthy in human life. [...] His attitude is that we should not be puzzled

[11] Allan and Kelly, 'Listening to Many Voices...', p.88.
[12] Jonathan Badger, *Sophocles and the Politics of Tragedy: Cities and Transcendence* (New York: Routledge, 2013), pp.1-16; Warren Lane and Ann Lane, 'The Politics of Antigone', in *Greek Tragedy and Political Theory*, ed. J. Peter Euben (London: University of California Press, 1986), pp.162-182.
[13] G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

> by division and conflict, but that we should view them as an expression of the dynamic nature of the universe. This is an attitude Hegel shares.[14]

Many scholars have argued that the vast majority of interpretations of *Antigone* in the past two centuries has been shaped and structured by Hegel's dialectic. It is only in very rare occasions and only during the second half of the twentieth century, that discussion on Antigone are not heavily related to the matter of conflicts. In *Antigone's Claim*, Judith Butler identifies this persistent revelation of conflicts of two opposing sides as has been initially shaped by Hegel:

> In the interpretation that Hegel has perhaps made most famous, and which continues to structure appropriations of the play within much literary theory and philosophical discourse, Antigone comes to represent kinship and its dissolution, and Creon comes to represent an emergent ethical order and state authority based on principles of universality.[15]

Antigone is a play which transcends the sphere of myth. It claims and gains historical and political substance. It finds recognition way beyond its contemporary Greek audience because it asks, in the form of opposing sides, some of the most basic and eternal questions about ethos, democracy, political power, authority, divine and human law, feminine power, free human spirit and decision. The fact that there is hardly any certain answer as to which of the two sides is correct is what elevates *Antigone* from the sphere of myth to the sphere of philosophy, politics and history. As Judith Shklar argues,

> The confrontation of two dependent yet irreconcilable social claims, which go beyond a mere judgement of individual rightness or error, is a philosophical tragedy. It is tragic not because the protagonists suffer, but because they are not mere private individuals, they are each a personification of a social necessity.[16]

And it is as such that *Antigone* has been used on the modern Greek stage, a personification of different social necessities which oppose each other, social necessities which clash and suffer and struggle towards reconciliation.

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[14] Howard Williams, *Hegel, Heraclitus and Marx's Dialectic* (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), pp.23-27

[15] Judith Butler, *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), pp.2-3.

[16] Judith N. Shklar, 'Hegel's *Phenomenology*: An Elegy for Hellas', in *Hegel's Political Philosophy: Problems and Perspectives*, ed. Z.A. Pelczynski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 73-89, p.86.

Antigone did not only hold a high position in the literature of the period in question; the play seemed to hold an equally high position in the preferences of European theatre of the time as well. German speaking countries were showing a strong preference towards *Antigone*. In 'Politicizing *Antigone',* Erika Fischer-Lichte discusses three German performances of *Antigone* in 1841, 1940 and 1978, each of related to different political events, to conclude that Antigone proves to be a suitable play for politicisation, based on 'the unstable and conflicting relationship between individual and state/community'. As she argues:

> Since this is a deeply political issue, any production of *Antigone* will therefore be 'political'. However, the ways in which it will be politicized depend on the particular situation and circumstances of a production as well as on its aesthetic and the specific aesthetic experience it allows for.[17]

Based on the European interpretation of *Antigone* which elevated the conflicts of the play to political conflicts relevant to modern audiences, it is no surprise that the Greek productions of *Antigone* have always been political. They made different references to different conflicts and issues in different ways under different circumstances but they have always been political, as the detailed discussions of this thesis aim to show. The question that now arises, and which I attempt to answer is as follows: if the Greeks were informed by the political thematics of *Antigone* which are indeed so important to the interpretation of the play, why have those thematics been so regularly ignored by the modern Greek revivals and the political dynamics surrounding them? The question above is not to suggest that the Greeks might have not been aware of the political implications of *Antigone*. On the contrary, I hold that they have at large been aware of such implications. However, the fact that various productions have masked these implications is a matter which needs to be paid particular attention. In this respect, the National Theatre *Antigone* production of 1969 serves as an ideal example. As we will see later, the colonels of the military Junta (1967-1974) allowed the staging of *Antigone* during their regime. To suggest that the colonels were ignorant of the political implications of the play

[17] Erika Fischer-Lichte, 'Politicizing Antigone', in *Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and Criticism,* ed. S.E. Wilmer and Audrone Zukauskaite (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 329-352.

would quite possibly be an overlooking of a deeper and more complex situation. Thus, it becomes of great interest to attempt an interpretation of their decision to allow such a production.

The decision behind choosing *Antigone* for the discussions of this thesis lies in the fact that the play as well as its protagonist have been used as a national symbolism in Greece as no other play or character have ever been. The Greek revivals have indeed claimed Antigone to be their own, their ancestral and sacred heritage passed on from antiquity to modernity. In an essay entitled *Exceptionalities and Paradigms: Ancient and Modern Greek Cultures in Classical Reception Research*, Lorna Hardwick argues that the easy assumptions about the culture and the period to which *Antigone* belongs are challenged 'when Moira Fradinger makes the case that *Antigone* is Argentina's national play and when Fiona Macintosh in a neighbouring essay makes the same claim for Ireland'.[18] The question which arises here is, naturally, why did it become so imperative for the Greeks to claim that *Antigone* is more national to them than it is for anyone else?

In our attempts to answer the above, another question arises: why is not *Oedipus Rex* the national play and the national figure? Why not *Agamemnon*? Why not *Helen*? In his 1989 book entitled *Ta Paidia tis Antigonis: Mnimi kai Ideologia stin Neoteri Ellada* (The Children of Antigone: Memory and Ideology in Modern Greece), Giangos Andreadis introduces his discussions with three myths about Antigone with regard to her children.[19] First, the Sophoclean myth which suggests that Antigone died a virgin, thus never gave birth to any children. Then, the myth from the surviving fragments of Euripides' *Antigone* which suggests that Antigone survived her rebel act, lived to marry Haemon and gave birth to a son. And last, the myth which declines the pessimistic outcome of Sophocles' myth, as well as the optimistic outcome of Euripides' myth. This last myth suggests that when Antigone died, her hanged body was left to swing between the sky and the earth, connecting

[18] Lorna Hardwick, 'Exceptionalities and Paradigms: Ancient and Modern Greek Cultures in Classical Reception Research', in *Re-imagining the Past: Antiquity and Modern Greek Culture*, ed. Dimitris Tziovas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 333-349, p.338.

[19] Giangos Andreadis, *Τα Παιδιά της Αντιγόνης: Μνήμη και Ιδεολογία στη Νεότερη Ελλάδα* (Αθήνα: Καστανιώτη, 1989).

the two like an *oscillum*. But Haemon, whose name is also indicative of his fate, sprinkled Antigone with his blood and their bodies were connected forever in the underworld. The significance of noting all these myths lies in the fact that we do not know which of the three (or any other myth regarding Antigone's ending) is the real story: each could be the real one, or maybe all three of them are real, or maybe none of the three is real. To decide which is the real version always depends on who recalls the myth, as well as how one chooses to recall the myth, to forget it, to change it, or to manage it. As Andreadis notes, his decision to choose *Antigone* instead of any other myth is based on the many variations and possibilities of the myth which remind us that, like in the case of *Antigone*, in every direct dialogue we open, there are endless underlying dialogues we are not (at least initially) aware of. The children of Antigone might be dead or alive, or even unborn, depending on who, as well as how and why one chooses to remember or forget them. Accordingly, the memory of any 'true' or 'false' version or interpretation of *Antigone* in Modern Greece is neither present nor absent; it is rather a rhetoric, even philosophical, creation. And, in its most direct form, it took the shape of tragic creation on the Modern Greek stage, a creation which came to represent the different ways in which Modern Greeks saw *Antigone* with regard to their nation and national identity.

In that respect, and within a very generalised approach, one could suggest that *Antigone* resembled something greater than a piece of ancestral heritage in the memory of the modern Greeks; she resembled Greece. A Hellene in her origins as they regarded her, Antigone died a virgin, pure from all evils, untouched by power, authority, and the law created by man. Therefore, when she was resurrected in modern times, she still was and always remained the pure, untouched and flawless figure that she originally was. Accordingly, Hellas might had died in antiquity, but when it was to be resurrected, the Greeks imagined it, like Antigone, pure, untouched and flawless. However, if we have a closer look at the specific ways in which *Antigone* has been staged, we will see that different people, from different backgrounds, holding different political (in its broader definition) ideologies, chose to see *Antigone* in their own particular ways.

Part 2: The Pursuit of National Identity and the Revival of Tragedy

It seems almost impossible to talk about *Antigone* on the modern Greek stage without talking about politics. There are a few matters which constantly come into questioning as far as the staging of ancient Greek tragedy is concerned. Do the Greeks have more rights over the heritage the ancient Greek world has left us? Who is to set the limits on what the Greeks, as well as the rest of the world, are 'allowed' to do with ancient Greek tragedy? And most importantly, how and why did modern Greeks came to think that they are 'closer' to the ancient Greeks and therefore more appropriate for the staging of ancient Greek plays?

The years before, during and after the Greek Revolution of 1821 were crucial for the construction of the modern Greek nation. Since then, we have been constantly faced with a struggle of the Greeks towards finding a distinct national identity. In that process, references to the Greek past, and especially to ancient Greek tragedy, have been constantly repeated. It is therefore helpful to see, even briefly, a few points regarding the construction of the modern Greek nation and the formation of the modern Greek national identity as well as how these relate to the rise and development of the arts, and specifically the modern Greek revivals. It will thus give insights on the very often phenomenon of Greek artists' ethno-centric approach towards the revival and staging of ancient Greek plays in general and *Antigone* in particular.

The formation of the modern Greek state only began at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The primary ingredients used in the process of formation were the idea of a national character and a distinguished national identity. For approximately four hundred years, between 1453-1821, Greece was under Ottoman rule. During these years the rest of Europe developed many of its national characteristics and structured the identities of many of its states. This period of European modernity also saw the development of the arts - music, literature,

poetry, painting and drama. However, in Greece these years saw different, and perhaps less rapid developments and, by most accounts also played a crucial role in establishing what would later be regarded a dichotomy between the eastern and the western character of the Greek national identity. The rise against Ottoman Rule and the Greek Revolution are the essential turning points in the process of the formation of the newborn Greek State, the modern Greek Nation and the modern Greek national identity.[20] In this process, a major role was played by the *Philhellenes*[21] who primarily stressed the ancestral importance of the Classical heritage for modern Greece and consequently initiated the rise of nationalistic awareness. Alongside the *Philhellenes*, the *Philiki Etairia*[22] was also responsible for the spreading of this strong nationalistic awareness. Its main purpose was to awaken Greek nationalism and lead Greece to freedom through revolution.

The post-revolutionary period was thus characterised by strong nationalistic stances. Greek intellectuals of the time made great efforts to return to their ancestral roots in order to gather evidence for the construction of their modern Greek identity. They gathered the evidence in a selective way and forcibly tried to find continuity in history between the three millennia that separated them from the ancient Greek world. In their effort to do so, they could not simply overlook the changes and influences they received. The replacement of paganism with the rapidly spreading Christianity, the Byzantine years, the Greek Medieval Period and

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[20] C.M. Woodhouse, *The Greek War of Independence: Its Historical Setting* (London: Hutchinson, 1952); *The Struggle for Greek independence: Essays to Mark the 150th Anniversary of the Greek War of Independence*, ed. Richard Clogg (London: Macmillan, 1973); Nikiforos P. Diamandouros, *Hellenism and the First Greek War of Liberation (1821-1830): Continuity and Change*, intro. John A. Petropulos , (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1976); David Brewer, *The Flame of Freedom: The Greek War of Independence, 1821-1833*, (London: John Murray, 2001); David Brewer, *The Greek War of Independence: The Struggle for Freedom from the Ottoman Oppression and the Birth of the Modern Greek Nation* (New York: Overlook Press, 2003); John S. Koliopoulos and Thanos M. Veremis, *Modern Greece: A History Since 1821* (Chichester : Wiley-Blackwell, 2010)

[21] C.M. Woodhouse, *The Philhellenes* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1969); William St. Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free: The Philhellenes in the War of Independence (*Cambridge: Open Book, 2008); Thomas Cahill, *Sailing the Wine-Dark Sea: Why the Greeks Matter, Hinges of history* Vol.4 (New York: Knopf Doubleday, 2010); Evangelos Konstantinou, *Graecomania and Philhellenism*, European History Online:<http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/models-and-stereotypes/graecomania-and-philhellenism/evangelos-konstantinou-graecomania-and-philhellenism/?searchterm=evangelos%20konstantinou&set_language=en> [accessed 15.03.2015].

[22] The *Philiki Eteria* is closely connected to the Greek Revolution. Scholarly discussion rarely separate the two. See references for Greek Revolution.

then the Ottoman Rule were working against the continuity the Greeks were trying to prove. As a result, instead of working on their current status and facts in order to create their modern Greek identity, they concentrated on proving that they are the rightful descendants of the ancient Greeks. Instead of focusing on an independent character of modern Greece, the Greek intellectuals invested a great deal of their efforts in proving the legitimacy of their cultural heritage.

During this period, the general population of Greece was not familiar with the heritage of the ancient Greek world. Especially Greek rural populations were not at all familiar with ancient Greek civilisation or the literary works which that civilisation has left us. To raise nationalistic awareness amongst all social classes was to find some kind of continuity between the ancient and modern world that would be comprehensible by everyone, rural, urban, intellectuals or not. The Greek intellectuals understood that the most fruitful way to do so was to turn to folklore studies.[23] The folkloric works would not only provide them with themes and motifs which would reflect the ancient Greek world and consequently prove the desired continuity. They would also be the most approachable and comprehensible form of art for the rural and uneducated populations of Greece. Searching through the folklore materials, they tried to find all necessary traces and evidence which would prove that all those years that separate the ancient from the modern Greek world have not managed to degrade the Greekness of the Greeks.[24]

Greek intellectuals of the time seemed to disagree with the *Romeic* (or *Romaic*) instead of *Hellenic* perspective of the European folklorists. Of course the complexity of the two terms can be sought further and deeper than these brief definitions[25], however for the *Romeic* qua actual, vernacular, rural–rooted, and 'oriental', as

[23] Roderick Beaton, *Folk Poetry of Modern Greece*(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
[24] In *Ours Once More*, Hertzfeld gives a systematic analysis not on the actual Greek folkloric works but rather on the attempts of the Greek intellectuals of the time to find continuity between the ancient and the modern Greek world. See also: Loring Danforth, 'The Ideological Context of the Search for Continuities in Greek Culture', *Modern Greek Studies*, 2:1(1984), 53-85.
[25] Tassos Kaplanis, 'Antique Names and Self-Identification: *Hellenes*, *Graikoi* and *Romaioi* form Late Byzantium to the Greek Nation-State, in *Re-imagining the Past: Antiquity and Modern Greek Culture*, ed. Dimitris Tziovas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 81-97.

opposed to *Hellenic* qua constructed, idealized, cosmopolitan, and occidental.[26] As a consequence, they introduced a new field of study which was given the name *laographia* (the study of the actions of life, and specifically the actions based on tradition instead of breeding or knowledge), in correction to the term 'folklore' (the knowledge of the folk).[27] Scholars worked on Greek folklore in order to prove the much desired continuity between the ancient Hellenic world, the Byzantine period, the years under Ottoman rule and the modern era.[28] They showed clear opposition to the perspectives of the foreign folklorists. They claimed that those who are not Greek in their 'origins' have neither the capability nor the right to deal with what is authentically Greek. Zambelios claims that 'we allow *foreigners* to portray [the past] to us under the prism of their prejudices and according to the circumstances of their systems and self-interests'. Evlambios in his turn comments

> I do not know whether a *foreigner* can ever assimilate the spirit (*pnevma*) of another people (*laos*) to the point of daring to correct and alter the people's creations, especially when the Greeks themselves -born and bred in their fatherland, and in contact from childhood on with their customs and language- do not give themselves such a right.[29]

The attention drawn to the folkloric studies during this period only concerns the discussions of this thesis in so far as the cultivation of a negative attitude towards the foreigners is concerned, an attitude which we well repeatedly see later, regarding the revivals of ancient Greek drama. The nationalistic sentiments that were spread through the matter of folklore studies would haunt the Greek intellectual though for many years to come.

Apart from the European studies on Greek folklore, there was another incident which initiated the intense flourishing of Greek folklore studies by the Greek intellectuals of the time. That is the Fallmerayer case in 1835. The so called

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[26] Alex Papadopoulos, 'Mapping "Romeic" and "Hellenic" Same–Sex Desire: Articulating Heteropatriarchy and Male Homosexuality in Contemporary Greece', *Antipode*, 34:5(2002), 910-934.

[27] Alki Kyriakidou-Nestoros, *Λαογραφία: Η Ουσία και η Μέθοδος* (Athens: Ολκός, 1975), pp. 59-77; Dimitrios Loukatos, *Εισαγωγή στην Ελληνική Λαογραφία* (Athens: Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Εθνικής Τραπέζης, 1992).

[28] Paschalis Kitromilides, 'On the Intellectual Content of Greek Nationalism: Paparrigopoulos, Byzantium and the Great Idea', in *Byzantium and the Modern Greek Identity,* ed. D. Ricks and P. Magdalino (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1998), pp.25-33.

[29] Herzfeld, *Ours Once More...*, p.31 and p.32 respectively.

Fallmerayer scandal is based on the claims of the Tyrolean academic Jacob Philipp Fallmerayer (1790-1861) over the origins of the present-time Greeks. Fallmerayer took extreme stands in order to justify his theory that the modern Greeks have absolutely no relation to the ancient Greeks.[30] He portrayed historical evidence in a selective way in order to justify his arguments that the modern Greeks are from Albanian and Slavic descent rather than ancient Greek. As Peter Bien argues, in taking such extreme stands, 'Fallmerayer, considered a diabolical Slavophile, became -and still is- public enemy no.1 in Greece'.[31] His extreme views had the extreme reaction from the Greek side as a result. As I have mentioned above, Fallmerayer gathered his evidence in a selective way. Respectively, the Greeks responded to that extreme stand with their own research through their folklore, and in an equally selective way, they reached their own conclusions as far as their origins were concerned. As it is commonly argued, the Fallmerayer case played a crucial role to the subsequent defending their origins by taking extreme stands. Konstantinos Romanos is the first and only translator of Fallmerayer's work into modern Greek.[32] The work *On the origins of the present-time Greeks* was translated as late as 1984. In the introduction of the translated text, Romanos does not fail to stress the influences of Fallmerayer's work on the consequent extreme rise of nationalistic stands after the publication of Fallmerayer's work from 1835 onwards.

In addition to folklore studies and the linear, continuous depiction of history, the Greek intellectuals of the time also dealt extensively with their language and what would later be called the *Glossiko Zitima* (Greek Language Question).[33] The Greek language is one of the languages whose historical continuity and connection with

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[30] Stathis Gourgouris, *Dream Nation: Enlightenment, Colonisation and the Institution of Modern Greece*(California: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp.142-143.

[31] Peter Bien, 'Inventing Greece', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 23:2(2005), 217-234, p.228.

[32] Jacob Phillip Fallmerayer, *Περί της Καταγωγής των Σημερινών Ελλήνων*, trans. Konstantinos Romanos (Athens: Νεφέλη, 1984), pp.8-9. For the reaction of the Greek side on the Fallmerayer 'accusations' see also: Giorgos Veloudis, *Jacob Philip Fallmerayer and the Genesis of Greek Historicism* (Athens: Mnemon, 1982); Elli Skopetea, *Φαλμεράϋερ: Τεχνάσματα του Αντίπαλου Δέους* (Athens: Θεμέλιο, 1999).

[33]Peter Mackridge, Language *and* National Identity...; Chrys Caragounis, *Greek, a Language in Evolution: Essays in Honour of Antonios N. Jannaris* (Hildesheim: Olms, 2010); Geoffrey Horrocks, *Greek: A History of the* Language *and its Speakers* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

the past has been widely discussed.[34] Even though the language has been under major changes and adjustments which could be argued against the desired continuity, there is, at the same time, an evident relationship between ancient and modern Greek. Intellectuals of the post-revolutionary period relied on the similarities and found the evidence of continuity they were looking for. However, due to the many centuries which separated the ancient from the modern Greek language, the changes could not have been easily overlooked by the intellectuals of the time. In their efforts to 'clean' or 'purify' the language from the changes imposed to it throughout time, they, and specifically the Greek humanist Adamantios Koraes (1748-1833), invented *katharevousa. Katharevousa was* a 'pure' but complicated and elitist form of Greek language which appeared long before the post-revolutionary phase, even before the Greek Revolution which was originally promoted by its inventors in order to cleanse their ancestral language from any 'foreign' traces.[35] This purified language was inaccessible to many users of the Greek language, especially in the rural communities and inevitably led to *diglossia*[36] (bi-lingual/dialectic usage) comprising *katharevousa* and demotic, a simpler form of Greek language, closer to the usage of everyday modern Greek speech, and essentially the spoken dialect of modern Greece. On the one hand, the *demotikistes* (supporters of demotic) claimed that *katharevousa* was destroying the Greek language of the *laos* (people) and on the other hand the *katharevousianoi* claimed that demotic was deviating from the original ancient Hellenic language and thus was threatening to the authentic Hellenic spirit of the Greeks.

Many are those who later suggested that the Greek Language Question was a battle of the classes rather than a battle over the actual language. Amongst them is the critic and stage director Marios Ploritis. The second part of his book entitled *Art,*

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[34] Dimitris Tziovas, *Re-imagining the Past...*, pp.7-8.

[35] Francisco Rodríguez Andrados, *A History of the Greek Language: From its Origins to the Present* (Leiden: Brill, 2005). Specifically on the genesis of *katharevousa* see: Peter Mackridge, 'Katharevousa (c.1800-1974): An Obituary for an Official Language', in *Background to Contemporary Greece,* Vol.1, eds. Marion Saraphe and Martin Eve (London: Merlin, 1990), pp.25-52.

[36] Anna Frangoudaki, 'Diglossia and the Present Language Situation in Greece: A Sociological Approach to the Interpretation of Diglossia and Some Hypotheses on Today's Linguistic Reality', *Language in Society,* 21:3(1992), 365-381; Maria Sifianou, 'Language Variation in Greece', in *Social Dialectology: In Honour of Peter Trudgill*, eds. David Britain and Jenny Cheshire (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2003), pp.263-274.

Language and Authority published in 1988 is concerned with the development of modern Greek language and how those who had the power used it against their own people. As Politis claims, both *katharevousa* and demotic of that particular period had failed to use the considerable variety and richness of the ancient Greek language. They were both created to serve the interests of the elite and they did not do justice to the full potential of the language.[37] The Greek Language Question is of great significance for the battle between the intellectuals of the post-revolutionary phase. Its significance extends to the subsequent periods and the matter of language is one that also concerns the revival of the ancient Greek drama on the modern stage. The use of different forms of the modern Greek language would turn out to be a great conflict between those who worked on the staging of ancient Greek plays.

Bearing in mind the above, we should now turn our attention to the matter at stake. At the beginning of the twentieth century there were only two main theatrical companies which attempted to work according to European standards. The first one was the *Nea Skini* (New Stage), founded in 1901 and the second was the *Vasilikon Theatron* (Royal Theatre) founded in 1900, which would later be the National Theatre.[38] The two companies were competing against each other: they were the only professional high art companies of the time. Apart from the two, the rest of the stages were occupied by local groups, result of the poor development of the arts throughout the latest half of the nineteenth century. In 1905 and 1908 both the *Nea Skini* and the *Vasiliko Theatro* respectively were shut down. The two main attempts to synchronise Greek theatre with the European theatres of the time failed and that which replaced those two companies was the *Athinaïki Epitheorisi* (Athenian Revue), a musical-theatrical genre which only addressed the Athenian elite of the time.[39] Even though *Athinaïki Epitheorisi* flourished for more than a decade, its decline came as early as the beginning of the 1920s, with the Greco-Turkish War, mainly because it was a genre that did not address a wide Athenian audience. Therefore, the years to follow the Greco-Turkish War found Athens in

[37] Marios Ploritis, *Τέχνη, Γλώσσα και Εξουσία* (Athens: Καστανιώτη 1997).
[38] Arvaniti, *Η Αρχαία Ελληνική...*, pp.14-19.
[39] Thodoros Hadjipantazis, *Η Αθηναϊκή Επιθεώρηση* (Athens: Ερμής, 1977), pp.7-8.

need for new theatrical genres, new theatrical companies and new theatrical stages. The substantive aspects of this will be further discussed in the following chapters. However, the overview that I provide here is imperative for the discussions regarding the development of the Greek intellectuals' views on the revival of ancient Greek drama.

In 1930, the *Vasiliko Theatro* was reopened by the state, and specifically by the Minister of Education, Georgios Papandreou (1888-1968) , under a new name now, the *Ethniko Theatro* (National Theatre).[40] The first General Director of the National Theatre was the eminent scholar Ioannis Gryparis (1870-1942), who was also a translator of many of the ancient Greek plays, including *Antigone*. At the same period of time, there was another theatrical company which was at its starting point but would also turn out to be as important for modern Greek drama as the National Theatre. That was the theatrical company of Karolos Koun (1908-1987), named *Laïki Skini* (Popular Stage) which only survived for two years (1934-1936) under that name. Regardless, during its short period operation, *Laïki Skini* played a crucial role in the conflict between the 'conservatives' and the 'progressives'. This was not a mere result of the artistic choices of *Laïki Skini*; it was also a result based on the name of the company. The two of the most renowned and significant theatrical companies of modern Greece come into clear opposition because the one was named *Ethniko* (National) and the second was named *Laïko* (Popular). The contrast between the names is obvious and definitely not coincidental. Koun's theatrical company came as a response to the National Theatre and those who were working for it or supporting it. Koun's renowned lectures, parts of which will be discussed shortly, confirm this conflict: Koun repeatedly attacks the National Theatre. A few years later *Laïko Theatro* was closed down and Koun founded a new theatrical company under the name *Theatro Technis* (Art Theatre) which is still in operation under the same name until today.[41] However, both *Laïko* and *Technis* were companies founded by the same person, and Koun was the official stage

[40] Vasilis Kanakis, *Εθνικό Θέατρο: Εξήντα Χρόνια Σκηνή και Παρασκήνιο* (Athens: Κάκτος, 1999), p.27.
[41] Margarita Kremmyda, *Κάρολος Κουν* (Athens: Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Εθνικής Τραπέζης, 2010).

director for both until his death in 1987. Therefore the philosophy behind the two has always remained the same.[42]

Both theatrical companies have throughout the years followed distinct and characteristic paths. As the examination of specific performances in the following chapters shows, the National Theatre has always, with a very few exceptions, kept a more conservative profile. This is not a suggestion or a claim that the National Theatre has not developed throughout the years. It has indeed been through different changes and adjustments but on its basis is has always remained as loyal to the 'originals' and 'classics' as possible, especially when it comes to the staging of ancient Greek drama. On the contrary, Karolos Koun was one of the most pioneering stage directors in Greece who introduced new, European methods and attempted to modernise the staging of ancient Greek plays.

Many intellectuals of the time have often been concerned with such revivals. Writers, theorists, critics, directors, even actors and actresses, were occasionally giving lectures, writing articles or discussing publicly the ways in which the ancient plays should be revived on the modern Greek stage. Through the work of those intellectuals we can grasp the general feeling of the epoch and distinguish the two opposing but not always easily distinguishable theses on the matter: the conservative and the progressive. The 'conservative' characterisation here is not to be confused with the Conservative as a right wing political ideology, even though the two types of conservative are indeed frequently connected. This will be a recurring theme in this work as there are constant shifts from what or whom the Greeks considered conservative or progressive.

Greek intellectual of the time, journalist, playwright and repeatedly involved with the National Theatre, Theodoros Synadinos , addressed one of his lectures entitled *State and Theatre* in a National Theatre hall in 1924. Throughout this lecture, Synadinos discussed the interaction between the modern Greek state and theatre by accusing the Greeks for denying anything that is originally Greek as a result of lack of national consciousness. He claimed that with no traces of dignity or control,

[42] Michael Maggiar, 'Karolos Koun and the Theatro Technis', (unpublished doctoral thesis, City University of New York, 1990).

the Greeks adopt foreign elements which have the potential to destroy their own culture. However, he did not fail to praise the National Theatre, by saying that the only serious and remarkable theatrical productions on the modern Greek stage had been produced by the National Theatre. Synadinos' nationalistic stances extend even further in his suggestion that it is three things which allow the National Theatre to be the one and only worthy theatrical company in Greece, based on the spirit of its Greek actors of former generations, their faith in the *Idea* of Theatre and their patriotism, as he characteristically says.[43] That was to suggest that the worth of theatrical companies was not to be evaluated according to their contribution to the development of the artistic culture but rather according to the level of patriotism they showed, whatever patriotism came to mean at the time. The notion that the National Theatre was incomparably worthier than any other company would be cultivated amongst theatrical circles in Greece for many years to follow.

Such patriotic and nationalistic stands initiated the reaction from the progressive side, and particularly Karolos Koun. His *Theatro Technis* was closed down due to financial difficulties between 1949 and 1954. While his company was out of operation, Koun worked for the National Theatre between 1950 and 1953. In 1954 he reopened the *Theatro Technis* as a result of his progressive methods, styles and ideas which never really matched the conservative work frames of the National Theatre. Koun has always been considered one of the most important, innovative and influential Greek theatre directors of all epochs. He was one of the first directors influenced by the Generation of the 1930s who bravely introduced modern repertoire, ideas and styles. Most importantly he dared to direct ancient Greek drama for the modern Greek audience in a unique, modern, and innovative way. He had a clear opposition towards anything nationalistic and conservative and his progressive views were to influence many subsequent theatrical generations.

Koun had never made any direct references, but the influences he received from that Generation of the 1930s are obvious in his performances as well as in his lectures. In a commemorative edition on Koun's performances published in 2008, the editors provided amongst other materials some of his most significant lectures.

[43] Theodoros Synadinos, *Κράτος και Θέατρον* (Athens: Ακροπόλεως, 1925), pp.6-7.

Throughout these lectures he expressed his ideas, dreams and expectations as far as his theatrical company as well as his drama school are concerned. In one of these lectures given in 1943, Koun distinguished his theatrical company from any other of the time by saying that 'Our theatrical company has no reason of existence unless it completely differs from any other current companies.'[44] In addition, he explains that his aim is to produce performances which will be adapted to modern Greek reality and tradition in order to be comprehensible by the modern Greek audience: 'I have started this theatrical company having as a basis the Greek popular reality with all its rich, primitive and instinctive elements.'[45] Furthermore, he mentions that the aim of his art was not merely the 'object' (play) he was working on but rather the meaning he was giving to each play. Apart from discussing about the work of his own theatrical company, Koun also criticises other theatrical companies of the time, with National Theatre being the indirectly implied target:

> Firstly we need to give a well-lit dressing room to the actor, and only when we do that we can proceed with providing the spectators with a velvet seat [...] because a good actor can make the spectator forget where he is sitting, whereas a velvet seat can never help any actor pass his message across the stage to the spectator.[46]

It is obvious that Koun's references to the 'velvet seats' have the National Theatre as a direct target. As the official state theatre, the National Theatre was in favour compared to other theatrical companies. Koun does not fail to attack the conservative theatres for a second time in the same lecture:

> It is better to open the window in order to have some fresh air, even if with the fresh air you might also have some or maybe a lot of dust. It is still better than keeping the windows shut, like good housewives do when they fear that their shelves and floors might get covered in dust. If we do that, we might end up dying from asphyxiation.[47]

Koun realised better than anyone else at the time that Greek theatre had to let the fresh 'foreign' air in. And he was never afraid not only to say that that publicly but also to set it into action through his performances.

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[44] Karolos Koun, 'Η Κοινωνική Θέση και η Αισθητική Γραμμή του Θεάτρου Τέχνης', in *Κάρολος Κουν: Οι Παραστάσεις,* ed. Platon Mavromoustakos (Athens: Μουσείο Μπενάκη, 2008), 81-97, p.81.
[45] Koun, 'Η Κοινωνική Θέση...', p.91.
[46] Koun, 'Η Κοινωνική Θέση...', p.87.
[47] Koun, 'Η Κοινωνική Θέση...', p.97.

Koun had never been conservative with his staging of ancient Greek drama in the same way that he was never conservative with any other genre. However, the matter of national identity and the finding of the roots was an unresolved matter for the Greeks, and this could not leave Koun unaffected. In another of his lectures, solely concerned with the staging of ancient Greek drama Koun mentions

> As artists of the present time, all our research and effort has been based on what means of expression we need to use in order to make those ancient plays with their specific truths touch the soul of the people of our time, without failing their original form, as those plays are more familiar to us who live in this place and we are able to distinguish analogies in the shapes, colours, rhythms and sounds as well as in the ritual and festive traces found in our popular tradition.[48]

Even though one would suggest there are traces of nationalistic stands in Koun's speech, one should never overlook firstly his influences from the Generation of the 1930s as well as the fact that his productions of ancient Greek drama were not, by all means, promoting nationalistic stands.[49] Clearly, he appreciated the heritage of the 'Greek ancestors' but he never worked on the ancient Greek plays in a conservative way. Koun always insisted that even though the whole truth of ancient Greek drama lies in the ancient Greek text, and the text should always be one's primary source of inspiration and information, ancient Greek plays are never to be treated as textbooks in libraries or museums. On the contrary, he insisted that these ancient texts belong on the stage. His vision of ancient Greek drama on the modern Greek stage was clearly stated in the same lecture:

> We research, we work and we allow ourselves to be influenced by the tradition of our country, the contemporary socio-political reality and the means of expression of the contemporary theatre, in order to bring [the ancient Greek playwrights'] poetry forth not as static language but as contemporary theatre. This is the only way that the ancient Greek playwrights can exist in our epoch and help the contemporary man. Our

[48] Karolos Koun, 'Μαγεία, Πάθος και Συγκίνηση, Κυρίαρχα Στοιχεία της Τραγωδίας', in *Κάρολος Κουν: Οι Παραστάσεις,* ed. Platon Mavromoustakos (Athens: Μουσείο Μπενάκη, 2008), 383-390, p.388.

[49] The *Theatro Technis* has never produced an *Antigone* throughout all the years of the company's operation. Anouilh's *Antigone* was staged by the company in 1947. However, one of his most renowned, modernist and innovative performances was Aristophanes' *The Birds* and it will be discussed later on.

> aim is to present ancient Greek drama as we see it and grasp it today, for those who live today.[50]

Koun serves as another great example as far as the confusion and distinction between conservative and progressive approaches of the revivals are concerned. Even though he initially seems to share the idea that the Greeks are more capable of understanding the ancient Greek plays because they share the same land with the ancient Greek ancestors, he eventually turns out to be, through his lectures and most importantly through his works as a director, one of the most forward, open-minded and progressive Greek artists of the twentieth century. He might have never directed an *Antigone* performance at his *Theatro Technis*, but he directed one of the most renowned revivals of ancient Greek drama, Aristophanes' *Birds*, in 1959. For the purposes of the performance, Koun employed some of the most progressive artists of his time, such as the choreographer Rallou Manou (1915-1988), the painter Giannis Tsarouchis (1910-1989) and one of the two prominent 'national' composers of Modern Greece, Manos Hadjidakis (1925-1994). The performance's Greek 'folk expressionism' in combination with the use of different traditions, brought together the 'art' and the 'popular' in order to create a unique and modern amalgam.

However, the liberties of the translation text had offended the audience, the music compositions failed to engage the audience, the choreographies were not well received, the mocking of religion, ancient and modern, infuriated the public, and as Van Steen argues in an extensive and detailed chapter on this production in *Venom in Verse*, 'The overall impression was of an improvised, unfinished, and disorganised production - a miserable attempt to make the ancient original contemporary.'[51] The appropriateness of the performance resulted to a great controversy which took severe political dimensions. Member of the conservative government at the time, Konstantinos Tsatsos (1899-1987), forbade all subsequent performances since he believed that Koun's staging of *Birds* abused the spirit of the classical text as well as

[50] Koun, 'Μαγεία, Πάθος...', p.390.
[51] Van Steen, *Venom in Verse*..., p.124.

the religious sensitivity of the audience.[52] Van Steen argues that the ban of the performance was heavily related to political reasons with implicit biases against the social, political and even sexual orientations of the contributors of the performance, and specifically Koun who was a foreigner in addition to a homosexual artist and a Jewish liberal.[53] The significance of this lies in the fact that the revivals of ancient Greek drama in modern Greece would receive similar treatment in the years to follow as performances would be judged based on political and social personal or governmental preferences. And the suggestion of official governmental intervention for the prevention of a performance would reappear as late as the 1980s, as we will see in a subsequent chapter.

After the 1930s, the socio-political circumstances of Greece went through various phases and changes which shaped the opinions on the staging of ancient Greek drama which never ceased to divide the intellectuals into opposing and conflicting sides. Theatre director and drama theorist, Alexis Solomos (1918-2012) had worked for the National Theatre for several years. Therefore, he would be expected to portray more conservative views on the matter. However, he is one of those who opposed to the idea that the staging of ancient Greek drama should be kept as close to its 'original' context as possible. This is not coincidental; Solomos was a student of Karolos Koun. Inevitably, the teacher's perspectives on the matter had a great influence on Solomos who held progressive views even when he was working for the most conservative theatrical company, the National Theatre. In one of his major publications in 1972, Solomos claims that the millennia which separate us from the ancient Greek world do not allow the attempt of any kind of revival in an original context. Every such attempt would be a failure and it would only turn those spectacular ancient plays into cheap archaeological imitations.[54] Furthermore, he mentions that the whole magic of theatre lies in its ability to create a connection between the audience and the stage, something that can only be achieved when

[52] Anonymous, 'Η Παραγωγή των Ορνίθων Προκάλεσε τη Διαμαρτυρία του Κοινού', *Η Καθημερινή,* 01 September 1959; Marios Ploritis, 'Όρνιθες του Αριστοφάνη', *Ελευθερία,* 01 September, 1959.
[53] Van Steen, *Venom in Verse...*, p.125.
[54] Alexis Solomos, *Τι Προς Διόνυσον: Σημειώσεις Γύρω από την Αρχαία Ελληνική Τραγωδία* (Athens: Δίφρος, 1972), p.161.

ancient Greek plays are adapted to the modern Greek reality.[55] As I have discussed in the Introduction, issues of revivals have been very frequently raised amongst non-Greek scholars. However, one should not forget that in addition to the broader issues that arise from the modern staging of ancient Greek plays, the modern Greek revivals also had to carry the burden of the ancestral heritage which defined their modern Greek identity.

Regardless of any attempts from the progressive side, the nationalists and conservatives never really withdrew from the foreground. They always returned to the intellectual circles of every epoch in order to 'protect' their nation, their national identity and their heritage and to preserve everything that had been given to them. Throughout his *Humanistic Interpretation of Ancient Greek Drama* in 1975, the journalist and theatre critic Babis Klaras, as ardent communist, raises some of the aspects of the modern staging of ancient Greek plays which have repeatedly concerned the theorists working on the subject. He begins his arguments by reminding his readers that ancient Greek drama is an art for the stage. He does not underestimate the importance of philological analysis and interpretation; on the contrary he insists that they are both of great significance for the deep understanding of the plays. But the ultimate goal should always be the performance.[56] Even though Klaras begins his arguments at a very moderate tone, he gradually builds on and takes conservative stands, by claiming that ancient Greek drama is a perfect form of art in its completely original context and does not need any kind of modernization or modern adaptation.[57] It is worth noting that despite his communist background, Klaras has occasionally been criticized by his contemporaries about his extreme conservative views on matters concerning the modern staging of ancient Greek drama. This is, again, to remind us of the previous assertion that when it came to the revivals of ancient Greek drama, the terms 'conservative' and 'progressive' are often awry or blurry.

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[55] See Introduction.

[56] Babis Klaras, *Ανθρωπιστική Ερμηνεία του Αρχαίου Ελληνικού Δράματος* (Athens: Εκδόσεις Σίδερη, 1975), p.185.

[57] Klaras, *Ανθρωπιστική Ερμηνεία...*, p.186.

If there is one common speculation amongst all intellectuals who have occasionally been concerned with the matter ancient Greek drama, this would be the difficulties of the staging of such plays on the contemporary stage. Both the conservatives and the progressives admit that there are a few matters that need to be taken into consideration, especially because ancient Greek plays refer to an era so distant from ours. The speculations on the problems of modern staging might be common for both sides but the suggestions and solutions given by each side though vary. Another example is the Greek Cypriot writer and journalist Emilios Hourmouzios who worked as a director for the National Theatre for almost ten years (1955-1964). In his book on ancient Greek drama, and specifically in the chapter on *Tradition and Imagination*, Hourmouzios introduces the problematic matter of modern revivals. He argues that in contrast to other theatrical genres, we have very limited information on how the original staging was, which might be a disadvantage but at the same time it allows the imaginative revival which the other genres lack. He continues on by arguing that due to constant alteration and destruction, since the fourth century B.C. ancient Greek drama has been a theatre without tradition. Since we have exhausted the limited sources on 'how', 'what' and 'when', the last word on the revivals is left to the imagination. At a first glance, Hourmouzios expresses a relatively progressive opinion which allows imagination to have last word on the staging of a genre so distant in time. However, coming from the school of National Theatre, a fact which immediately positions him in a certain ideological and political context, Hourmouzios reveals his previously concealed conservatism by emphasizing that we should not outreach the limits of creative imagination as this might lead to the opposite outcome. The fact that he tries to impose limits to imagination, though, and particularly to creative imagination, immediately cancels the real context of imagination itself and leads back to conservative models of revivals.[58]

The staging of ancient Greek drama has always been a political matter, especially in Greece. Directors and dramaturges have very often taken political stands through their productions as well as through the people they decided to work with

[58] Emilios Hourmouzios, *Το Αρχαίο Δράμα: Μελετήματα* (Athens: Οι Εκδόσεις των Φίλων, 1978).

according to both their opinions on the revivals and their greater socio-political stands, which were often interrelated. Greeks, whether theatre directors, actors, translators or scholars, who have worked on the matter outside a political context are very few and only did so during the last years of the twentieth century onwards.

In *Art, Language and Authority*, Ploritis is concerned with this relationship between *art* and *authority*. He argues that authorities in Greece have always treated artists in three ways: with compassion when they serve the authorities, with tolerance when they are neutral towards the authorities and with hatred when they are against the authorities. This is the result of the fear that the authorities have always had towards the all kinds of artists and the truth they are portraying through their art. Ploritis does not, by any means, suggest that art should be apolitical. He only points out a major issue in the history of modern Greek theatre in general and in the history of the revivals of ancient Greek drama in particular: the artists' willingness to compromise their art in order to make it compatible with the interests of any authority, political party or political ideology. Through the words of Trotsky, Ploritis suggests that art can and should always be alongside every revolution, as long as it remains loyal to itself.[59] Ploritis' argument serves as a conclusion to this chapter as well as a reminder. The Greeks have always had art, and specifically the art of ancient Greek drama, alongside every 'revolution'; whether they kept it loyal to itself though, is a whole different matter, a topic that will be examined and questioned throughout the rest of this work.

[59] Ploritis, *Τέχνη, Γλώσσα...,* p.27.

Part 3: Current Literature and Contribution to the Field

Antigone is undeniably amongst the most discussed works in history. Its timeless value though, lies amongst other, in our eagerness to re-read, re-evaluate, re-interpret, re-invent, re-write and re-present the myth, the play and the character. However, one needs to bear in mind the invaluable volume of works devoted to *Antigone* in the field of Classics and beyond. The play has been reinvented in poetry, modern theatre, philosophy, political and legal theory, feminist theory and psychoanalysis by renowned poets, thinkers, philosophers, writers and scholars such as Hölderlin, Hegel, Heidegger, Butler, Irigaray, Brecht, Anouilh, Derrida, Lacan, Žižek and many more for more than two centuries now. One of the most important accounts of such works is George Steiner's *Antigones: The Antigone Myth in Western Literature, Art and Thought*, which presents how the themes of *Antigone* have been used and portrayed in the Western world for over two millennia.[60] In that sense, it provides a clear understanding or, better said, a form of an explanation as to why *Antigone* has been used in certain ways in the history of modern theatre in general and modern Greek theatre in particular. In a similar respect, the edited volume published in 2010 entitled *Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and Criticism*[61] as well as Bonnie Honig's *Antigone, Interrupted*[62] in 2013 discuss the myth of Antigone in contexts other than that of the original Sophoclean play. These works might serve very different purposes but at the same time they are significantly relevant to this thesis on a two-level scale: firstly they show how *Antigone* has been used as a platform for discussions on political or politically charged issues, and secondly they give insights on how these issues have been used for, have inspired or initiated the re-presentation of *Antigone* on the contemporary stages of Greece and beyond.

[60] George Steiner, *Antigones: The Antigone Myth in Western Literature, Art and Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).
[61] S.E. Wilmer and Audrone Zukauskaite, *Interrogating Antigone in Postmodern Philosophy and Criticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
[62] Bonnie Honig, *Antigone, Interrupted* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Even though Classics Reception is a relatively recent field of study, work of great significance has already been done. A large number of prominent scholars from a wide international background have contributed to the development of the field by discussing materials of Greek antiquity outside their original context. General themes of reception studies are covered in the edited volume *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*[63] published in 1997. The volume is divided into three parts, the last of which is devoted to classical reception, with essays on themes of reception as far as texts and performances from antiquity to modernity are concerned. However, as a relatively young field of studies, Classics Reception still has many issued to discuss. Beyond works which fall under the general umbrella of Reception Studies as they discuss themes of antiquity in modernity, the field of Classics Reception is in itself a matter of discussion in order to be concretely defined amongst other well-established scholarly fields. In a later edited volume published in 2006 and entitled *Classics and the Uses of Reception*, Charles Martindale discusses Classics Reception as a growing field of study and he mentions that

> 'Two things above all I would have classics embrace: a relaxed, not to say imperialist, attitude towards what we may study as part of the subject, and a subtle but supple conception of the relationship between past and present, modern and ancient. Then classics could again have a leading role among the humanities, a classics neither merely antiquarian not crudely presentist, a classics of the present certainly, but also, truly, of the future.'[64]

In that respect, the revival and reception of ancient Greek drama in modern Greece should not be treated any differently from the rest of the world. Bearing in mind the complicated relationship between ancient and modern Greece though, the matter becomes somehow more complicated. Reviving the ancient Greek plays, thus reviving the past, in order to guide and inform the present and the future seems to have become a problematic and painful procedure for the modern Greeks: it involved, and still involves, the hotly disputed matter of historical

[63] Pat Easterling, *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
[64] Charles Martindale, 'Thinking Through Reception' in *Classics and the Uses of Reception,* eds. Charles Martindale and Richard Thomas (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 1-13, p.13.

continuity, the formation of the modern Greek nation and the definition of the modern Greek national identity.

As recently as 2008, another edited volume was published, entitled *A Companion to Classical Receptions*. In addition to the introduction which discusses broader issued of the field of Classics Reception itself, the volume is divided into parts which discuss different aspects of the field, such as reception in antiquity, theory, translation, performance, film and cultural history. The specific research area of this thesis was particularly informed by the discussions regarding translation, performance history and cultural history. In addition, Gonda Van Steen's contribution to the volume discusses the renowned 1903 *Oresteia* performance by the *Vasilikon Theatron* (Royal Theatre), a performance which Van Steen characterises as 'perhaps the most famous production in the modern Greek reception history of the revival of tragedy'.[65] I would agree with Van Steen on the above; the production has indeed received significant scholarly attention, especially compared to other productions in the history of modern Greek revival of tragedy, which deserve as much attention and analysis as far as their cultural, social and political contexts are concerned, however they still remain un-discussed.

There is a long list of scholarly works regarding the revival of ancient Greek drama in the modern world. These works approach the matter from different perspectives and pay particular attention to different aspects of the matter according to the specific research interests of each. However, they usually share one common element, a common question which allows them all to be considered part of the broader field of Classics Reception: why and how are the works of antiquity relevant to the present and the future? This relationship between antiquity and modernity is the central theme of works such as Michael Walton's *Living Greek Theatre: A Handbook of Classical Performance and Modern Production,* published in 1987[66] as well as Michael Silk's edited volume entitled *Tragedy and the Tragic:*

[65] Gonda Van Steen, 'You Unleash the Tempest of Tragedy: The 1903 Athenian Production of Aeschylus' *Oresteia',* in *A Companion to Classical Receptions,* eds. Lorna Hardwick and Christopher Stray (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 360-372, pp.360-361

[66] Michael Walton, *Living Greek Theatre: A Handbook of Classical Performance and Modern Production* (Michigan: Greenwood Press, 1987); see also:

Greek Theatre and Beyond, published in 1998, where essays discuss a variety of Greek plays in their political and cultural contexts as well as their theoretical perspectives of the modern world.[67] In *Greek Theatre Performance: An Introduction* published in 2000, while discussing the aforementioned relationship between the past and the present, David Wiles notes:

> By seeing how different generations have reinterpreted Greek tragedy, we can gain some sort of perspective on the complex relationship of past and present. Most directors who engage with Greek drama feel (a) that they have touched on something *authentically* Greek which is worth bringing to the present and (b) that there is something in the present which they would like to bring to the ancient text.[68]

If touching something *authentically* Greek can be troublesome or problematic, or let us simply say interesting or intriguing, to the rest, in the case of Greece the matter is elevated into a major issue within a national context. Terms such as the past and the *authentic*, as well as the relationship between ancient roots and the modern world, have always been a matter of great dispute for the modern Greeks, as the definition of such terms is closely related to what came to be considered part of their national identity. In *Radical Theatre: Greek Tragedy and the Modern World* published in 2003, Rush Rehm notes:

> Requiring moment-to-moment realization in a *mimesis* not co-extensive with reality, Greek tragedy reminds us that humans live real lives (the only ones we have) and die real deaths, no matter how hard we try to deny it. Those hard truths provide the inspiration for tragic performance, and suggest simply and directly why this ancient form of theatre might be particularly timely now.[69]

The vast majority of scholarship agrees on the fact that the revival of tragedy as a modern from of theatre is indeed timely now. A particular definition of 'now' is not required: Greek tragedy is timely *now* in a diachronic way. However, the many years that separate us from the civilisation and the culture which produced these plays, make the modern revival and staging of such work a complicated task. In

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Michael Walton, *The Greek Sense of Theatre: Tragedy Reviewed* (London: Routledge, 1996).

[67] Michael Silk, *Tragedy and the Tragic: Greek Theatre and Beyond* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

[68] David Wiles, *Greek Theatre Performance: An Introduction* (New Work: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.179.

[69] Rush Rehm, *Radical Theatre: Greek Tragedy and the Modern World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2003), p.20.

How to Stage Greek Tragedy Today published in 2007, Simon Goldhill raises six major problems in the attempts of modern revivals of tragedy through the discussion of modern productions in Europe and the United States: the staging space of the play, the use of the chorus, the role of the modern actor while performing an unfamiliar style, the political aspects of tragedy as interpreted in modern times, the complicated issue of translation and the treatment of gods or other unfamiliar types of characters common in the ancient world.[70] These are problems that any director would have to face in the process of revival of tragedy on a modern stage. With the additional problem of the ancestral heritage and the acclaimed historical continuity between the Greek past and present, it is not surprising that the revival of tragedy has always been, and still remains, a particularly complicated task for the modern Greeks.

In the edited volume *Theorising Performance: Greek Drama, Cultural History and Critical Practice* published in 2010, Rosie Wyles argues that

> The reception of a play cannot fairly be described as simply the reception of a text; it is the reception of the theatrical and cultural activity embodied in the performance of a piece of theatre. The performance of a play thus has much to tell us about both the nature of theatre itself, as well as the culture which produces it and for which it is produced.[71]

This introduces us to another discussion concerning modern revivals of tragedy in general, as well as modern Greek revivals in particular. It is indeed true that each production reveals much about the culture it produces it and the culture for which it is produced, something we could arbitrarily name a double reception: first is the producer's reception of the original piece of work and then is the audience's reception of the producer's work. Especially for the purposes of this thesis, this double reception becomes of great significance, particularly as far as its political interpretations are concerned. In the same edited volume, Erika Fischer-Lichte notes:

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[70] Goldhill, *How to Stage Greek Tragedy...*

[71] Rosie Wyles, ' Towards Theorising the Place of Costume in Performance Reception', in *Theorising Performance: Greek Drama, Cultural History and Critical Practice,* eds. Edith Hall and Stephe Harrop (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), 171-180, p.171.

> Different groups encounter, negotiate and regulate their relationships differently in performances. The social process turns political during a performance when a power struggle erupts between actors and spectators or between different groups of spectators. [...] Thus a performance might turn into a profoundly political process, without necessarily addressing an explicitly political subject matter.[72]

As we shall see in later discussions of modern Greek *Antigone* productions, this is a surprisingly frequent phenomenon. Producers, directors, translators and actors received ancient Greek tragedy in their own specific ways; however, their contemporary audiences received these receptions in different ways. And even though the initial receptions did not employ any political implications, the different ways in which they were seen, turned them into explicit political subject matters at best, and sometimes even into direct intense political conflicts.

Bearing in mind the youth of the field of Reception Studies, there is a relatively long list of works which discuss the ways in which ancient Greek materials can be, or in other cases already are, relevant to the modern world. In that respect, performances of ancient Greek drama on various modern stages have been studied from different perspectives in their political and social contexts and have thus revealed a lot about the cultures which have produced them as well as the cultures for which they are produced. Marianne McDonald's *Ancient Sun, Modern Light: Greek Drama on the Modern Stage* published in 1992, discusses the staging of various Greek tragedies produced for the modern stage by dramatists who

> ...call our attention to particular phenomena -war, rape, murder- but they never suggest that there is anything behind or beyond that phenomenon. If anything, their adaptations gain their power through a kind of stylized theatrical repetition, seldom through a naturalistic chronological development, and never through transcendence. There is, however, always a resonance with the Greek originals from which these modern versions have come.[73]

The edited volume by Stephen Dillon and John Wilmer *Rebel Women: Staging Ancient Greek Drama Today* published in 2005, examines the representation of

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[72]Erika Fischer-Lichte, ' Performance as Event - Reception as Transformation', in *Theorising Performance: Greek Drama, Cultural History and Critical Practice,* eds. Edith Hall and Stephe Harrop (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), 29-42, p.30.

[73] Marianne McDonald, *Ancient Sun, Modern Light: Greek Drama on the Modern Stage* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p.5.

ancient Greek heroines in both their original context and the modern world. The volume in its entity considers

> How such female characters have been portrayed in the twentieth century and in some cases have been transformed to enhance their relevance to topical and local situations and/or to strengthen and make more appealing their personalities and their actions.[74]

In their *Greek Tragedy and the British Stage 1660-1914* published in 2005, Edith Hall and Fiona Macintosh discuss productions of ancient Greek tragedy in the British theatre covering a period of two and a half centuries, with a particular interest in the reasons behind the radicals' and the progressives' growing attraction to tragedy, when the genre was by tradition used as a part of elitist education in schools and universities.[75] In the same year an edited volume by Hall, Macintosh and Amanda Wrigley was also published, entitled *Dionysus Since 69: Greek Tragedy at the Dawn of the Third Millennium*[76]. The essays of the volume examine the popularity of the staging of performances of ancient Greek tragedy during the last three decades of the second millennium in accordance with their political, social and aesthetic contexts and in relation to other theoretical frames such as feminism, psychoanalysis, post-colonialism and post-structuralism.

Similar to the above in context and approach, but with a particular focus on the performance history of specific plays, are two edited volumes, the first of which is *Medea in Performance 1500-2000* published in 2000[77] and the second is *Agamemnon in Performance 458 BC to AD 2004* published in 2005[78], as well as the authored book by Fiona Macintosh, entitled *Sophocles: Oedipus Tyrannus* and published in 2009[79]. Even though modern performances of *Antigone* are sporadically discussed in edited volumes or journal articles, there are two books

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[74] Stephen Dillon and John Wilmer, *Rebel Women: Staging Ancient Greek Drama Today* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005), pp.xiii-xiv.
[75] Edith Hall and Fiona Macintosh, *Greek Tragedy and the British Stage 1660-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
[76] Edith Hall, Fiona Macintosh and Amanda Wrigley, *Dionysus Since 69: Greek Tragedy at the Dawn of the Third Millennium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
[77] Edith Hall, Oliver Taplin and Fiona Macintosh, *Medea in Performance 1500-2000* (Oxford: Legenda, 2000).
[78] Fiona Macintosh, Pantelis Michelakis, Edith Hall and Oliver Taplin, *Agamemnon in Performance 458 BC to AD 2004* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
[79] Fiona Macintosh, *Sophocles: Oedipus Tyrannus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

which are exclusively devoted to the performance history reception of *Antigone*. The first is Tina Chanter's authored book *Whose Antigone? The Tragic Marginalization of Slavery* published in 2011, parts of which discuss *Antigone* in accordance with slavery and modern African productions of the play.[80] The second is the edited volume *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage* by Erin Mee and Helene Foley published in 2011, with essays on various performances of *Antigone* in different countries, deploying different political and social uses of the play by different nations, languages, cultures and traditions. It is worth having a closer look at this edited volume for the sake of analogy between the ways the rest of the world, similar to or in contrast with Greece, has seen and revived *Antigone*.[81]

Starting with *Antigone* in Argentine tradition, Moira Fradinger discusses various Argentine productions of the play[82], a phenomenon which she describes as a 'national tradition' which dramatizes the political foundations of the nation, highlights four crucial moments for the nation's constitution (war of independence, post-revolutionary constitution of a liberal nation, civil war, and cleansing of territories by other nations) and prompts playwrights from different generations to respond to each other's appropriation of Antigone's myth. As we will see in analogy, Greece also used the myth of Antigone in a very similar way. The Greek nation's constitution also provided a context into which many of the *Antigone* performances were produced, and sparked the reaction of playwrights, as well as of audiences, not only from generation to generation, but also within the same generation. According to Fradinger though, the myth of Antigone has also been used in the Argentine productions to dramatize 'one of the most influential narratives that the nation devised to interpellate women as its political builders qua *women*, but especially qua *mothers'*. However, in modern Greek productions of the play, femininity, feminism, or the feminine figure, do not seem to occupy any significant (or any at all, as a matter of fact) intellectual thought or activity. A

[80] Tina Chanter, *Whose Antigone? The Tragic Marginalization of Slavery* (Albany: State University of New Work, 2011).
[81] Erin Mee and Helene Foley, *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[82] Moira Fradinger, 'An Argentine Tradition', in *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage,* ed. Erin Mee and Helene Foley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp.67-89.

number of Antigone performances will be discussed hereafter, and, astonishingly, none of the discussion includes or refers to one of the most obvious thematics of *Antigone*, neither in direct political terms, nor in implied politicised social or cultural terms. Apparently, the politicisation of *Antigone* in Greece happened in a balder, more direct way than anywhere else: *Antigone* came to be a national play way beyond its specific thematics, but rather as a whole.

In the same edited volume, Erin Mee's article 'The Fight for Regional Autonomy through Regional Culture: *Antigone* in Manipur, North-East India'[83] discusses two productions of *Antigone* in accordance with the conflict between regional autonomy and national stability, in order to portray the culture of Manipur and to establish regional identity in contrast to the national identity imposed on the citizens of the region by the national government. As such, the productions in question inevitably mount a cultural and political resistance to the national government. The approach is political in a more direct way which is clearly drawn from the thematics of the Sophoclean play. Even though the circumstances are different to the above, the 1974 *Antigone* production of the Greek National Theatre could be discussed in relation to the Manipur productions, as far as their thematics are concerned. As we will later see in detail, the production was staged after the fall of the military Junta and it was a cry of opposition against the dictatorial regime which imposed itself as the protector of everything 'national', as well as a celebration of freedom from the imposed military and dictatorial 'national'. Similar to the case of the Indian productions, the 1974 National Theatre production and its reception showed political resistance, even retrospectively, to an imposed national government.

The fourth part of the volume carries the general title of *'Antigone* and Human Rights', and includes three articles, two of which are discuss in more detail in later chapters: 'To Mock the Spirits: Yup'ik *Antigone* in the Arctic' by Dave Hunsaker and 'Declaring and Rethinking Solidarity: *Antigone* in Cracow' by Marc Robinson. The

[83] Erin Mee, 'The Fight for Regional Autonomy through Regional Culture: *Antigone* in Manipur, North-East India', in *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage,* ed. Erin Mee and Helene Foley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp.107-126.

third is Serap Erincin's article 'Performing Rebellion: *Eurydice's Cry* in Turkey'.[84] The significance of these three pieces of work, in relation to the discussions of this thesis, lies in what seems to be one of the most evident political implications of the Sophoclean play: freedom of speech as a fundamental human right. It is only expected that productions of Antigone around the world would approach the play in various political ways with respect to freedom of speech. The paradox and irony we are faced with when it comes to the modern Greek productions though is that, instead of celebrating freedom of speech through the revival of Antigone, there were specific productions which actually did the exact opposite. One of the most characteristic examples is the 1956 National Theatre production, a few years after the end of the Greek Civil War and the marginalisation of the Greek Left. As will be extensively discussed later, the 1956 production did not only exclude the Left on all practical levels, but through its narrative and representation on the stage, it also ensured the restoration of the Right which silenced any disobedient opposing Left voices.

In *Theatre of the Condemned: Classical Tragedy on Greek Prison Islands* published in 2010, Gonda Van Steen discusses performances of ancient Greek tragedy on the prison islands where leftists were sent on exile during or after the Greek Civil War in 1945-1949, including the *Antigone* of Aris Alexandrou on the island of Makronissos.[85] Van Steen has also very recently, in 2015, published her *Stage of Emergency: Theatre and Public Performance under the Greek Military Dictatorship of 1967-1974* which discusses theatrical and other kinds of public performances in Greece during the seven years of the dictatorship and severe censorship between 1967 and 1974.[86] Only a part of my thesis falls into the era covered in detail by Van Steen, however the approach of each work lies in different grounds: Van Steen pays close attention to the Colonels' own propagandistic performances as well as to the immediate effects of the Junta's censorship on the performances staged by youth

[84] Serap Erincin, 'Performing Rebellion: *Eurydice's Cry* in Turkey', in *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage,* ed. Erin Mee and Helene Foley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp.171-183.
[85] Gonda Van Steen, *Theatre of the Condemned: Classical Tragedy on Greek Prison Islands* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
[86] Gonda Van Steen, *Stage of Emergency: Theatre and Public Performance under the Greek Military Dictatorship of 1967-1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

groups and other non-mainstream teams during the period in question. My discussions on the *Antigone* performance produced and staged by the National Theatre in 1969 are looking into the matter partly from the same perspective as Van Steen, but also from the perspective of the receivers: the audience, the critics and the commentators. Interestingly, Van Steen does not make particular references to this performance in her discussions. I discuss this performance in detail with relevant materials from the National Theatre performance archives as well as reviews from the contemporary press.

Stathis Gourgouris' *Dream Nation: Enlightenment, Colonization, and the Institution of Modern Greece*[87] published in 1996 is a useful reading alongside Herzfeld. The discussions regard dream-like nations, the ideal form of nations as interpreted by modern social imagination, as well as how these idealised conceptions create and shape the modern nations themselves. For the purposes of his argument, Gourgouris uses the paradigm of modern Greek nation as an institution which dates back in 1830 in accordance with the European Enlightenment and Philhellenism. It is of imperative importance to my work to show that what came to be the modern Greek nation is, by and large, a result of what initially was a planted idea of a dream nation. This is again not an argument which invests efforts in proving or disproving the modern Greek identity, but rather an argument which attempts to deconstruct modern Greek identity to its initial, idealised elements. A later publication regarding the shaping and development of the modern Greek society is Philip Carabott's edited volume *Greek Society in the Making, 1863-1993* published in 1997.[88] The collection is rather insightful for the purposes of this thesis, as the essays approach the matter of the making of the Greek society from a holistic rather than individualistic perspective. Many discussions in this thesis have been formed based on this approach. Even though many historical and political events and figures have been taken into consideration, the specific area of study of this work does not examine the particulars of modern Greek history. The aim is to draw the greater

[87] Stathis Gourgouris, *Dream Nation: Enlightenment, Colonization, and the Institution of Modern Greece* (Caligornia: Stanford University Press, 1996).
[88] Philip Carabott, *Greek society in the Making, 1863-1913: Realities, Symbols and Visions* (London: Variorum, 1997).

picture of the process of the Greek society making, and more importantly to make connections between this process in relation to the revivals on the Greek stage.

Hugely informative for the purposes of this thesis, and beyond, is Yannis Hamilakis' *The Nation and its Ruins*, published in 2007.[89] The use of classical antiquity has evidently and constantly been used in the formation of modern Greece and Hamilakis shows the double side of this complex relationship between the ancient and the modern Greek world. Because it is indeed true that the past played a significant role in the formation of the modern Greek society but at the same time, the modern Greek society also played a very crucial role in what was eventually shaped into the modern perception of the ancient Greek world. While introducing his work, Hamilakis asks a crucial question: 'What is it in the process of excavating, collecting, preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting archaeological artefacts and finds, that makes archaeology so central and essential to nationalism?'.[90] This question urges us to pay closer attention to the relationship between the terms 'nation' and *'topos'*, and therefore to have a better understanding not only of the persistent preference of modern Greeks to stage ancient Greek tragedy in open-air ancient theatres but also of their belief that there is an obligation to respect and honour these theatres as they are reflective of their nation:

> National imagination works through imagery, and constructs a *topos* (in both the literary and the geographical sense), it is shaped by a topographic desire. [...] Specific ruins and artefacts from antiquity can be seen as the essential emblems, images, and material landmarks that define the *topos* of the nation.[91]

The edited volume by Roderick Beaton and David Ricks, entitled *The Making of Modern Greece: Nationalism, Romanticism and the Use of the Past 1797-1896* and published in 2009, could not have been excluded from this review. A series of essays present and discuss different issues concerned with matters of nationalism with aspects of romanticism and the role of imaginative literature, as far as the establishment and development of the modern Greek nation is concerned.

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[89] Yannis Hamilakis, *The Nation and its Ruins: Antiquity, Archaeology and National Imagination in Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[90] Hamilakis, *The Nation and its Ruins...*, p.15.
[91] Hamilakis, *The Nation and its Ruins...*, p.16.

Amongst other, chapters of the book discuss the construction of the modern Greek identity in relation to the legacy of ancient Greece. In the introduction of the book, Roderick Beaton raises what seem to be some of the most crucial questions in regards to modern Greek identity in general, as well as to the specific themes of this thesis in particular:

> The question is no longer: 'Is it true that the modern Greeks are descended from the ancients?' but rather: 'How, when, and above all, *why* did it become important to anyone to think that they might be?' [...] 'How was the claim to continuity established, restated, and consolidated over the years?' [...] And the crucial one: 'What does this extreme, and in comparative terms even far-fetched, claim to a legitimacy derived from the remote past have to tell us about *all* modern nationalisms, not only in Europe but beyond?'[92]

These questions are repeatedly raised in my work while discussing the revivals of *Antigone* on the modern Greek stage in a slightly different, but directly relevant manner. Paraphrasing Beaton, the question is no longer whether it is true that the modern Greeks are the legitimate inheritors of ancient Greek drama and therefore the most appropriate for the modern revival of tragedy, but rather, how, when, and above all, why did it become important to anyone, and especially to the Greeks themselves, to think that they might be. A more recent edited volume by Dimitris Tziovas, entitled *Re-imagining the Past: Antiquity and Modern Greek Culture* and published in 2014, revisits the complex relationship between the Greek past and present which has occasionally been seen as either an asset or a burden. But as Tziovas suggests in his introduction, maybe it is timely

> To move beyond these two dominant perspectives on the Greek past [asset or burden], by shifting attention to the ways this past has been constructed, performed, (ab)used, Hellenized, canonized, and ultimately decolonized and re-imagined.[93]

In his *Modern Greek Theatre: A Quest for Hellenism* published in 2001, Stratos Constantinidis discusses modern Greek nationalism through a variety of modern

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[92] Roderick Beaton, 'Introduction', in *The Making of Modern Greece: Nationalism, Romanticism and the Use of the Past 1797-1896,* ed. Roderick Beaton and David Ricks (London: Ashgate, 2009), 1-20, pp.7-8.

[93] Dimitris Tziovas, 'Introduction: Decolonizing Antiquity, Heritage Politics, and Performing the Past', in *Re-imagining the Past: Antiquity and Modern Greek Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1-27, p.1.

Greek performances covering a period of time between the 1820s and the 1970s under the prism of nationalism, colonialism and cultural imperialism. Even though this thesis focuses on the revival of ancient Greek drama in general and *Antigone* in particular, it shares a fundamental element with Constantinides':

> Theatre as an institution in the Kingdom of Greece (1832-1973) stood in the complex, almost schizophrenic, relationship with the dominant ideology. During the monarchy, ideology privileged the agreeable voices of cooperative subjects while it tried to contain or silence any dissonant (and therefore "disagreeable") voices.[94]

The discussions of this thesis repeatedly confirm the above, particularly as far as the performances of ancient Greek drama are concerned, an area of modern Greek theatre which is not covered by Constantinides' analysis of performances, as he exclusively discusses theatrical plays written by modern Greek playwrights. As we will explicitly see in later discussions, the productions of the late nineteenth century, as well as those of the first half of the twentieth century (and even those until the mid 1970s) tend to privilege the agreeable voices, and by agreeable voices I mean the voices which were compatible with the main ideology (political or other) of each period. As for the dissonant voices, they have frequently been marginalised, suppressed, silenced, or even censored. After the fall of the dictatorship and entering into the era of the *Metapolitefsi* in 1974, we can observe a change in the relationship between the dominant ideology and the theatre. This is not to suggest that their relationship was any less complex or schizophrenic, but the disagreeable voices were no longer silenced in the way they used to be in the past.

The construction of the Modern Greek nation and the modern Greek national identity have always been closely related to matters of the language. Greek nationalism has frequently been discussed in accordance with the history of Greek language from antiquity to modernity. The Greek Language Question mentioned above is not only significant in respect to the modern Greek national identity; it is also immediately related to the early revivals of ancient Greek drama in modern Greece as well as the famous performance of *Oresteia* which resulted to the riots in

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[94] Stratos Constantinidis, *Modern Greek Theatre: A Quest for Hellenism* (North Carolina: McFarland, 2001), p.2.

central Athens in 1903. In *Language and National Identity in Greece 1766-1976* published in 2009, Peter Mackridge gives one of the most informative scholarly accounts on the hotly disputed Language Question. While introducing the topic, he mentions

> Greek national identity has been chiefly defined by two criteria that have been held to distinguish Greeks from non-Greeks. The first is the membership of the Orthodox Church. The second is the possession of the Greek language. While there are other peoples in the world who are predominantly Orthodox Christian, the Greek language is clearly distinguished from all other languages in the world by its alphabet, its vocabulary, and its grammar. [...] This has given educated Greeks a sense that their nation possesses a unique cultural heritage. Their language both distinguishes them from all other modern nations and connects them with the civilization of ancient Hellas, early Christianity, and Byzantium. It is largely this complex connection between contemporary and older culture that has given rise to the development of the Greek national identity in modern times.[95]

One of the major issues in the field of Reception Studies is the matter of translation, a matter which exceeds merely linguistic discussions. After all, translation is a matter which extends far beyond words. The question which is constantly raised is concerned with the different elements, political, cultural and other, that different kinds of translation bring to the surface. For example, Lorna Hardwick's *Translating Words, Translating Cultures* published in 2004, stressed the importance of translation of Greek and Roman works in different cultures as it gives rise to new cultural identities.[96] In addition, the edited volume by Alexandra Lianeri and Vanda Zajko *Translation and the Classics: Identity as Change in the History of Culture* published in 2008, raises issues of translation and how they shape new traditions in relation to the social, political and national aspects of the classics in an international context.[97]

Included in this edited volume is Dimitris Maronitis's article entitled 'Intralingual Translation: Genuine and False Dilemmas', which is of particular interest, at least

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[95] Mackridge, *Language and National...*, p.viii.
[96] Lorna Hardwick, *Translating Words, Translating Cultures* (London: Duckworth, 2004).
[97] Alexandra Lianeri and Vanda Zajko, *Translation and the Classics: Identity as Change in the History of Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

for the discussions of this thesis.[98] The matter of translation from one language to another is in itself a very intriguing and complex field of study. But even more complex is the matter of translation from one form of a language to a different form of the same language. Now the matter becomes even more complex when there is a genuine or fake dilemma on whether the language we translate to is actually the same with the language we translate from. Thus, the problem of modern Greek translations of ancient Greek plays becomes a complex matter on multiple levels. First, to accept the term intralingual, is to somehow accept that the ancient and the modern Greek are the same language. It is not in the scopes of this thesis to discuss the validity of this. However, the fact that language and its continuity was one of the most hotly disputed conflicts amongst the people involved with the revivals, opens a path for discussion as far as intralingual translation is concerned. And then, there is another matter at stake with regard to the translation from ancient Greek to different forms of modern Greek (the *katharevousa* and the demotic, as well as different idioms of the two) which introduces other kinds of complexities, depending on who the translator is, and why a specific form of language is chosen at each particular case. It is then obvious that the matter of intralingual translation exceeds mere linguistic complexities and enters the sphere of social and political in many ways.

In regards to the modern Greek translation of ancient Greek texts, the aforementioned works and the issues they raise seem to be of great significance and immediate relevance. At the same time though, the case of modern Greek translations should be looked at from yet another perspective. In another edited volume by Jan Parker and Timothy Mathews, entitled *Tradition, Translation, Trauma: The Classic and the Modern* and published in 2011, Parker argues that

> From the start the question was not so much a celebration of great and humane texts passed down (tradition) and reinvented in/incorporated into other cultures (translation) but of the potentially rebarbative, politically dangerous, irritant, painful, or at least challenging nature of

[98] Dimitris Maronitis, 'Intralingual Translation: Genuine and False Dilemmas', in *Translation and the Classics: Identity as Change in the History of Culture,* ed. Alexandra Lianeri and Vanda Zajko (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp.367-386.

> such texts (trauma): a painful, ongoing marking effect of such texts sometimes lost and sometimes made potent in reception.[99]

In the case of Greece, from the start the question was as much about the great texts passed down as *tradition*, a modern Greek tradition which was thought to have its roots in the ancient Greek world. It was also about the reinventing and incorporation of such texts in the form of *translation* in a way that would secure the historical continuity between the ancient and the modern Greek world. And of course, above all, it was also about the politically dangerous, irritant, painful and challenging nature of such texts, dealing with which had caused a perpetual trauma as far as the definition of the modern Greek national identity was concerned.

A large part of my discussions, then, especially as far as the early Greek revivals are concerned, focuses on the matter of language and translation. There are limited Greek scholarly works which focus on the modern Greek translation of ancient Greek drama, one of which is J.Th. Kakridis's *Meletes kai Arthra*, pubished in 1971, which includes an article that particularly discusses Ioannis Gryparis as a translator.[100] This is of great significance, as Gryparis' translation of *Antigone* in Greek demotic was, and still remains, one of the most popular and widely used text in the history of intralingual translations of ancient Greek plays. Not only has it been used in numerous productions of *Antigone* in the twentieth century, but it has also been part of Greek secondary and high school syllabus until today. More details on Gryparis as a translator will be discussed in the main chapters when his translation of *Antigone* will be used by producers for the staging of the play. As the material on this subject which addresses an international audience is very limited, and bearing in mind the significance of translation in Reception Studies, I think it is only timely to address the question and attempt to give answers to the matter of modern Greek translations of ancient Greek drama in general and *Antigone* in particular. After all, the claims of continuity of the Greek language was a significant part of the arguments regarding the historical continuity between ancient and

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[99] Jan Parker, 'Introduction: Images of Tradition, Translation, Trauma', in *Tradition, Translation, Trauma: The Classic and the Modern,* eds. Jan Parker and Timothy Mathews (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1-26, p.13.

[100] J.Th. Kakridis, *Μελέτες και Άρθρα: Τιμητική Προσφορά για τα Εβδομήντα Χρόνια του Συγγραφέα* (Thessaloniki: Εστία, 1971).

modern Greece, and thus the translation of ancient Greek plays on the modern Greek stage should not, by any means, be excluded from such discussions.

The specific research area of this thesis is the revival of ancient Greek Drama. However, such a research could not have been conducted without taking into consideration the greater field of modern Greek Theatre Studies. Prominent Greek works on the general topic of modern Greek theatre should not be excluded from this review as they are immediately relevant to my specific research area. This thesis, and as a matter of fact any research regarding modern Greek theatre, should be taking into consideration the extensive works of Giannis Sideris, the father of Greek Theatre Studies, as he is widely considered within Greek academia. His multi-volume work *Η Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνικού Θεάτρου 1794-1944* (The History of Modern Greek Theatre 1794-1944), republished in 2000 by a major Athenian publishing house, is a textbook for anyone working in the field.[101] His approaches and perspectives on various matters could be questioned and revisited, but his work is undoubtedly a highly significant source of information. Interestingly, in 2005, the editor of the 2000 publication of Sideris' works, Platon Mavromoustakos, published his own work on modern Greek theatre with the same Athenian publishing house, covering the period which has not been covered by Sideris, between 1940 and 2000 . The work is entitled *Το Θέατρο στην Ελλάδα 1940-2000: Μια Επισκόπηση* (Theatre in Greece 1940-2000: An Overview) and the style, approach, methodology and presentation of materials is very similar to Sideris'.[102] More insightful for the purposes of this thesis is Sideris' *Το Αρχαίο Ελληνικό Θέατρο στη Νέα Ελληνική Σκηνή 1817-1932* (Ancient Greek Theatre on Modern Greek Stage 1817-1932).[103] Sideris provides a great volume of information and sources usually not widely available or easily accessible to the reader.

A different approach from that of the scholars has been taken by modern Greek theatre critics, particularly after the beginning of the 1980s. Many prominent,

[101] Giannis Sideris, Η Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνικού Θεάτρου 1794-1944, ed. Platon Mavromoustakos, (Athens: Καστανιώτη, 2000).
[102] Platon Mavromoustakos, *Το Θέατρο στην Ελλάδα 1940-2000: Μια Επισκόπηση* (Athens: Καστανιώτη, 2005).
[103] Giannis Sideris, *Το Αρχαίο Ελληνικό Θέατρο στη Νέα Ελληνική Σκηνή 1817-1932* (Athens: Ίκαρος, 1976).

mainly Athenian, theatre critics have published works which consist of collections of their reviews. These works are not considered academic or scholarly, however they are of immense significance for the purposes of this thesis: they are, I would dare say, the most reliable source of information regarding the contemporary reception of the performances in question. Bearing in mind that this thesis is looking into performances in order to define the relationship between revivals of ancient Greek drama and the modern Greek national identity, it is only essential to take into consideration the perspectives of the people who were actually part of the audience of such performances.

In his *Κλειδιά και Κώδικες Θεάτρου: Αρχαίο Δράμα* (Keys and Codes of Theatre: Ancient Drama) published in 1982, Costas Georgousopoulos provides a collection of reviews on ancient Greek plays staged in Greece during the second half of the twentieth century, and specifically between 1971 and 1981. The reviews discuss performances of tragedy by the three tragedians, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides as well as performances of comedy by Aristophanes in their modern Greek cultural, social and political contexts.[104] Similarly, in his *Αρχαίο Δράμα: Αναλύσεις* (Ancient Drama: Analyses) published in 1984, Stathis Dromazos provides thirty nine reviews of performances of ancient Greek plays on the modern Greek stage, reviews which have been previously published in prominent Athenian newspapers.[105] In a more recent book entitled *Το Θέατρο στην Ελλάδα: Η Παράδοση του Καινούργιου 1974-2006* (Theatre in Greece: The Tradition of the New 1974-2006) published in 2011, theatre critic Eleni Varopoulou provides performance reviews she has previously published during a period of over thirty years. The book is divided into parts, one of which focuses on reviews on ancient Greek drama performances, with a sub-part on performances of Sophocles' plays, including two *Antigone* performances which I discuss in detail in Chapter Three of this thesis.[106]

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[104] Costas Georgousopoulos, *Κλειδιά και Κώδικες Θεάτρου: Αρχαίο Δράμα* (Athens: Βιβλιοπωλείον της Εστίας, 2007).
[105] Stathis Dromazos, *Αρχαίο Δράμα: Αναλύσεις* (Athens: Κέδρος, 1984).
[106] Eleni Varopoulou, *Το Θέατρο στην Ελλάδα: Η Παράδοση του Καινούργιου 1974-2006,* Vol.2 (Athens: Άργα, 2011), pp.379-383.

In his *Θεατρολογικά I: 1963-1978* and *Θεατρολογικά II: 1978-1989* published in 1990 and 1992 respectively, Tasos Lignadis, the second most widely recognised scholar of modern Greek Theatre Studies after Sideris, discusses various matters concerning the modern Greek revival of ancient Greek drama, from its purpose in modern times to the audience and the translation of the ancient texts, as well as two productions of *Antigone* in specific.[107] Similar issues are raised in Katerina Arvaniti's book entitled *Η Αρχαία Ελληνική Τραγωδία στο Εθνικό Θέατρο* (Ancient Greek Tragedy at the National Theatre), published in 2010.[108] Arvaniti's discussions focus on the productions of the Greek National Theatre. The book includes analyses of specific performances of ancient Greek tragedy staged by the National Theatre since it was founded in 1932. However, none of the *Antigone* productions of the National Theatre is discussed in the book. The publication comes with a subtitle of *Volume One*, but a second volume has not been published or announced yet. We could only assume or speculate that some of the most important *Antigone* productions of the company would be included in a forthcoming volume. It is worth mentioning here that the aforementioned Greek works are localised in their approaches and therefore secluded in their vast majority from the broader discussions concerning the matter of revival in the rest of Western theory, literature and reception. This is not to suggest that modern Greek intellectuals have been ignorant or indifferent towards non-Greek approaches on the matter, but the revival of ancient Greek drama has always been a particularly sensitive matter for the Greeks and they have thus frequently approached it as 'personal' and 'familial', as a national matter. This is a matter which does not only concern the discussions in the Introduction of this thesis were I present the views and approaches of Greek intellectuals on the modern revival of Greek drama; it is a recurring theme that weaves through the discussions of the whole thesis as it has always remained an unresolved matter.

[107] Tasos Lignadis, *Θεατρολογικά I* (Athens: Μπούρας, 1990) and Tasos Lignadis, *Θεατρολογικά II* (Athens: Μπούρας, 1992).
[108] Katerina Arvaniti, *Η Αρχαία Ελληνική Τραγωδία στο Εθνικό Θέατρο,* ed. Dimitra Kondilaki (Athens: Νεφέλη, 2010).

Last but not least is the work of Professor of Theatre Studies Anna Mavroleon, in the form of an unpublished doctoral thesis entitled *Η Διαχείριση του Αρχαίου Ελληνικού Δράματος από την Νεοελληνική Κοινωνία: Το Ιστορικό της Αναβίωσης της Αντιγόνης του Σοφοκλή στην Ελλάδα και τα Ορεστειακά*, in 2003.[109] Mavroleon has conducted extensive research and collected all recorded Greek performances of *Antigone* in the nineteenth and twentieth century staged in Greece and elsewhere, as well as all non-Greek performances of Antigone which have been presented on the Greek stage of the same period. Even though Mavroleon does provide the long history of the modern Greek revivals of *Antigone,* she does not provide an analysis of the materials of the performances or the reception of the performances by their contemporary audiences. However, she does not fail to mention that there is a long distance to be covered in the field of modern Greek Theatre studies. The field is still at a very young and primary stage as performances are yet to be recorded and materials to be collected. But most importantly, these materials should be discussed analytically and critically by taking into consideration other aspects, some less and some other more relevant to the field itself. I hope that this thesis is going to make a contribution to both fields of modern Greek Theatre Studies and Classics Reception, not by giving an account of performances in the form of a list but rather by critically discussing a selection of performances in a wide and multidisciplinary context for the better understanding of their social and political resonances in accordance with the hotly disputed matter of the modern Greek national identity.

[109] Mavroleon, 'Η Διαχείριση του Αρχαίου...'.

Part 4: Methodology, Research Methods and Presentation

This thesis concerns the study of performances of *Antigone* on the modern Greek stage in the field of Classics Reception. It is also heavily inflected by discussions of the history of the modern Greek nation, the structure and development of the modern Greek national identity and the social, political and cultural events of modern Greece covering a period of time of approximately one hundred and fifty years. Therefore, it takes an interdisciplinary approach to the matter, where social, cultural and political history is of immense significance. The field of Classics Reception has relatively recently taken such a turn by seeking connections between the Classics and other fields of study. In their introduction 'Making Connections' as a part of the edited volume entitled *A Companion to Classical Receptions* (2008), Lorna Hardwick and Christopher Stray discuss the above matter in detail. They also give insights on the work frame the contributors were asked to work within:

> Contributors were asked to contextualize their discussions and to make their working methods transparent, but to avoid 'surveys' and to concentrate on texts, debates and trends which they judged to be of current and future importance.[110]

It is in this frame that I have attempted to work for the purposes of this thesis. Having to deal with a topic which is not widely discussed, especially within the non-Greek scholarly circles, has not been an easy task. In order to avoid 'surveys', unsupported arguments or anecdotal testimonials, even when they came from people directly involved with the performances I discuss, I have turned to the original sources where available. As the central aim of this work is to make connections between the performances of *Antigone* and the socio-political situation of Greece, there were two different types of materials that needed to be collected. Firstly, it was the materials of the performances of *Antigone* in question as well as their contemporary commentaries or reviews, and secondly the materials

[110] Lorna Hardwick and Christopher Stray, 'Making Connections', in *A Companion to Classical Receptions,* eds. Lorna Hardwick and Christopher Stray (London: Blackwell, 2008), p.2.

which relate to the broader social, political and cultural events of Greece during the period in question.

As the Introduction provides a historical, social and literary background for the rest of the thesis, the research methods and the materials which have been used differ significantly from those of Chapters One, Two and Three. For the first four parts of the Introduction I have used a wide variety of scholarly sources, each specialising in the specific topic I am discussing. There are quite a few matters in this thesis which are not widely discussed in international scholarship. For the purposes of those parts of my research I have turned to the few sources available, as well as to Greek scholarship which is relatively richer as far as these specific matters are concerned. Some of the events discussed date as back as the nineteenth century as well as the beginning of the twentieth century. Therefore, the sources, even the primary ones, are not always consistent. One should always bear in mind the underdevelopment in many aspects of Greek life during the period of time in question which made the survival as well as the accuracy of the sources more difficult. A large part of the Introduction discuss the views of Greek intellectuals, scholars, artists and theatre critics over the matter of ancient Greek drama revivals covering the whole twentieth century. These texts are not part of organised scholarship in Greece. I have personally collected them from volumes, books and journals and carefully chosen the extracts which are relevant to this thesis, translated and presented them as part of the arguments of this chapter.

The performances which have been studied and discussed in this thesis cover a long period of time between 1863 and 2000. As a result, different kinds of materials survive in different forms for performances in different periods of time. In Chapter One, I discuss performances of *Antigone* staged between 1863 and 1940. The materials for the performances of the nineteenth century are very scarce, but I do provide them when available. During the first four decades of the twentieth century there is a larger volume of surviving material and in significantly better condition. The performances between 1940 and 1974 are the core of Chapter Two. From the 1940s onwards, the volume of materials rises significantly and the condition is incomparable to that of the materials of the earlier performances. Finally, Chapter

Three discusses performances between 1974 and 2006. For the performances during the last two decades of the century as well as the beginning of the new millennium, there is a great amount of materials which survive in excellent condition in archives in Athens and elsewhere as well as in electronic databases of many kinds.

For the purposes of these three chapters, I have collected various types of materials. Firstly are the materials of the performances per se, such as details of the productions, programme notes, photographic and audiovisual recordings, musical scores and last but not least, the translation texts of the performances in question. By presenting these as part of my argument, I aim at providing my reader with as accurate accounts of the performances as possible. Bearing in mind the chronological frame of this thesis, it is only to be expected that audio or visual materials of the early performances discussed do not survive. Therefore, I have collected commentaries on or critiques of the performances which inform the arguments as they give accounts of the details of the performances which in other cases, of more recent productions for example, would have been provided by the audiovisual recordings. As I have mentioned above, the commentaries are the most reliable account of the contemporary audience reception of these performances. Such commentaries where usually written by theatre critics, scholars, actors, translators and other people involved in the field of theatre and beyond. For the collection of both types of materials I have conducted a thorough research mainly in Athens, which included numerous archives of theatrical companies, official state archives of the press, personal collection archives, university and other state libraries, libraries of private institutions, museums and many more. Here I provide a brief account of some of the most important of the above mentioned:

Desmi - Centre for Ancient Greek Drama Research and Practical Applications (Athens): This is the first and only centre for the study of ancient Greek Drama in Greece. It was founded as simply *Desmi* in 1975, a non-profit organisation, and its initial aim was cultural de-centralisation, as the National Theatre was until then holding a leading role in the main cultural events of the country. The *Desmi* frequently organised art exhibitions, lectures, presentation of literary works and of

course performances of ancient Greek drama as well as other repertoire. It participated in many festivals in Athens, festivals in other cities of the country and the Epidaurus Festival. In 1991, the *Desmi* also founded a research centre on the demand of intellectuals who held that the operation of such a centre was imperative for Greece. Prominent figures in this attempt were Aspasia Papathanasiou and Costas Georgousopoulos (author, theatre critic and translator of *Antigone*). The centre holds an archive of performances of ancient Greek plays exclusively.

The Library of the National Theatre (Athens): The National Theatre holds an archive of performances from 1932 onwards in a library situated in central Athens. The materials are limited as far as the early performances are concerned. However, there is a very rich collection of different sources for the performances of the 1950s onwards. In an effort to promote the study of Greek theatre, the National Theatre is in the process of digitalisation of its materials. Even though the electronic archive does not provide the whole range of materials of the library, new items are constantly added.

The Archive of the National Theatre of Northern Greece (Thessaloniki): Like the National Theatre, the National Theatre of Northern Greece also holds an archive in central Thessaloniki as well as an electronic archive of its performances.

Theatre Museum of Greece - Centre for Study and Research of Greek Theatre (Athens): Founded in 1938, the centre had been the sole theatre museum of the country for decades until 2011 when it was closed down by the state due to financial difficulties against the strong opposition of many Greek intellectuals, scholars and artists. Public access is denied, therefore access to the archives of the museum can be granted after special request by researchers, academics, etc.[111]

[111] Anna Mavroleon, 'Το Ψηφιακό Αρχείο του Ελληνικού Κέντρου Μελέτης και Έρευνας του Ελληνικού Θεάτρου - Θεατρικού Μουσείου: Οι Ανεκμετάλλευτοι Αρχειακοί Θησαυροί και η Περιπέτεια της Θεατρολογικής Έρευνας στην Ελλάδα της Κρίσης', proceedings of the 5th European congress of Modern Greek Studies on *Continuities, Discontinuities, Ruptures in the Greek World (1204-2014): Economy, Society, History, Literature*, Vol.4 (Thessaloniki, 2014), pp.345-360.

Personal Performance Archive of Maria Hintiraki (Crete): Hintiraki is an individual collector of materials of modern Greek theatre with a particular interest in the female presences on the Greek stage. She holds a vast collection of photographic materials which she willingly offered to share with me for the purposes of my research.

Blegen Library and Gennadius Library - The American School of Classical Studies (Athens): Both part of the American School in Athens, Blegen Library and Gennadius library were founded in 1888 and 1926 respectively. They are considered prominent centres for classical studies on an international basis but they are particularly significant for Greece as they are the richest in materials centres for classical studies in the country.

ASKI - Contemporary Social History Archives (Athens): The Contemporary Social History Archives is a non-profit organisation founded in 1992, and it is currently the leading archive for the history of political and social movements in Greece, particularly as far as the history of the Greek Left is concerned.

E.L.I.A. - The Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive (Athens): The Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive was founded in 1980 but has been part of the National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation (M.I.E.T.) since 2009. The archive holds materials which relate to the modern history and culture of Greece.

Libraries of National and Kapodistrian University and Panteion University (Athens): Both university libraries provide a wide range of sources as far as modern Greek Studies are concerned. The vast majority of these sources are provided in the Greek language.

Library of the Secretarial General of Information and Communication (Athens): Official press archives under the Minister of State in Greece. The library holds materials under the name of 267 different Greek newspapers and 13450 volumes covering a period of time from 1902 onwards.

Library of the Greek Parliament (Athens): Founded in 1844, the library holds thousands of books, journals, periodicals, and newspaper volumes. More than 5000 titles of Greek and foreign newspapers are reporter in the archives of the library.

Thessaloniki Municipal Library (Thessaloniki): Part of the larger group of seventeen libraries under the Thessaloniki Municipality, Thessaloniki Municipal Library was founded in 1932 and serves as one of the biggest libraries of the city.

In addition to the above, materials for my research have been collected from various other sources which I do not list here as they are commonly available to non-Greek audiences. Apart from the photographic material, most of the materials collected from the above sources are in Greek. In order to make the findings of my research available to an international audience, I have translated the extracts which are relevant to my thesis and I present them where appropriate in the form of quotations. All translations of Greek sources are mine, unless indicated otherwise. I have chosen to cite the original Greek titles of all Greek sources instead of a translated title. This is a deliberate decision as many of the sources are not easily accessible. An attempt of the reader to reach to those sources will probably not be fruitful unless the original title is used. The nature of my work required the use of many Greek terms which I provide in my text with the method of transliteration. At the same time though, I always provide a translation of such terms, the widely accepted when available or the most commonly used otherwise. Last, the volume of the collected primary materials is very large but only a selection has been used for the purposes of this thesis. The materials directly relevant to the arguments are presented in the text in the form of quotations or in the form of figures when it comes to photographic content. Other relevant materials are provided as part of the footnotes.

As I have mentioned above, a wide variety of sources has been collected and presented in this thesis, including materials from the press which date back to 1867 onwards. Newspapers of the second half of the nineteenth century, as well as the first half of the twentieth century, usually provided their articles in long consecutive columns without providing author names. Therefore, the reader will repeatedly find

anonymous sources in the footnotes of this thesis, sources which are also listed at the end of the work in the form of references. I always provide the article title when available; otherwise I clearly indicate that a title is not available. In all cases, I provide the source of the article, which is usually a newspaper and the exact date of publication.

For the organisation, structure, presentation and referencing of the thesis, I have used the *Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA)* referencing style.[112] The *MHRA* style asks for a full bibliographical reference in the footnotes and a shortened version for all subsequent references of the same source, again in the footnotes. The decision to use the *MHRA* style instead of any other style which asks for a short reference in the text or in the footnotes, is based on the nature of this work. While the shortened version of bibliographical details is very useful and practical for works of a different kind, it seemed to be less informative as far the kind of materials I am using is concerned. I found it useful myself in the process of writing, and I hope that it will be useful to the readers as well, to have immediate access to the full details of each source, without the constant need to refer to the end of the work.

[112] Brian Richardson and Robin Aizlewood, *MHRA Style Guide: A Handbook for Authors, Editors and Writers of Theses* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2013).

Part 5: Chapter Breakdown and Brief Summary

The thesis is divided into the Introduction, Chapters One, Two and Three, and the Conclusions. Each chapter is subdivided into parts with specific topics related to the general topic area of each chapter. The Introduction provides cultural, historical and literary backgrounds, whereas Chapters One, Two and Three discuss the various performances of *Antigone* in question. These three chapters are presented in chronological order, covering a period of time of about one century and a half. During the writing process, it was clear that presenting the findings of this research in chronological order is of immense importance. The historical events of modern Greece provide a clearer context into which the details of the performances as well as their reception and interpretation by their contemporary audiences can be discusses and explained. The broader history of the modern Greek nation in accordance with the history of modern Greek theatre and the history of modern Greek revivals of ancient Greek drama in general, contributes to the understanding of the specific context into which the modern Greek performances of *Antigone* have been staged, received and interpreted.

The Introduction is divided into five parts. In the first part, I discuss why I choose to study the revival of tragedy on the modern Greek stage, instead of comedy, and also why I specifically choose Antigone instead of any other tragedy. The second part of the Introduction sets a brief historical, political, social and cultural background of the thesis. The history of modern Greek theatre and the revival of ancient Greek drama are strictly connected to the history of the modern Greek nation and state. In this part, I do not attempt to re-evaluate the historical events of the period in concern; I rather attempt to grasp the general political and social sentiment of the epoch as well as to bring together different matters which arise from these political sentiments. These matters contributed significantly to the conception and construction of the modern Greek state, nation and national identity but, most importantly for the purposes of this thesis, eventually played a crucial role to the revival of ancient Greek drama. Inevitably, this leads us back to

the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the formation of the modern Greek nation and the modern Greek state begins. The end of the Greek Revolution (1821-1832) found Greece in need of a firm national identity. The rich material of the ancient Greek world acted as a landmark for the formation of this modern Greek identity in many ways. And as we shall see in this part, the material of the ancient Greek world, also acted as a landmark for the formation of ideologies concerning the modern Greek revivals.

The idea of modern Greek national identidy was in the earlier period, especially during the ninenteenth century, based on most intellectuals' notions of revival and rebirth (*palingenesia*), but later, during the twentieth century, it was rather based on a falsely conceptualised historical continuity from antiquity to modernity. During the first decades of the twentieth century, Greek theatre went through a rough transitional phase from amateurism to professionalism. Many scholars, intellectuals, theorists, journalists, writers, composers, directors and actors have been involved in this ongoing battle as far as the appropriate way to revive ancient Greek drama is concerned. The conflict of the appropriate revival of ancient Greek drama did not come to an end even when Greek theatre entered its final and most professional phase from the 1950s onwards . Therefore, it is of great significance to examine some later views as far as this ongoing conflict is concerned. The views of these intellectuals are not widely available to non-Greek scholars and have rarely, if not ever, been translated from Greek to any other language. In this part, I have collected, translated and analysed the views of some of the most important representatives of the time. This part does not only provide materials which are not widely accessible and discussed by the international scholarship; it also provides the frame into which the modern Greek revivals of ancient Greek drama have been interpreted throughout time. As I aim to show in the following chapters, the modern Greek revivals in general and the revivals of *Antigone* in particular have always been connected with the socio-political events of the time. Moreover, the artistic, aesthetic, linguistic or literary interpretations of the performances as well as the text in question, have frequently 'neglected' both the performance and the text, or have used them as a platform for political conflicts.

In the third part of the Introduction, I discuss the current literature regarding the specific themes of this thesis and I position myself into, beside or against these existing works. The fourth part presents research methods and methodologies which were used for the composition of the thesis, and finally the current fifth part is a chapter breakdown which provides concise summaries of all parts of the thesis.

Chapter One is the first of the three main chapters which deal exclusively with the modern Greek revivals of *Antigone*. In this chapter, I present and discuss different kinds of first performances of *Antigone* from 1863 until 1940. The materials for this performances are very scarce, especially for the performances of the nineteenth century as well as the first two decades of the twentieth century. While approaching the 1930s and 1940s, the sources rise in number, variety and quality. The period of time covered in this chapter is very intense, not only because the Greeks were still in the process of finding and defining their modern Greek identity but also because Greece underwent a series of intense political events and wars such as, in chronological order, the World War I, the Greco-Turkish War (or Asia Minor Disaster as commonly referred to by the Greeks), the *Mesopolemos* (Interwar Period) and World War II. Greece suffered great economic difficulties which prevented the rapid development of the arts in the country. As a result, the survival of materials from that period of time is limited.

The first part of this chapter discusses the first Greek revival of *Antigone*, staged in Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1863. As I have previously mentioned, this thesis is going to discuss performances which were staged in Athens, the capital of Greece since 1834 and the cultural centre of the country. However, this production holds great significance not only because it was the first Greek revival of the play, but also because it was staged in Constantinople under Ottoman rule.

The second part of the chapter is concerned with the first Greek revival of *Antigone* in Athens, in 1867. The production was prepared for the purposes of the celebrations of the Royal wedding of King George I of Greece and Grand Duchess Olga Constantinovna of Russia, upon their return to the country in the same year. In this part, I also discuss other performances of *Antigone*, staged between 1867 and

1886. The available sources of the time reveal that these early revivals were mainly concerned with a double conflict of language. Firstly, the debate was concerned with the conflict between revivals using the original ancient Greek text or the *katharevousa* translations, and later on, with the conflict between revivals using the *katharevousa* or the demotic translations. Even during these early stage of revivals, conflicts about language were rarely discussed in linguistic or aesthetic terms. The preferences toward the one or the other form of language were constantly justified through political stands in relation to the protection of the authentic Greek national identity and ancestral Greek roots.

From the beginning of the twentieth century until the end of the 1930s, the revival of ancient Greek drama was flourishing. These performances are discussed in the third part of this chapter. Numerous amateur theatrical companies were staging performances of *Antigone*, especially during the first two decades of the century. During the following two decades, some of the most significant professional companies in the history of modern Greek theatre made their first appearance as well. However, the matter of national identity had not yet been resolved during this time or in the years to follow. The modernist influences of the Generation of the 1930s made their first appearance during the last years of the period covered here. The aim of this third part of the chapter is firstly to show how the conflict of revivals shifted from the language to the modernist influences of European Modernism and secondly to stress the fact that regardless of the shift, the underlying and substantial problem of the definition of modern Greek national identity in relation to ancient Greek roots has remained the same. There is indeed a shift in the political agendas of the people involved in these performances, but the play of *Antigone* still remained a platform for the resolving of political issues.

The fourth and final part of this chapter discusses the first revival of *Antigone* by the National Theatre in 1940. Formerly known as the Royal Theatre, the National Theatre reopened by the state in 1930 and since then it has been responsible for some of the most influential as well as controversial performances of ancient Greek drama in general and *Antigone* in particular. Many of these *Antigone* performances will be discussed in the subsequent chapters. As the official stage of the state, the

National theatre held a great responsibility as far as revivals are concerned. In addition, the National Theatre held the exclusive privilege of staging performances at the ancient site of the Epidaurus Theatre as well as the Odeon of Herodes Atticus, as part of the annual Athens and Epidaurus Festival. The first performance at Epidaurus was Sophocles' *Electra* in 1938. The aforementioned *Antigone* in 1940 was also presented at the ancient Epidaurus Theatre but the establishment of the annual festival was cut short by the events of the World War II and later by the Greek Civil War (1946-1949). In 1954, the National Theatre resumed the attempts to establish the annual festival with Euripides' *Hippolytus*. The festival opened its doors to theatrical companies other than the National Theatre as late as 1975. In doing so, the National Theatre considered itself the sole theatrical company capable of preserving ancient Greek drama as ancestral heritage which, according to the sentiments of the time, was the basis of the modern Greek national identity.

Chapter Two covers a period of time between 1945 and 1974, commonly referred to by the Greeks as the *Metapolemiki Periodos* (Post-war Period). Ironically, this post-war period was marked by two of the most intense and severe political events of modern Greek history. The first was the outspread of the Greek Civil War between left wing military groups which held leading roles in the World War II and the right wing government army with the support of British and American forces, which resulted in the defeat of the Left. The second was the a coup d'état in 1967 by a group of right wing colonels which resulted in seven years of dictatorship, the restriction of many basic human rights and intense censorship which inevitably affected various forms of arts, including the theatre. The fall of the dictatorship in 1974 marked the beginning of a new era in Greece which will be discussed in the following chapter. The years between those two political events were seemingly peaceful, regardless the turmoil which led from the one event to the other. During these years, many performances of Antigone were staged by the National Theatre as well as by other independent theatrical companies.

The first part of this chapter covers a number of significant performances of Antigone during the years after the end of the World War II in 1945 and before the rise of the Colonels and the imposition of Dictatorship in 1967. During these years,

the National Theatre staged what was to be the most iconic *Antigone* in the history of modern Greek theatre. The success of the production was immense, regardless the partially negative criticism it received. The discussions concerned with the revival of ancient Greek drama were again used as a platform for political conflicts. In contrast to the performances discussed in the previous chapter, the discussions now took a more direct and immediate political turn as a result of the recent events of the civil war and the open conflict between left and right wing supporters.

The second part of the chapter is exclusively devoted to the National Theatre *Antigone* production in 1969 during the Dictatorship in Greece. In a period of time when censorship was at its peak, the fact that the Colonels allowed the staging of *Antigone*, the play which questions state authority and the imposed laws of the state leaders, is astonishing in itself. There are two major observations concerning this production which are widely discussed and analysed in this part. The first observation is one regarding the language of the performance. The Colonels might had approved *Antigone* as part of the National Theatre repertoire, but the play was performed in *katharevousa,* which had otherwise been replaced by demotic in the majority of revival productions for decades. As right wing patriots and conservative nationalists, the Colonels had a preference towards the older and elitist form of the Greek language which was considered by many a language closer to the original ancient Greek language. The Colonels used *katharevousa* in all occasions such as public announcements, mottos and written declarations and statements. The second observation is concerned with the reception and criticism of the production. In contrast to any previous performances, the comments of the theatre critics were strangely apolitical which is in itself a political statement regarding the situation of the country at the time. This is probably one of the very few times in the history of modern Greek revivals when the criticism of a production was mainly concerned with the artistic and aesthetic interpretation of the performance instead of using it as a platform for the promotion of political matters.

The third and final part of this chapter discusses the National Theatre production of *Antigone* in 1974, immediately after the fall of the dictatorship. The reception of this production restored the previously common frame of political interpretation of

revivals as a response to the apolitical criticism of the 1969 production. Theatre critics as well as other commentators discussed this performance under political terms and strongly criticised the recent situation of the country. They made direct references to the themes of *Antigone* in relation to the dictatorship and its leaders. In this case the performance was not merely used as a platform for opposite political stands. The text of *Antigone* provided the commentators of the performance with relevant material in order to make connections between the recent events of the country and the performance.

Chapter Three, the final chapter of this thesis, presents and analyses the performances of *Antigone* in the years after the fall of the dictatorship until the first years of the new millennium. With the fall of the dictatorship, a new era emerged which is commonly referred to as *Metapolitefsi* (Regime Change). Even though the term Change of Regime refers to a very specific and usually short period of time, in Greece the term has been used to describe a period of time covering several years while different scholars mention different time frames as far as the duration of this period is concerned, details of which will be given in the discussions of the chapter. During this period, another polarisation would rise in Greece, a polarisation between the two dominant parties which exchanged places in power for many decades, the Socialist party and the Conservative party. The conflict between the two parties soon became a conflict of the people involved in the theatre and the performances of *Antigone* openly became a battlefield for the opposing sides of the socialists and the conservatives.

In the first part of this chapter, the *Antigone* performances of the first decade after the fall of the dictatorship (1975-1984) will be discussed under the lights of the rise of the conservative party in 1974, the accession of Greece as the 10th member of the European Community (now European Union) in early 1981 and the change of power and the rise of the socialist party later in 1981. Two performances of this period are of great significance for the purposes of this chapter. The first is a 1980 *Antigone* production by the National Theatre of Northern Greece. Interestingly, the production premiered in Cyprus. Cyprus underwent a Turkish invasion in 1974 and as a result the island has remained divided into two parts, a Greek-Cypriot and a

Turkish-Cypriot, since then. The events of the invasion left both communities in search for missing persons and the Greek-Cypriot side in particular has repeatedly asked for the return of the bodies (if there are any) in order to be offered proper burial ceremonies. The staging of *Antigone* was thus of immense significance at the time. The second is a 1984 *Antigone* production by the National Theatre, a production heavily accused of innovative elements and methods. *Antigone* thus became yet again a battlefield between opposing supporters of the socialist and the conservative parties and the matter was eventually brought before the Greek parliament.

A series of *Antigone* performances produced by non-Greek theatrical companies were presented in Greece in the during the second half of the 1980s. These performances are discussed in the second part of this chapter, as they are significant in the ways they influenced the Greek audiences of the time. Greek artistic circles often disagreed and opposed strongly and openly foreign attempts at ancient Greek drama revivals. As an official member of the European family now, Greece had to revisit, re-evaluate and redefine its own national identity, a rather complicated situation for the Greeks. The third part of this chapter discusses a 1990 *Antigone* production presented at the Epidaurus Festival, where three major national figures of the arts worked together and the result was indicative of the aforementioned national identity confusion.

In the fourth part of this chapter, I present and analyse the performances of the 1990s, with a particular emphasis on the 1992 National Theatre *Antigone.* The socialist party lost the parliamentary elections of 1989 after eight years in power and after two rounds of elections the conservative party rose to power again in 1990 and remained until 1993. Amongst other conservative notions, the conservative party was also responsible for spreading the notion of religiosity, and particularly Christianity. This created a paradox when examined in combination with the conservative tendency to define modern Greek identity through a persistent return to the ancient Hellenic world of who they claimed to be their ancestors. Evidence of this Christian-Hellenic paradox can be traced in the National Theatre *Antigone* production in 1992. The performance which premiered at the

Epidaurus Festival before returning to Athens, was again used as a platform for yet another conflict between the conservatives on the one side and the socialists, as well as communists on many occasions, on the other side.

Many are those who claim that from 2007 onwards, the Greek political and social scene has seen some of its worst days since the dictatorship in 1967. Democracy has been under serious questioning, theoretically as well as practically in modern Greece. The people, who have so proudly tried to persuade the world that their ancestors have invented democracy, are now in more need than the rest of Europe to redefine democracy. As has always been the case in Greece, the arts have not stayed uninvolved in the intense events of the last years. It was a deliberate decision not to look into performances of the new millennium. The events of this very recent history of Greece are still ongoing, they have not been properly digested and an attempt to discuss and analyse such events or performances would be, in my opinion, rushed in the least. However, the study of the history of the modern Greek nation in combination with the history of the definition of modern Greek national identity based on ancient Greek roots and the history of revivals of ancient Greek drama on the modern Greek stage, does give us some insights on the complicated issue of the Greek national identity in the twenty first century, a topic which I briefly discuss in the conclusions of this thesis.

Chapter One

The First *Antigones* 1863-1940

In his preface to *Antigones*, George Steiner mentions that 'Sophocles' *Antigone* is not 'any text'. It is one of the enduring and canonic acts in the history of our philosophical, literary, political consciousness.'[113] There is indeed a paramount body of academic work as far as *Antigone* is concerned. From philosophical analyses to political theory, gender studies, psychoanalysis and performance reception, the Sophoclean tragedy has been at the centre of European academic attention since the end of the eighteenth century. Different elements and themes have been drawn from the play in order to reveal analogies and oppositions regarding power, authority, feminism and many more. However, the approaches of modern Greek productions of *Antigone* seem to differ from the European approaches. Sometimes uninformed or separated from, at other times even indifferent towards the European academic approaches of *Antigone*, Greek academics and intellectuals of the nineteenth and early twentieth century often approached the play in a more immediate way (for example by using the ancient original, or by using settings and costumes which resembled ancient Greek settings and ancient Greek garments), but in essentially academic settings. In the history of Greek revivals of *Antigone*, a considerable number of performances have been related to some of the most significant social, political and cultural events of the country which determined the formation of the modern Greek language, culture, nation and national identity. One should bear in mind that especially the first revivals had an educational character which aimed at cultivating the idea that the modern Greek national identity should be built upon ancient traditions and the glorious spirit of the past. In what follows, I attempt to explore some of the resonance of such performances.

The relative poverty in combination with the underdevelopment of the country in general during the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, made the survival of many materials of theatrical companies and their performances more difficult. Despite the efforts of many Greek scholars to collect and archive these materials, the archives are usually incomplete, the audiovisual material is scarce and the press coverage is often partial. It is worth mentioning that due to the difficulties in collecting such materials, the scholarly efforts as far as the revival of

[113] Steiner, *Antigones...,* p.ix.

all ancient Greek plays are concerned, are usually quantitative rather than qualitative. The Greek academic Anna Mavroleon who has specifically worked on the collection and recording of *Antigone* performances in modern Greece, mentions that 'We need to bear in mind that theatre studies in Greece are still undergoing the phase of material collection, and we need to walk a long and painful path until we reach the phase of analysis of such materials.'[114] The aim of this thesis is not to collect and record the total number of *Antigone* productions on the modern Greek stage; it is rather to single out important productions and analyse them in accordance with the social and political climate of the time. Hereafter follows a qualitative instead of quantitative analysis of the modern Greek performance history of *Antigone* which ultimately aims at revealing the political instead of aesthetic approach of the revivals of ancient Greek drama in modern Greece in relation to the construction and development of the modern Greek nation and the modern Greek national identity from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards. In this process, the significance of the first revivals of the play starting in 1863 could not be overlooked. Therefore, this chapter will closely examine the first revivals of *Antigone* in Modern Greece and the events which created the background for the later performances of the twentieth century.

[114] Anna Mavroleon, 'Η Διαχείριση του Αρχαίου...', in introduction and conclusions.

Part 1: The First Greek Revival of *Antigone* in Constantinople 1863

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the domain of revivals of ancient Greek drama was mainly occupied by amateurs, intellectuals and academics. Actors or directors were rarely involved in these attempts. The first recorded Greek revival of *Antigone* was in Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1863. It has been previously mentioned that the interest of this research focuses on the performances of *Antigone* in Greece and especially in Athens, the capital as well as the cultural and political centre of the country. Nevertheless, the performance in Constantinople plays a significant role in the Greek performance history of *Antigone*, not merely because it was the first revival of the play. Its significance also lies in three more factors which will be further discussed: the city where the performance took place, the professionals who were involved, and the translation which was used.

During the 1860s, Constantinople was still under Ottoman rule. It was home to a huge Greek community, the city's biggest non-Muslim community at the time, with a population of four hundred thousand, many of whom were wealthy and well educated.[115] Amongst other Greek communities outside Greece, such as those of Romania, Egypt, and Smyrna, Constantinople played a significant role to the development of the Athenian arts and theatre in the years to follow. Bearing this in mind, it is not surprising that the first revival of *Antigone* took place in this city. In addition, according to the Great Idea (*Megali Idea*)[116] which was cultivated amongst the Greeks after the Greek Revolution of 1821 until the end of the Greco-Turkish War in 1922, Constantinople was considered the city which would replace Athens as the capital of the Hellenic world, when all former Greek territories would be regained by Greeks. Attempts to spread the Hellenic spirit, by such means as the distribution of Greek texts as well as the introduction of ancient Greek drama, were

[115] Murat Gul, *The Emergence of Modern Istanbul: Transformation and Modernisation of a City* (London: Tauris, 2009), p.9.
[116] See Introduction.

a very common phenomenon in Constantinople during that time. The changing scene of Constantinople in combination with the educated and cultivated Greek population of the city, as well as the underdevelopment of the arts and theatre in Athens, allowed the first revival of *Antigone* to take place not only outside Athens but outside Greece.

All the information regarding this performance comes from the contemporary press and the studies of later Greek intellectuals, particularly Giannis Sideris (1898-1975)[117]. The première of the performance was in October 1863 at the *Naum Theatre*, one of the most prominent theatres in Istanbul from the 1840s when it was first built on a formerly wooden-structure theatre until 1870 when it was destroyed by a fire and reopened under the new name of *Çiçek Pasajı* which remains until today.[118] The theatre had a tradition of Western performances, specifically of Italian operas.[119] The theatrical company who funded the performance belonged to two wealthy businessmen of Constantinople, the Greek brothers Cosmas and Odysseas Demetrakou. Professional actors were allocated for the main roles of the play. The renowned member of the Demetrakou brothers theatrical company Pantelis Soutsas had the leading role of Creon. A professional actress named Pipina Vonasera was chosen for the role of Antigone. Vonasera is considered not only the first actress to portray Antigone for the first revival of the play in modern times; she is also the first ever woman actress who had the role of Antigone in the Greek history of revivals of all times, if we take for granted that women's roles were portrayed by men in antiquity.[120] Another two names are given in the sources available, those of Sofia Pana as Ismene and Demosthenis Alexiades as Tiresias. However, there is no further information on either their acting careers or their involvement in the performance.

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[117] Giannis Sideris, 'Η Πρώτη Αντιγόνη: Πριν Εκατό Χρόνια στην Πόλη', *Θέατρο*, 12 (1963), 31-33; Sideris, *Το Αρχαίο Θέατρο...*, pp.33-34.

[118] Ezgi Yazici, 'Theatre in Nineteenth Century Istanbul: Cases for the Translation of an Architectural Typology' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2010), pp.81-84.

[119] Namik Sinan Turan, Ayşegül Komsuoğlu, 'From Empire to the Republic: The Western Music Tradition and the Perception of Opera', *International Journal of Turcologia*, 2:3(2007), 7-29.

[120] Edith Hall, 'The Singing Actors of Antiquity' in *Greek and Roman Actors: Aspects of an Ancient Profession*, ed. Pat Easterling and Edith Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.3-38.

The direction of the performance and the stage design were assigned to Italians Asti Nocci and Poggi respectively. The involvement of Italian professionals in this performance should not be overlooked. One might have expected that for this first Greek revival of *Antigone*, at least the role of director would be assigned to a Greek professional. It was, after all, the first attempt on a Greek revival of the play, and it would only be natural if the Greek company owners had assigned the task to a Greek director. The decision behind this choice lies in two reasons. Firstly, the role of director was not yet established amongst the Greek theatrical circles. Secondly and more importantly, by assigning those roles to European professionals, the Greeks of Constantinople ensured that their performance would not lack the European elements they were trying to incorporate into their arts, in order to emphasise the western characteristics of their identity. It is not coincidental that the theatrical company of Demetrakou brothers also funded the performance of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* while the *Antigone* performance was still ongoing. It is clear that the Greek intellectual circles of Constantinople were investing efforts in creating bridges between the eastern and the western world by introducing European elements, methods and repertoire to their Greek audience.

As a result of this tendency to build bridges with the West, the performance was not given in the original ancient Greek language, but was instead presented in translation. The translation used for this first revival of *Antigone* was in *katharevousa* by eminent poet, writer and professor of Archaeology at the University of Athens, Alexandros Rizos Rangavis (1809-1892).[121] It is worth noting here that Rangavis was also an active political figure in Athens. He served at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education, he was one of the first who contributed to the formation of the University of Athens where he taught classics for many years. He also served as Dean under the approval of the King in 1866, as well as a Minister at the Ministry of External Affairs (1856-1859). Having lived and studied abroad, Rangavis inevitably received influences from European

[121] Constantina Ritsatou, *Με των Μουσών τον Έρωτα: Ο Αλέξανδρος Ρίζος Ραγκαβής και το Νεοελληνικό Θέατρο* (Heraklion: Πανεπιστημιακές Εκδόσεις Κρήτης, 2011); Dimitris Spathis, 'Το θέατρο 1871-1909: Η Εδραίωση της Επαγγελματικής Σκηνικής Τέχνης', in *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού 1770-2000,* Vol.5, ed. Vasilis Panagiotopoulos (Athens: Ελληνικά γράμματα, 2003), 199-218.

intellectuals, which obviously showed in his own work, and especially in his attempt to translate ancient Greek drama form the original ancient Greek to *katharevousa*, especially during a time when the preservation of anything originally Greek was of immense significance for the formation of the modern Greek identity. Quoted by Alexandra Lianeri in 2014, Rangavis himself expressed this tendency towards translation in a way which is significant for two reasons. Firstly because it clearly shows the attempt to connect with European traditions and secondly because it reveals what would later be a recurring issue in the majority of the discussions regarding the Greek revivals: the Greeks might desired the connection with the West but at the same time, they never ceased to believe that they deserved the enjoyment of such performances before and above anyone else:

> As is well known, the *Antigone* is performed now for quite a few years in the grandest theatres of Germany, France and England. [...] If we may ever allow ourselves to hope that we too will be willing to participate in this noble enjoyment, *which we deserve and in which we are interested before and above anyone else*, it is evident that this task can only be achieved through translation.[122]

Even though the earlier known version of Rangavis' translation dates back to 1860, only later publications of the translation text are available in the archives of Desmi, as well as in the libraries of the Theatre Museum in Athens, the Panteion University Athens and the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. However, there is a copy of the original translation text in the archives of the Thessaloniki Municipal Library. The copy stands on the shelves of old and rare collections of the library and it does not provide bibliographical or publication details, apart from an indication of the 1860 date. The translation is in *katharevousa* and a sample is provided here for the better understanding of the differences in language and style between the original ancient Greek text and Rangavis' translation.

[122] Alexandra Lianeri, 'A Syncretic Antiquity in Translation: *Polis* and Political Modernity in Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Greek *Antigones*', in *Re-imagining the Past: Antiquity and Modern Greek Culture*, ed. Dimitris Tziovas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 59-78, p.65.

Antigone (Sophocles):[123]

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
ὦ κοινὸν αὐτάδελφον Ἰσμήνης κάρα,
ἆρ᾽ οἶσθ᾽ ὅ τι Ζεὺς τῶν ἀπ᾽ Οἰδίπου κακῶν
ὁποῖον οὐχὶ νῷν ἔτι ζώσαιν τελεῖ;
οὐδὲν γὰρ οὔτ᾽ ἀλγεινὸν οὔτ᾽ ἄτης ἄτερ
οὔτ᾽ αἰσχρὸν οὔτ᾽ ἄτιμόν ἐσθ᾽, ὁποῖον οὐ
τῶν σῶν τε κἀμῶν οὐκ ὄπωπ᾽ ἐγὼ κακῶν.
καὶ νῦν τί τοῦτ᾽ αὖ φασι πανδήμῳ πόλει
κήρυγμα θεῖναι τὸν στρατηγὸν ἀρτίως;
ἔχεις τι κεἰσήκουσας; ἤ σε λανθάνει
πρὸς τοὺς φίλους στείχοντα τῶν ἐχθρῶν κακά;

Antigone (trans. Rangavis):[124]

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
Ὦ ἀδελφῆς Ἰσμήνης φίλη κεφαλὴ
ἠξεύρεις τίνα τῶν Οἰδίποδος κακῶν
ἐπὶ ζωῆς μας δὲν μᾶς ἔπεμψεν ὅ Ζεύς;
Δὲν βλέπω ποίαν θλίψιν, ποίαν κάκωσιν,
ποίαν αἰσχύνην, ποίαν ἐξαχρείωσιν
εἰς σὲ δὲν ἐδαψίλευσε καὶ εἰς ἐμέ.
Τί τοῦτο πάλιν,ὃ πανδήμως λέγεται
ὁ στρατηγὸς κηρύξας εἰς τὴν πόλιν μας΄
Το ἤξευρες; το ἤκουσας; ἢ ἀγνοεῖς
πῶς ἀπειλοῦν τοὺς φίλους μας ἐχθρῶν κακά;

Ragkavis' intention, as far as the *Antigone* is concerned, was to provide a text as faithful to the original as possible.[125] As he mentions, the translation of such texts like *Antigone*, brings with it the danger of *desecration*.[126] With this observation, Rangavis pointed out what would later be not only a major problem in the history of the Language Question but also in the history of revivals of ancient Greek drama. Language was not the only problem in the history of the revivals, but especially

[123] Sophocles, *Antigone*, 1-10.
[124] Sophocles, *Αντιγόνη*, trans. Alexandros Rizos Rangavis (Athens). The copy is missing the title page and therefore any further publication details. A later version of the translation can be found in: Alexandros Rizos Rangavis, *Άπαντα: Μετάφρασις Αρχαίων Δραμάτων*, Vol.5 (Athens: Νικολαϊδου Φιλαδέλφεως, 1875), pp.1-60.
[125] Ritsatou, *Με των Μουσών τον Έρωτα...*, pp.81-84.
[126] In his notes on the *Antigone* translation, in the edited volume of Ancient Drama Translations cited above. In the original notes, Rangavis uses the Greek word 'βεβήλωση' which I have translated as 'desecration'.

during a period of time when the problem of *Diglossia* was expanding rapidly, the translation of the ancient Greek texts was revealed as the first and most important issue. The expert in modern Greek theatre studies Tasos Lignadis (1926-1989) mentions that

> The translation [of ancient Greek plays] from one form of a language to another form of the same language creates both aesthetic and dramaturgical problems, as none of the translations [neither in *katharevousa* nor in demotic] serves the purposes of the original language of the plays.[127]

This takes us back to Maronitis' arguments discussed in the Introduction, as far as intralingual translations are concerned. Rangavis insisted on a translation which would be as close to the original as possible, when clearly his *katharevousa* translation differs majorly from the original Sophoclean text. It is not in the scopes of this thesis to attempt a linguistic comparison between the two translations in order to prove or disprove Rangavis' intention to maintain the original text. However, the intention itself provides a context into which his attempt can be interpreted: during the second half of the twentieth century, it was of great significance to protect and preserve the ancestral heritage, which would form the basis of the modern Greek national character and national identity. It is of lesser relevance whether this was successfully achieved. What is rather important here is the fact that the translation of ancient Greek plays exceeded mere linguistic, artistic or aesthetic purposes, and was elevated to a matter of national significance. The preservation of a language, even through translation, meant the preservation of a national heritage, and thus a concrete basis for the formation of the desired modern identity.

The performance was overall unsuccessful as it was not well received by either the audience or the critics. The Italian elements of melodrama incorporated into the performance failed to convince the Greek audience of Constantinople who were expecting more familiar Greek elements. Instead, the elements of melodrama were much more evident than the expected Hellenic elements of ancient Greek tragedy.

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[127] Tasos Lignadis, 'Η Μετάφραση της Τραγωδίας', in *Θεατρολογικά* (Athens: Χ. Μπούρας, 1978), p.153.

Sideris mentions that 'the Italian professionals treated the protagonists of *Antigone* as if they were opera soloists'.[128] The Westernised pattern of the performance was totally at odds with the expectations of the audience which was left completely unsatisfied. Regardless the production's lack of success and the disappointment of the audience, a new era begun for the revival of ancient Greek drama in general as well as for *Antigone* in particular. Greece needed a few more years in order to prepare for its own *Antigone* productions, but when it did, the audience had very similar reaction to that of the Greek audience in Constantinople: they repeatedly rejected elements which deviated from what they considered originally Hellenic.

[128] Sideris, *Το Αρχαίο Θέατρο…*, p.34.

Part 2: The First Revivals of *Antigone* in Athens 1867-1986

In 1867, King George I of Greece travelled to St. Petersburg and secretly married the daughter of the Great Duke Constantine of Russia, the sixteen year old Grand Duchess Olga Constantinovna of Russia. Queen Olga, as she then became, lived and served beside King George in Greece until 1913 when the King was assassinated by an anarchist. Her son, King Constantine I, first in line to the throne, was exiled due to the unstable political situation in Greece in the 1920s, and Olga served as Regent in his place for a very short period of time between 1 October 1920 and 19 November 1920 when the king returned to Greece after a positive result of a referendum. Olga herself was sentenced to exile after the abolition of the monarchy in Greece and she died in France in 1926.[129]

To celebrate the royal wedding and the arrival of the royal couple from St. Petersburg to Athens in 1867, the University of Athens prepared a performance of *Antigone*. The University of Athens, founded in 1837, was then and later holding a very significant role in the process of construction of the modern Greek society.[130] The university did not only hold itself responsible for creating, sustaining and promoting the bonds with the historical past of the country. It also employed academics who were widely and openly involved with the social and political scene of the country and it produced new generation of students, and later young academics, who also carried the responsibility of recognising the significance of the past as well as that of passing it on to future generations. As Vangelis Karamanolakis notes, 'the emphasis on the relationship between the university and Greek antiquity was a political choice'.[131] During the early years of its operation the king of the country was Otto of Bavarian descent with a well known philhellene

[129] John Van der Kiste, *Kings of the Hellenes: The Greek Kings 1863-1974* (Stroud: Sutton, 1999).
[130] Vangelis Karamanolakis, 'The University of Athens and Greek Antiquity (1837-1937)', in *Re-imagining the Past: Antiquity and Modern Greek Culture*, ed. Dimitris Tziovas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 112-127.
[131] Karamanolakis, 'The University of Athens...', p.114.

father whose views were partly responsible for the development of the university ideology. The new royal family which followed the reign of King Otto after his death in 1862, did not share the same philhellen views. As a result, a clash between the royal family preferences and the university preferences was unavoidable.

This performance was not only a wedding gift to the royal couple, it was also the first revival of *Antigone* in Greece. Some of the participants in this performance were part of the professional cast who took part in the performance in Constantinople in 1863: Pipina Vonasera held the leading role of Antigone and Demosthenis Alexiades the role of Tiresias. According to Sideris who gives the details of this performance[132], the rest of the original cast was replaced by local Athenian amateur actors and the chorus consisted of fifteen male students from the University of Athens. Consequent to the failure of the 1863 performance, this production was not assigned to the Italian director. Instead, responsible for the direction was now the professor of Archaeology at the University of Athens, and supporter of *katharevousa*, Athanasios Rousopoulos. *Antigone* not only returned to the hands of an expert in the field of antiquity but it also returned to its homeland, and indeed Athens. Even though the performance took place in winter, on 7 December 1867, the producers insisted on staging it in an ancient theatre, the Odeon of Herodes Atticus in Athens.[133] In their efforts to define their modern identity by making references to their ancestral heritage, Greek artists and intellectuals of the time tried to bring ancient Greek drama to the place where it was originally created. Therefore, the staging in an ancient theatre was of immense significance. Bearing in mind that the performance was organised by the University as a gift to the newly wedded royal couple, one would expect that there would be no entrance fee, but this was not the case. There were two sets of tickets, top price tickets for ten drachmas and reduced price tickets for seven drachmas. However, each member of the audience was given a free copy Ragkavis' translation of the

[132] Sideris, *Το Αρχαίο Θέατρο…*, pp.43-44.
[133] The *Odeon of Herodes Atticus* is not an Ancient Greek theatre, it is a Roman theatre. However, it still seemed to serve the purpose of those who insisted on finding continuity between the Ancient and the Modern Greek world.

text of *Antigone*.[134] One could suggest that this gesture worked as an exchange for the ticket fee. At the same time though, it was a strategic move of the University representatives to spread and establish their position as far as the proper translation language of ancient Greek plays was concerned. Nevertheless, despite the effort of the Athenian producers, the performance was not received as well as expected. The use of the Odeon of Herodes Atticus, the *katharevousa* translation and the direction by a professor of Archaeology proved insufficient in convincing the contemporary audience. The second and last performance in the Odeon was given on 7 January 1868, alongside Euripides' *Cyclops*, with a different actress; in the leading role of Antigone this time was Polyxeni Soutsa. Again, even though it was not negatively received, the performance did not gain great success and was criticised by the contemporary press, a criticism which reminds us that these early revivals were not considered part of an artistic theatrical tradition, but rather part of an 'educational' programme which aimed at the awakening of national awareness:

> We want to urge the people to encourage this kind of theatre that allows the teaching of ancient Greek drama as well as its ethical and political lesson which are important to the people. [...] Such theatre should contribute not to the 'revival' of our ancestors' theatre, as they call it, but rather to the creation of a theatre that will be National.[135]

On 27 January 1868, twenty days after the second and last performance at the Odeon*,* another performance of *Antigone* was staged at the *Theatro Athinon (Boukoura)* by the theatrical company of Sophocles Karydes, who also served as director. Even though Karydes used the *katharevousa* translation by Rangavis for the purposes of this performance, he received negative criticism from the conservative academics of the University of Athens as well as the press. It is worth noting here that during this period it was the progressives who favored *katharevousa,* as opposed to the more conservative side of the intellectual thought which favored the ancient Greek language, whereas later on the conservatives supported the *katharevousa* and the progressives supported the demotic.

[134] This was the text which is commonly found in later publications of Rangavis' translations of Ancient Greek plays, as I cite above.
[135] Anonymous, Article title not available, *Αυγή*, 08 January 1868.

Therefore, the criticism of Karydes' performance was based on two arguments which did not derive from a language conflict. The first is that Karydes was the first director who staged *Antigone* in an indoor theatre. As the performance of 1867 reveals, the academics insisted on staging ancient Greek drama in outdoor theatres because this would make a direct reference to the original ancient Greek staging. The second reason lies in the fact that Karydes was not an academic. Newspaper *Ethnofylax* characteristically wrote that 'there is now a clear conviction that the ancient Greek plays should only be staged by students of the university and only in outdoor theatres.'[136] As has been previously mentioned, the intellectuals of the time held that the revivals of ancient Greek drama should be entrusted to the hands of qualified academics who had deep knowledge of the ancestral heritage and therefore were capable of spreading the notion of historical continuity upon which the modern Greek identity should be formed.

For nine years after the performance of 1868, not a single performance of *Antigone* was staged in Athens, or anywhere else in Greece. In 1877, the theatrical company *Euripides* owned by Antonis Varveris and Michalis Arniotakis produced a performance of *Antigone.* The surviving information on this performance as accessed through the performance archives of all sorts is very limited who names Varveris as the actor in the role of Creon.[137] Even though specific materials or details of this performance do not survive, there is some surviving information on Varveris which gives us insights on his views as far as the revival of ancient Greek drama is concerned.[138] Varveris had a group of followers and colleagues, consisted of young people outside the academia but involved with the field of drama. He directed many performances of ancient Greek plays and used innovative methods for the chorus which was at the time, and still remains, one of the most problematic elements for the modern revivals. He was also one of the first Greek directors who gave an active role to the chorus. The fact that he allowed the chorus to interact with the rest of the actors was both innovative and challenging for the Greek

[136] Anonymous, 'Η Αντιγόνη του Σοφοκλέους', *Εθνοφύλαξ*, 30 January 1868.
[137] Varveris also had the role of Creon in 1867 in the performance for the royal wedding celebrations.
[138] Dionysis Tavoularis, *Απομνημονεύματα* (Athens: Πυρσός, 1930), p.93.

audience of the time and opened new paths for this problematic aspect of revivals.[139]

Another ten years passed by during which there is no recorded performance of *Antigone*. The next performance took place in 1888, the year of the celebrations for the twenty five years of King George I on the Greek throne. This was not the first time when *Antigone* was staged for the purposes of celebrations regarding the Greek Royal family. Bearing in mind the strongly subversive nature of the play which contrasts public and private, state and family, authority and personal decision, it seems rather interesting that the staging of *Antigone* was not a concern in the royal context. On the one hand, we could describe this as an element of historical irony. On the other, the preference towards *Antigone* could be the result of the position the play held in European thought and the attention it received by European scholars compared to other ancient Greek plays.

The production was performed on 22 October 1888 in the *Dimotiko Theatro Athinon*, amongst other plays which were staged for the same purpose. The theatrical company responsible for this performance was the *Ethnikos Dramatikos Sillogos*, members of which were students and amateur actors who were frequently staging theatrical plays of the company founder A. Antoniades. Only two professional actors were involved in the performance and they portrayed the roles of Ismene and Eurydice.[140] The importance of this performance lies in the fact that the play was presented in its original ancient Greek language, taught to the amateur actors by Antonis Varveris and Dionysis Tavoularis. As non-academics, the amateur actors were, of course, not familiar with the ancient Greek language. This also indicates that the majority of the audience who would watch the performance would also be unfamiliar with ancient Greek. I would not suggest that these performances were mere shows but they were definitely used in a national context in order to inform -or remind- the wider population of their ancestral heritage and their connection with the past. Approximately twenty years after the first revival of *Antigone* in Greece, the Language Question was developing rapidly and the staging

[139] Sideris, *Το Αρχαίο Θέατρο…*, p.67.
[140] Anonymous, Article title not available, *Παλιγγενεσία*, 20 October 1888.

of the play in its original language could not be overlooked by the press of the time: 'This performance will prove to the foreigners that the young academics of the country know how to respect the sacred ancestral heritage'.[141] Strong religious-related terms such as 'desecration' and 'sacred ancestral heritage' were commonly used amongst the contemporary reviewers, in order to stress the appropriate way to revive ancient Greek drama. Ironically, the Royal Family did not attend the performance, even though it was organised for the king's Silver Jubilee celebrations. The Royal Family was rarely attending any performances: their interaction with other European theatrical companies led them to consider Greek productions of a lower level. In addition, another theory could suggest that the Royal absence from the performance audience could be a result of the fact that Antoniades of the theatrical company was an anti-royalist.

Only two days later, on 24 October 1888, another performance of Antigone was staged in the same theatre, the *Dimotiko Theatro Athinon*, but this time the participants were amateur royalist aristocrats. Director of the performance was Dimitrios Koromilas who also had the role of Creon and his wife Efrosyne had the role of Eurydice. The rest of the cast consisted of other Athenian aristocrats. One of the most important contributors was G.M. Vizyinos who helped the amateur group with the artistic interpretation of the play.[142] Paradoxically, the performance was again given in the original ancient Greek language, even though most of the participants were writing their own theatrical plays in demotic. According to press evidence, both the royal family and the audience received the performance very positively. Athenian newspaper confirms so by writing that the Athenian aristocrats revealed their best selves by honouring their king with 'the greatest possible performance'.[143] Interestingly, the royal family attended this performance in contrast to the one which was specifically organised in their honour, a fact that in itself suggests the Palace's displeasure with the anti-royalist organisers of the performance only two days earlier.

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[141] Anonymous, 'Η Αρχαία Τραγωδία Αντιγόνη', *Ακρόπολις*, 21 October 1888. 'Sacred ancestral heritage' is originally 'ιερή κληρονομιά των προγόνων'. As I have commented earlier, it was a common phenomenon of the time to refer to the Ancient Greek works with religious terms.
[142] Sideris, *Το Αρχαίο Θέατρο…*, p.83.
[143] Anonymous,'Η Αντιγόνη', *Νέα Εφημερίς*, 25 October 1888.

The last performance of *Antigone* in the nineteenth century was held in 1896 at the *Dimotiko Theatro Athinon* by the theatrical company of Georgios Mistriotis *Eteria Yper tis Didaskalias Archeon Dramaton* (Company for the Teaching of Ancient Drama, founded in 1885). Interestingly, Mistriotis' performance coincided –or was inspired by- the revival of the Olympic Games, the first Olympiad of the modern era which took place in Athens in 1896. His performance was presented in the original ancient Greek, which was not surprising for the contemporary audience as Mistriotis was renowned for his archaistic views as well as his obsession with protecting and preserving the ancestral heritage. Even though Mistriotis was one of the first directors who insisted on the revivals of ancient Greek plays in outdoor theatres, the palace denied him the Odeon of Herodes Atticus for his performances. As we will see shortly, the palace was supporting the demotic, and the views of Mistriotis were working against their preferences. This conflict between Mistriotis and the palace would worsen a few years later during the *Oresteiaka* Incidents.

The criticism in the contemporary press was divided and opposed according to unsupported aesthetic observations. For example, an anonymous critic in the contemporary newspaper *Asty* wrote that Mistriotis' performance was 'the worst performance of *Antigone* that has ever been staged, the acting was terrible and the music unbearable.'[144] On the opposite side, another anonymous author in a different contemporary Athenian newspaper, *Proia*, praised the performance as a whole and the music in particular.[145] There is only one common element between these opposing sides: both sets of critics offer very little substantive arguments to support their views. Their reviews are vague, with no specific references to the any particular elements of the performance as far as the acting, the direction, costume or set designs. The main difference which separates the opposing critics is the linguistic preferences of each side, each critic and each newspaper. During the last years of the nineteenth century, the revival of ancient Greek drama was undergoing its most intense educational phase. As an academic, Mistriotis had the power to influence his students who were participating in his performances. His passion for

[144] Anonymous, Article title not available, *Άστυ*, 27 March 1896.
[145] Anonymous, 'Τρίτη Διδασκαλία της Αντιγόνης', *Πρωία*, 03 April 1896.

the preservation and presentation of the ancestral heritage was passed on to his students who in their turn passed this passion onto their audience. They were indeed lacking in professional acting skills, but their unawareness of the technicalities of theatre allowed them to focus on the promotion of the ancient Greek spirit. His loyal supporters were in an open conflict with his opponents and the matter was not be resolved within the field of theatre but rather in the field of linguistic preferences based on a social and political grounds.

The original ancient Greek language was not the only element which Mistriotis used with passion in his performances. Another element which separated his *Antigone* from any previous performance was the use of music by the Greek composer Ioannis Sakellarides (1853-1938). The majority of the previous performances used the music of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, specifically composed for Ludwig Tieck's renowned and successful staging of *Antigone*, first performed in 1841 at the Berlin Opera House.[146] Disregarding the European elements which had the potential to destroy the authentic ancient spirit, Mistriotis employed Sakellarides for the composition of original music for the performance of 1896. Sakellarides was a musician, composer and philologist, expert in Byzantine music. He used Greek folk and Byzantine motifs for the *Antigone* compositions, which could be easily comprehended and digested by the contemporary audience in contrast to the European classical melodies of Mendelssohn. Whatever aesthetic difference between Mendelssohn's and Sakellarides' compositions, it was their political orientations that set them apart. Sakellarides' music was a deliberate political statement that allowed Mistriotis to separate himself from European trends and interpretations, and claim the authenticity of ancient Greek tragedy by making clear references to Greek historical continuity through music.

The last decades of the nineteenth century, as well as the first decades of the twentieth century, saw some of the most intense attempts in respect to the revival of the ancient Greek spirit which, always according to the Greeks, would ideally be

[146] Michael Steinberg, 'The Incidental Politics to Mendelssohn's Antigone' in *Mendelssohn and His World*, ed. R. Larry Todd (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp.137–157; Jason Geary 'Reinventing the Past: Mendelssohn's *Antigone* and the Creation of an Ancient Greek Musical Language', *Journal of Musicology,* 23:2 (2006), 187–226.

incorporated into the modern Greek identity. The revival of ancient Greek drama, as well as the revival of the Olympic Games played a crucial role as far as these attempts are concerned. It worked as a reminder for the people of Greece: a reminder of a glorious past which could and should be revived and relived in the present. Such nationalistic sentiments, allowed Mistriotis and other nationalists to claim with passion what they considered rightfully theirs.

Part 3: The First 'Modernised' Revivals of *Antigone* 1900-1939

The aim of this thesis is to examine the Greek revivals within Greece, Athens in particular. However, as before, the examination of at least some performances outside Greece is imperative. One of these is a 1900 performance which, similar to the first Greek revival of *Antigone,* took place in Constantinople by the *Ellinikos Philologikos Syllogos Constantinoupoleos* (Greek Literary Association of Constantinople).[147] The Association had a tradition of giving an annual concert. This tradition was altered in 1900 when instead they decided to give a performance of ancient Greek drama. The decision might have been provoked by the tour of the renowned French actor Jean Mounet-Sully who gave a performance of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* in Athens and was supposed to present the same performance in Constantinople as well.[148] The Ottoman censorship forbade this performance due to its references to the killing of King Laius. The Ottoman authorities also forbade the staging of Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* as well as Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Tauris* based on the same view that the references to kings could be offensive, provocative or even dangerous for the Sultan.[149] This fear of the Turkish authorities reveals that the revival of ancient Greek plays was not a political matter only within Greece. The Greek community of Constantinople was not only financially powerful; it also had a strong social and intellectual character. Therefore, the presentation of such performances was a matter of concern for the Turkish officials who considered the texts inappropriate.[150] Beyond the references to kings, the texts of ancient Greek drama were troublesome for the Turkish for another reason. During that period of time, ancient Greek drama was gaining global recognition. The staging of

[147] Giorgos Giannakopoulos, 'Ο Ελληνικός Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως (1861-1922): Η Ελληνική Παιδεία και Επιστήμη ως Εθνική Πολιτική στην Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία' (unpublished doctoral thesis, National and Kapodistrian University Athens, 1998).
[148] Anne Penesco, *Mounet-Sully: L'homme Aux Cent Coeurs D'Homme* (Paris: Le Editions du Cerf, 2005).
[149] Sideris, *Το Αρχαίο Θέατρο…*, pp.155-184.
[150] For theatre censorship and the Ottoman Rule see: Nermin Menemencioglu, 'The Ottoman Theatre 1839-1923', *British Society for Middle Eastern Studies*, 10:1(1983), 48-58.

performances in the ancient theatres of Constantinople as well as the coasts of Ionia was a reminder of the Great Idea for the Greeks. It was a painful reminder of the land they had lost to the Ottoman Rule, but it was also a hopeful reminder that the land they lost would soon be 'theirs once more'. As a consequence, the revival of ancient Greek drama turned out to be a great threat for the Turkish state.

Since *Oedipus Rex*, *Oedipus at Colonus* and *Iphigeneia in Tauris* were forbidden and the Turkish authorities warned that there would be death sentences for those who disobey this verdict, the vice-president of *Ellinikos Philologikos Syllogos,* M. Afthentopoulos, suggested the staging of *Antigone*. The reasons behind the Ottoman authorities' lenience towards a play which openly questions authority by definition, can only be speculative. A similar phenomenon is also examined in subsequent chapter when the Dictatorship of 1967-1974 officials forbade the staging of other ancient Greek plays but allowed the staging of *Antigone*. In both cases, one might assume that the punishment with death of the rebellious figure (Antigone) was one of the reasons which allowed the staging of the play, a hypothesis which also indicates the rather limited interpretive abilities on the part of the censors or the authorities. However, the overlooking of punishment of the authority-leader figure (Creon) in both cases, remains an unanswered question. The leading roles in the performance were assigned to professional Greek actors and the chorus consisted of Greek intellectuals and aristocrats of Constantinople. The text, which does not survive in any of the archives was a paraphrasing of the original ancient Greek by Christos Hatzichristos and the music that of Mendelssohn. Without any evidence, I would assume that Hatzichristos' version of *Antigone* must have been in *katharevousa* rather than the demotic. This assumption finds its roots in the fact that the elite, wealthy and well-educated Greek population of Constantinople would have welcomed a performance in *katharevousa* with greater enthusiasm rather than a performance in demotic which was the language of the rural and less educated populations. Our only surviving source of information is the yearbook with the proceeding of the association which states that the performance was a great success and the audience of Constantinople was deeply touched. The proceedings of the association mention that 'such performances can only be

appreciated by the happy societies of civilised nations', which might be an implied attack to the Turkish authorities for their prior objection towards the staging of other ancient Greek plays.[151]

Back in Athens, both the political and the social scenes were changing rapidly and the Language Question was at its peak. Despite the negative criticism he received for his previous performance in 1896 from both the University and the theatrical audience, Mistriotis directed another *Antigone* in 1900 with the *Eteria Yper tis Didaskalias Archeon Dramaton* at the *Demotiko Theatro Athenon*. Similarly to the previous performance, he assigned students and amateur actors the leading roles and the chorus, he insisted on using the original ancient Greek text again, and as expected, he used the music composed by Sakellarides for the 1896 performance. Even though the première was given on 20 April 1900, parts of the performance, the choruses in particular, were presented by a group of students of Mistriotis at the University of Athens approximately a month before the official première. According to evidence from the Athenian newspaper *Proia*, for the presentation of the choruses Mistriotis chose the day allocated by the University for the National Celebrations of the 25 March.[152] The day was of great significance; it remains today the official day for the celebration of the beginning of the Greek Revolution of 1821 which led the Greeks to their freedom from Ottoman rule. By presenting his *Antigone* choruses in ancient Greek, with the accompaniment of music which made clear references to Byzantine and folk tradition on such an important day, Mistriotis sent a message to everyone who ever doubted his work. It was his mission to revive the ancient Greek spirit and to prove that modern Greeks, now liberated from Ottoman rule, are the true descendants of who they considered their rightful ancestors.

By the end of the performance, the contemporary Athenian newspaper *Estia* strongly criticised the use of demotic folk elements, rhythms, patterns and lyrics in the compositions of Sakellarides which focused on tradition.[153] Sakellarides though,

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[151] Anonymous, Proceedings of the 'Ο εν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Ελληνικός Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος', ΚΖ' 18999-1902, (Constantinople: Αδελφών Γεράρδων, 1904).
[152] Anonymous, 'Εταιρία των Φίλων του Λαού', *Πρωία*, 24 March 1900.
[153] Anonymous, 'Η Παράστασις της Αντιγόνης', *Εστία*, 21 April 1900.

had a very clear vision for his ancient Greek drama musical compositions, which supported that there is an obvious continuity between the music of the ancient Greeks, Byzantine music and Greek folk music.[154] It has been mentioned above that the relationship between the royal family and Mistriotis was tense due to language preferences. The musical preference of Mistriotis was another issue for the royals, who favoured western elements instead of traditional Greek elements. These western elements were foreign to the Greek populations; however they served well the 'foreign' royal family who supported the modernisation and westernisation of the country. King George I himself showed a sincere interest in the modernisation of Greek theatre at the beginning of the twentieth century.[155] Had Mistriotis used the melodies of Mendelssohn, like all previous producers and directors, no discussion would have been raised on the matter. Throughout all the sources available for all previous performances, there are very few and usually neutral comments as far as the music of the revivals is concerned. Academics, intellectuals, artists or critics had never until then got into any serious conflict regarding Mendelssohn's compositions for *Antigone*. The debate about the appropriate music for the revivals only began with Mistriotis' performances and Sakellarides' compositions, a debate which was evoked by Sakellarides' references to tradition and Greek musical continuity, and by extension, Greek historical continuity. Once again, the opposition to Mistriotis' musical choices was neither artistic nor aesthetic. It was a clear political opposition which did not even find resonance in political aesthetics.

Despite the fact that the beginning of the new century found Athens in a flourishing period at least as far as the revival of ancient Greek drama is concerned, there is no recorded performance of *Antigone* for more than three years after that of Mistriotis in April 1900, neither in Athens nor anywhere else in Greece. The next performance would be that of Constantine Christomanos (1867-1911), owner and director of the theatrical company *Nea Skini*. *Nea Skini* was one of the very few theatrical companies, alongside the *Vasilikon Theatron* (Royal Theatre) which employed

[154] Sideris, *Το Αρχαίο Θέατρο…*, p.164.
[155] Giorgos Michaelides, 'Μεταίχμιο Αδιέξοδο', *Λέξη,* 75-76(1988), 510-517, p.510.

professional crew and used professional European methods for the purposes of its performances. This is due to Christomanos' European education which allowed him to have modernistic views on theatrical aspects (he is considered the establisher of the role of director in modern Greek theatre) as well as on the matter of language. He was an open supporter of the modernisation of language and the establishment of demotic.[156] The performance premiered on 2 November 1903 at the *Dimotiko Theatro Athinon* by professional actors and the music accompaniment of Mendelssohn's composition. The significance of this performance lies in the fact that it is the first *Antigone* in the history of revivals which was performed in demotic, in a translation by Christomanos himself. The use of demotic leads to significant deviations from the original ancient Greek text. It is 'loyal' to the original in regards to content; Christomanos did not add or remove words or phrases from the original while translating. However, the translation does not maintain the rhythm of the original and the language is much simpler, not only compared to the ancient text but also compared to previous translations in *katharevousa*, for example that of Rangavis.

Antigone (Sophocles):[157]

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
ὦ κοινὸν αὐτάδελφον Ἰσμήνης κάρα,
ἆρ᾽ οἶσθ᾽ ὅ τι Ζεὺς τῶν ἀπ᾽ Οἰδίπου κακῶν
ὁποῖον οὐχὶ νῷν ἔτι ζώσαιν τελεῖ;
οὐδὲν γὰρ οὔτ᾽ ἀλγεινὸν οὔτ᾽ ἄτης ἄτερ
οὔτ᾽ αἰσχρὸν οὔτ᾽ ἄτιμόν ἐσθ᾽, ὁποῖον οὐ
τῶν σῶν τε κἀμῶν οὐκ ὄπωπ᾽ ἐγὼ κακῶν.
καὶ νῦν τί τοῦτ᾽ αὖ φασι πανδήμῳ πόλει
κήρυγμα θεῖναι τὸν στρατηγὸν ἀρτίως;
ἔχεις τι κεἰσήκουσας; ἢ σε λανθάνει
πρὸς τοὺς φίλους στείχοντα τῶν ἐχθρῶν κακά;

[156] Dimitris Spathis, 'Ο Κωνσταντίνος Χρηστομάνος και η Καθιέρωση της Σκηνοθεσίας στο Νεοελληνικό Θέατρο', Proceedings of the Conference for the 130 Years since Christomanos' Birth *Ο Κωνσταντίνος Χρηστομάνος και η Εποχή του: 130 Χρόνια από τη Γέννηση του* (Athens, 1997).
[157] Sophocles, *Antigone*, 1-10.

as compared to *Antigone* (trans. Christomanos):[158]

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
Ἰσμήνη, ἀδελφοῦλα μου, ἐσύ ἀγαπημένο κεφαλάκι.
Ξέρεις νάμεινε ἀπ' τὸν Οἰδίποδα κακό
ποῦ νὰ μὴν ἔρριξεν ὁ Δίας ἐπάνω μας
ἐνόσῳ ζοῦμε.
Δὲν εἶναι πόνος, οὔτε χαλασμός, οὔτ' ἀτιμία, οὔτε ντροπή
ποῦ νὰ μην είδα ἐγώ μἔσ' τὲς δικές μου δυστυχίες καὶ στὲς δικές σου.
Καὶ τώρα πάλι, τί λένε πῶς διαλάλησε καινούργιο
σ' ὅλην τὴν πολιτεία ὁ στρατηγός;
Ἔμαθες τίποτα καὶ ἄκουσες;
ἤ δὲν μαντεύεις τὴ συμφορά ποῦ ἔρχεται ἀπό τοὺς ἐχθρούς,
σ' ἐκείνους π' ἀγαποῦμε;

Particular attention should be drawn to Christomanos' translation, being essentially in prose. We cannot say with certainty how far Christomanos was deliberately innovating here but we might assume that his translation, not only in demotic but also in prose, was an attempt on his part to bring in strategies he had learned in the German-speaking world. Bearing in mind the aforementioned attitude of the Greeks towards anything 'foreign', it does not come as a surprise that such innovations were not positively received, especially by the conservative intellectuals who assigned themselves the obligation of preserving the ancestral heritage.

Prior to *Antigone*, in 1901 Christomanos had translated and directed Euripides' *Alcestis* which received negative criticism, even by the supporters of the demotic; his *Antigone* was not well received either and it was ridiculed by the contemporary press who attacked the translator for his linguistic preferences.[159] The supporters of demotic criticised the translation in particular and the performance as a whole which led Christomanos to his isolation from the theatrical life of the city. His *Antigone* did not gain the success he was hoping for, but his translation, alongside the Georgios Sotiriades (1852-1942) *Oresteia* trilogy translation in demotic and its presentation by the *Vasilikon Theatron*, acted as initiating forces for the

[158] Sophocles, *Αντιγόνη*, trans. Constantine Christomanos (Athens: Γεώργιος Φέξης, 1912).
[159] Anonymous, 'Η Σφαγή της Αντιγόνης' , *Εστία*, 03 November 1903.

development of the *Oresteiaka* incidents in November 1903, only two weeks after the premiere of *Antigone*.

The *Oresteiaka* was a set of intense incidents which took place in Athens in November 1903, concerning the Language Question and the revival of ancient Greek drama.[160] The political dimension attributed to the translation of *Oresteia* which caused the *Oresteiaka*, played a significantly role in subsequent discussions regarding the political dimensions of the revivals of ancient Greek drama. The *Oresteia* performance by the *Vasilikon Theatron* in early November 1903 acted as a landmark as far as the revival of ancient Greek drama is concerned: it was the first performance of the trilogy of *Oresteia* presented on the modern Greek stage translated in Greek demotic. Also, the *Oresteiaka* incidents allowed some astonishing events for the history of theatre.[161] Throughout the history of modern Greek theatre, no similar incident or performance has ever been reported to have caused such extreme responses and casualties.[162] It is not a coincidence that Gonda Van Steen names this the most important performance in the history of modern Greek theatre as far as the revival of ancient Greek drama is concerned.[163]

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the *Vasilikon* was occupied by important and progressive figures of the time who did not share the same language preferences with the more traditional and conservative academics of the University of Athens: they were clearly more positive as far as the used of the demotic instead of *katharevousa* was concerned. It is worth noting that this progressive approach with regards to the language of the *Vasilikon* performances was approved by the Palace and the Royal Family who had previously expressed their preference towards the demotic. This is based on the fact that in 1896 the wife of King George I of Greece, Queen Olga Constantinovna of Russia, requested the translation of the

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[160] Mackridge, *Language and National Identity*..., pp.252-254.
[161] Rena Stavridi-Patrikiou, 'Παλαιές Ιδέες και Νέοι Φόβοι', in *Ευαγγελικά 1901 - Ορεστειακά 1903: Νεωτερικές Πιέσεις και Κοινωνικές Αντιστάσεις*, ed. Ourania Kaiafa (Athens: Σχολή Μωραΐτη - Εταιρία Σπουδών Νεοελληνικού Πολιτισμού και Γενικής Παιδείας, 2005), pp.13-24; Dimitris Spathis, 'Ο Σκηνοθέτης και η Παράσταση της Ορέστειας στο Βασιλικό Θέατρο', in *Ευαγγελικά 1901 - Ορεστειακά 1903: Νεωτερικές Πιέσεις και Κοινωνικές Αντιστάσεις*, ed. Ourania Kaiafa (Athens: Σχολή Μωραΐτη - Εταιρία Σπουδών Νεοελληνικού Πολιτισμού και Γενικής Παιδείας, 2005), p.229.
[162] Alexis Solomos, *Θεατρικό Λεξικό* (Athens: Κέδρος, 1989), p.280.
[163] Gonda Van Steen, 'You Unleash the Tempest...', pp.360-372.

Holy Gospel texts in demotic. The Archbishop of Athens Prokopios (1837-1902) warned the Queen that such an action should first get the approval of the Synod.[164] Both the Synod and the Theological Department of the university did not approve the translation. Queen Olga proceeded with the translation anyway, and ordered one thousand copies which were distributed in schools and hospitals, an act which was not positively received.[165]

Considering the recent events of the *Evangelika*[166] though, another set of riots in Athens on 8 November 1901 regarding the translation of the Holy Gospel in demotic[167], and the general sentiments of the time regarding the Language Question, the people within the *Vasilikon* held that the translation of the *Oresteia* should not be using merely the demotic, but instead a mixture of demotic with many *katharevousa* elements. This would allow a smooth introduction of translated ancient Greek texts, and by extension, the use of demotic for the rest of performances of ancient Greek drama.

According to the contemporary press it was not the performance as such which received the negative criticism; it was rather the translation. And even in that case, the translation did not receive negative criticism based on either a linguistic analysis of the text itself or a comparison with the original ancient Greek text. The attacks towards the *Vasilikon* and the translator were essentially based on personal preferences in a social and political context, rather than a linguistic context. Examples of criticism from prominent contemporary Athenian newspapers show the tendency towards a political interpretation which, in its substance, excludes the text itself from any critical discussions. It is worth noting here that the original texts

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[164] Vasilios Markides, 'Secularization and the Greek Orthodox Church in the Reign of King George I' in *Greek Society in the Making, 1863-1913: Realities Symbols, and Visions*, ed. Philip Carabott (Aldershot: Variorum, 1997), 179-198, pp.182-189.

[165] Spyridon Markezinis, *Πολιτική Ιστορία της Νεωτέρας Ελλάδος*, Vol.2 (Athens: Πάπυρος, 1966).

[166] For further information and discussions of the incidents of the *Evangelika*, see:
Phillip Carabbot, 'Politics, Orthodoxy and the Language Question in Greece: The Gospel Riots of November 1901', *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 3:1(1993), 117-138; Dimitrios Stamatopoulos, 'Τα Όρια της Μέσης Οδού: Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο και Γλωσσικό Ζήτημα στις Αρχές του 20ου αιώνα', proceedings of the 3rd International Conference of Modern Greek Studies (ENNS) *Ο Ελληνικός Κόσμος Ανάμεσα στην Εποχή του Διαφωτισμού και στον Εικοστό Αιώνα* (Bucharest, 2006).

[167] This was a different translation of the Holy Gospel than the one ordered by Queen Olga in 1896. It was published in the prominent newspaper *Acropolis* on 9 September 1901.

of the following newspaper articles are all in *katharevousa*, revealing both the linguistic preferences and the political stances of their authors.

In newspaper *Asty*:

> Unfortunately, this is not the time to examine the harmony of the verses but it is needless to say that the text was inferior. [...] The Vasiliko proved that they are considering working with translations whose language would upset Aeschylus himself.[168]

In newspaper *Astrapi*:

> The play was performed with great success. However, the translation which was a farrago of unintelligible, supposedly demotic words, words in *katharevousa* and ancient Greek words, destroyed the magnificence of the play.[169]

In newspaper *Kairoi*, the commentary refers to the *Oresteia* by the *Vasiliko* as well as *Antigone* by *Nea Skini*, both performances staged in the demotic.

> The recent performances of the *Oresteia* and *Antigone* have upset not only the intellectuals but rather the society in its whole. The timeless masterpieces of Greek philology were dragged onto the stage and they suffered a great deformation which caused the uncontrollable laughter of the audience. The boldness of the translators resulted in the spreading of indignation.[170]

And in newspaper *Proia*:

> The Language Question, a National matter, was raised again as a result of the *Oresteia* performance which used a couple of pretentious words [referring to the use of the demotic]. We have been informed about the above, as we have not watched the performance. This incident is not worth being used as a motive [for further conflict], but this incomprehensible mosaic of language should raise public opposition.[171]

It could be argued that the real motive of the *Oresteiaka* was to target the *Vasiliko* as well as the acceptance of demotic by the King and by extension the state. The tension was eventually unavoidable and the translation of Soteriades in demotic inevitably led to the events of the *Oresteiaka*. The events reveal the unpreparedness of at least a part of modern Greek society to accept such a progressive turn.

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[168] Kifissos, 'Η Πρώτη του Βασιλικού *Ορέστεια'*, *Άστυ*, 02 November 1903.
[169] Anonymous, Article title not available, *Αστραπή*, 02 November 1903.
[170] Anonymous, 'Η Ελληνική Γλώσσα', *Καιροί*, 05 November 1903.
[171] Anonymous, 'Ζήτημα Εθνικόν', *Πρωία*, 08 November 1903.

A key-role for the events of the *Oresteiaka* was played by Georgios Mistriotis who was held heavily responsible for the protest of the university students. From his position as an academic and educator, Mistriotis had the power to influence young people. From his position as a theatre director of ancient Greek drama, he held that he was creating a theatrical tradition. He was one of the supporters that ancient Greek drama was a matter of the university and the well-educated intellectuals. His linguistic preferences excluded the rural populations from his audience. His approaches were incomprehensible by the general population as he was using the original ancient Greek texts for his performances. Even though he realised the inability of the population to understand the original texts, he refused to use translations because he considered them a debasement of the original texts. As a consequence, he created an elitist circle of students and other intellectuals who solely supported his views as well as his performances. He held that the university and the academics should only be responsible for the revival of ancient Greek drama. As a result, he detested professional performances of ancient Greek plays. The translated trilogy of *Oresteia* infuriated him even more and led him to extreme actions. His extreme stance, in combination with a dogmatic connection to the past, prompted him to use any possible mean to protect and preserve the national pride, something which eventually led him and his supporters (his university students at large) to the events of the *Oresteiaka* on the night of 16 November 1903 when the participants of the protest clashed with the police. The result of this clash was one dead, many injured and even more arrested.[172]

One year later in 1904, Constantinos Manos (1869-1913) published his own translation of *Antigone* in demotic.

Antigone (Sophocles):

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ

[172] The primary sources of that period do not provide consistent information on the numbers of the injured or the arrested. The references to these details in modern Greek historical books are limited and epigrammatic.

Ἐλθοῦσα μέντοι κάρτ’ ἐν ἐλπίσιν τρέφω
φίλη μὲν ἥξειν πατρί, προσφιλὴς δὲ σοί,
μῆτερ, φίλη δὲ σοί, κασίγνητον κάρα· 900

Antigone (trans. Manos):[173]

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
Ανύπαντρη, άφιλη, άκλαυτη
στον τάφο με τραβούνε.
Τον ήλιο πια τα μάτια μου
Δε θα τον ξαναδούνε!
Κι εμέ κανένας φίλος μου
δε θα μοιρολογήσει.
Δάκρυ για με να χύσει
κανείς δε θα βρεθεί!

Manos' translation was evidently more liberal compared to Christomanos'; not only did he not maintain the rhythm of the original text, but he also translated into shorter verses which rhyme.[174] Manos' lyricizing strategy of translation was much on the lines of neo-balladry during that period, notable representative of which is eminent writer and poet Georgios Vyziinos (1849-1896). Regardless the innovations, his translation would remain one of the most renowned translations of the time as well as comprehensible by the wide Greek audience who was not familiar with either the complex ancient Greek language or the elitist *katharevousa*. It is not coincidental that because of its comprehensibility, Manos' translation would be repeatedly used for the staging of many performances in the years to follow. But the question which arises here is: was Manos' choice of demotic based on social consideration for the lower educated populations of Greece or was it a deeper, more deliberate political choice of a specific form of language? As Sideris argues,

> A good translation could not be built merely upon the deep knowledge of the translator as far as the two languages are concerned [ancient Greek and demotic], but rather upon the ideology of each translator. And

[173] Sophocles, *Αντιγόνη*, trans. Constantinos Manos (Athens: Μάισνες & Καργαδούρη, 1905).
[174] In the above section, the rhyming is 1-2-3-2 for the first four verses and 1-2-2-3 for the last four verses.

> during that period of time, the greater ideology was the establishment of demotic over *katharevousa*.[175]

As with many cases in the past, the linguistic or artistic value, analysis and discussion of this translation seemed to be of less significance, in comparison to the political resonance behind it. This is a phenomenon which would recur in subsequent translations and productions of *Antigone*. Both the texts and the performances would be repeatedly used as a platform for social and political conflicts.

In 1905, the First International Archaeology Conference was organised in Athens. Amongst other performances, Mistriotis and his company presented another *Antigone* which did not differ significantly from his previous performances: they used the original ancient Greek text, the music compositions by Sakellarides and a combined cast of amateur actors and university students. New amongst the participants was the president of the German School of Archaeology Panagiotis Kavadias who was also a member of Mistriotis' company and he was responsible for the general management of the performance.[176] The company performed the play at the *Panathinaiko Stadio* (Panathenian Stadium) in Athens between 28 March 1905 and 10 April 1905. Mistriotis gave a speech after the first performance which was attended by an audience of twelve thousand spectators who applauded the success of *Antigone*.[177] Throughout his speech, he verbally attacked the foreign (non-Greek) archaeologists in regards to their views on the revivals of ancient Greek drama, mentioning that they should not allow 'the corruption of the Greek *genos*, those who where the first to have created civilisation'.[178] During the last day of the conference, the French archaeologist Théodore Reinach (1860-1928) replied to the attacks of Mistriotis by giving him some suggestions on the Greek revivals of ancient Greek drama. His suggestions were supported by other philologists who participated in the conference. In general, the foreign participants supported the

[175] Giannis Sideris, 'Οι Αντάρτες του Νουμά Μεταφράζουν Τραγωδίες στη Δημοτική', *Θέατρο*, 31(1973), 47-56, p.54.
[176] Kavvadias was also the archaeologist responsible for the excavation of the ancient theatre of Epidaurus.
[177] Anonymous, 'Το Αρχαιολογικόν Συνέδριον, Η Αντιγόνη εις το Στάδιον, Αι Εργασίαι των Τμημάτων', *Νέον Άστυ*, 29 March 1905.
[178] Anonymous, 'Η Χθεσινή Παράσταση της Αντιγόνης εις το Στάδιον', *Εμπρός*, 30 March 1905.

idea that ancient Greek plays should be presented in translation and not in their original language, not only in Europe but in Greece as well.[179] This reinforced the position of the Greek supporters of demotic who insisted on the translation of the ancient texts for years. This production was the last attempt of Mistriotis to stage an *Antigone* performance. In the following years he gradually withdrew from the theatrical circles of Athens while the revival of ancient Greek drama was the academic to the professional theatrical sphere.

According to the archives of *Desmi*, the APGRD, the National Theatre Performance Archive and other scholarly sources, there were no new productions of *Antigone* between 1905 and 1910. The next set of performances covers the period between 1910 and 1916, all of which were produced by the theatrical company *Cybele*, owned by Cybele Andrianou (1887-1978).[180] Going by her first name only, Cybele was already a familiar face for the theatrical audience of Athens, as she held the role of Ismene in Christomanos' performance of 1903 at *Nea Skini*. In her production of *Antigone*, Cybele held the homonymous leading role. Surprisingly, she did not use the translation of her teacher and director Christomanos. Instead, she used the translation by Manos which was considered more 'theatrical' compared to Christomanos'. *Antigone* was a constant performance in the tour of the theatrical company throughout the whole six years which started from Smyrna and travelled all over Greece before it returned to Athens. During the tour, other theatrical plays were also performed by the company. Regardless the play that was performed, the programme notes of the company in those six years always had a photograph of Cybele dressed as Antigone, something which stressed the importance of the play amongst the rest of their repertoire.[181] In addition, Cybele's 'obsession' with *Antigone* is an early indication of what would later be a very frequent phenomenon in the history of Greek revivals: every great actress of the country would consider the role of Antigone a milestone for their career.

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[179] Anonymous, 'Το Αρχαιολογικόν Συνέδριον', *Νέον Άστυ*, 31 March 1905.
[180] Efi Vafiadi, 'Κυβέλη: Φαινόμενο Ηθοποιού σε Δεκάδες Διαφορετικούς Ρόλους', *Τα Νεα*, 10 December 1999.
[181] Sideris, *Το Αρχαίο Θέατρο…*, p.244.

Cybele received very positive criticism for its performances of *Antigone* as a whole, as did Cybele for her own acting performance in the role of Antigone in particular. The fact that no other company staged an *Antigone* for those six years left Cybele with no competition. Cybele's rival at the time, actress and theatrical company owner Marika Kotopouli (1887-1954), was staging other performances of ancient Greek drama at the time. The great success of Cybele's *Antigone* deterred Kotopouli from including the play in her own repertoire, at least for the time being. After the final performances of Cybele in 1916, *Antigone* remained off the Greek stage for the eight years following. The events of World War I (1914-1918) in combination with the events of the Greco-Turkish War (1919-1922) created an unstable political situation in Greece and consequently the arts and the theatre were not a priority during these years, neither for Greece in general, nor for the Athenian audience in particular.

In 1924, Kotopouli and her company made their *Antigone* début at one of the *Vasilikon Theatron* halls, even though Kotopouli was clearly supporting the revival of ancient Greek drama in outdoor ancient theatres. The performance was repeated in Athens in 1925 and Angeliki Kotsali replaced Kotopouli in the leading role of *Antigone*. In 1926 and before the company begun its tour around Greece, they gave another performance, at an outdoor theatre this time, the Odeon of Herodes *Atticus* with Kotopouli back in the leading role of Antigone. The performance saw unexpected success, both financial and artistic. The Athenian newspaper *Proia* reported that it was such a great production that they had it recorded at the Odeon.[182] However, such a recording does not survive in any archive. At the end of the tour, the performance returned to Athens for one last performance at the theatre of the company on 14 November 1926.

The translation of Manos in demotic was used for the purposes of all performances of Kotopouli. However, the language of revivals was not a hotly disputed matter now, at least not as much as it had been at the beginning of the century. The use of translated texts was gradually being established amongst most of the theatrical companies of Athens. The importance of Kotopouli's performance lies in the fact

[182] Anonymous, '*Αθηναϊκές Πεννιες*', *Πρωία*, 10 May 1926.

that it revealed a shift of interest from the language matter to the ownership of the ancient texts. The rising conflict was again political. However, it was not one which needed to be resolved between supporters of different forms of language. The conflict now needed to be resolved between those who supported that the ancient Greek plays are the ancestral heritage of modern Greeks and therefore they are the most suitable for the revivals and those who were progressively adopting foreign methods and elements while modernising ancient traditions. In an interview for the contemporary Athenian newspaper *Vradini*, Kotopouli raised the subject by mentioning that

> No other than the Greek actor can ever portray the ancient Greek soul on the stage […] And the foreign actors, no matter how artful they are, they never achieve to represent the ancient spirit.[183]

Claiming the ownership of their rightful heritage was a common sentiment amongst Greek intellectuals and artists of the time. It is during the same period when the representatives of the Generation of the 1930s were introducing European modernistic methods into their Greek literary and artistic culture. As a result, the 'safe keepers' of the ancient Greek heritage feared the 'bastardisation' of Greek tradition and fought the foreign threat with passion.

Numerous performances were produced in the following years, none of which contributed significantly to the development of the revivals. Interestingly, the majority of these performances were presented using the translation of Manos, as well as the musical compositions of Mendelssohn. The performances of the 1920s and the 1930s might have not been of great interest; however the matter of revival of ancient Greek drama was undergoing a very intense phase. Some of the events of the late 1920s were critical for the history of revivals since ever. In 1927, the American lecturer, choreographer and admirer of the ancient Greek civilisation Eva Palmer-Sikelianos (1874-1952) and her husband, the Greek poet and playwright Angelos Sikelianos (1884-1951), organised the Delphic Festivals using the ancient cite of Delphi for the first time in modern years. Another Festival was organised by the couple three years later in 1930. Anastasia Siopsi argues that

[183] Anonymous,'Η Μαρίκα Κοτοπούλη Ομιλεί προς την Βραδυνήν δια το Ελληνικόν Θέατρον', *Βραδυνή*, 30 October 1924.

> They visualised the Delphic Festivals as the primary factor for the implementation of the 'Delphic Idea', that is the bringing together of the whole humanity through the poetic *logos* as well as through the greater ancient Greek spirit, at the navel of Gaia [the earth], at Delphi. [184]

Fig. 1.1. Scene from the First Delphic Festival in 1927, organised by Angelos Sikelianos and Eva Palmer-Sikelianos at the ancient sites of Delphi.
Photographic material from The Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive (E.L.I.A.)

Many events were organised for the purposes of the festivals in the course of several days. Most importantly, both the festivals featured an ancient Greek play: for the festival of 1927 the couple presented Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* and for that of 1930, Aeschylus' *The Suppliants*.[185] Even though both Festivals were widely successful not only in Greece but in Europe as well, the Greek government of the time did not see the point of investing in the idea of the revival of the Delphic spirit. For the couple, the festivals were just the beginning of a greater dream, whereas for the Greek government the festivals were more of a tourist attraction. The

[184] Anastasia Siopsi, *Η Νεοελληνική Πολιτισμική Φυσιογνωμία μέσα από το Ρόλο της Μουσικής σε Αναβιώσεις του Αρχείου Δράματος* (Athens: Gutenberg, 2012), pp.58-59.
[185] Antonis Glytzouris, 'Resurrecting Ancient Bodies: The Tragic Chorus in *Prometheus Bound* and *Suppliant Women* at the Delphic Festivals in 1927 and 1930', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 27:12(2010), 2090-2120; Gonda Van Steen, 'The World's a Circular Stage: Aeschylean Tragedy through the Eyes of Eva Palmer-Sikelianou', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 8:3(2002), 375-393.

history of the Delphic Festivals of the Sikelianos couple ended in 1930. However, elements of their festivals would later on be used by the National Theatre for the organisation of the Epidaurus Festivals.[186] Also, the Delphic Festivals played a crucial role in the alteration of the earlier notions of music for ancient Greek drama as a background of complementary nature.[187] Ancient Greek drama was now viewed as a total artwork, and the role of music was significantly developed. Composers of the 1920s and 1930s held that the only way to approach composition for ancient drama as total artworks was through the revival, the 'reproduction', of ancient Greek music.[188] However, the lack of extant scores and information on the function of music in the original ancient Greek performances was a basic limitation for such a revival. As a result, several composers turned to what was perceived as musical continuity which was directly linked to the broader idea of Greek historical continuity between antiquity and modernity. The theories of musical continuity were frequently expressed in musicological as well as philological journals and newspapers of the 1930s. For example, Loris Margaritis (1895-1953) mentions that 'the pure Greek folk melodies can solve the problem of the music of ancient Greeks since they are undoubtedly related to them.'[189] In his work on early music, Fanis Michalopoulos (1901-1960) pays specific attention to tragedy and he suggests that there is a strong connection between ancient Greek music and Paleo-Byzantine chant.[190] Eva Palmer-Sikelianou played a crucial role in the first stages of the composition of music for the revivals of Greek dramas. Her concept of music first proposed in 1921, was based on an imagined cultural continuity of ancient Greek music, Byzantine chant and modern Greek music.[191] She claimed that in contemporary *demotic songs* the concept of *logos*, music and movement are

[186] Pantelis Michelakis, 'Theatre Festivals, Total works of Art, and the Revival of Greek Tragedy on the Modern Stage', *Cultural Critique*, 74(2010), 149-163.
[187] Fiona Macintosh, 'Tragedy in Performance: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Productions', in *The Cambridge companion to Greek tragedy,* ed. P. E. Easterling (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 284-323, p.305.
[188] Anastasia Siopsi, 'Aspects of the Modern Greek Culture Through Revivals of Ancient Greek Drama During The First Decades of the Twentieth Century 1900-1940', in the proceedings of the international conference *Greek Music for the Opera and Other Forms of the Performing Arts in the 20th Century* (Athens, 2009), pp.115-119.
[189] Loris Margaritis, 'Το Μουσικό Μέρος', *Μουσικά Χρόνια*, 9-10(1929), p.260.
[190] Fanis Michalopoulos, 'Το Μουσικό Συναίσθημα στην Πρωτόγονη Μορφή του', *Μουσικά Χρόνια,* 7-8(1928).
[191] Eva Palmer-Sikelianou, *Ωραία Ματαιοπονία: Τρεις Διαλέξεις* (Athens: Ελληνικά Γράμματα, 2005).

interrelated and she compared that to the ancient tradition where movement, music and poetry were taught simultaneously. According to Konstantinos Psachos (1866-1949) who worked with Palmer-Sikelianou for the Delphic Festivals, his music for ancient Greek drama

> Was composed according to all the ancient Greek modes, as well as to most of the ancient Greek rhythms. [...] I undertook this work as part of the Delphic Festivals in order to move towards a Greek direction.[192]

Perhaps the most significant aspect of Palmer's involvement in ancient Greek music was the reactions which were provoked and the discussions that followed the Delphic Festivals.

During the 1930s, a new era begun which was marked by the belated, compared to the European, Greek modernism, as well as the frequent revivals of ancient Greek drama during this period. Since the inception of the modern Greek state, Greece had struggled to forge a national identity, but during the 1930s the search of identity took rather diverse dimensions. Even though the concept of continuity dominated Greek intellectual thought for long, during the 1930s a new dialogue with the past began and the matter of Greekness, in relation to the present instead of the past, was at the centre. Greekness (or Hellenicity) was rarely directly referenced in the texts and literature of the 1930s, nevertheless it is attached to and marked by Greek Modernism and the so-called Generation of the 19030s (*Genia tou '30*). The search of identity by the Generation of the 1930s associated with a rupture with the past, moving from an archaeological approach of tradition to a modernist one. The imperative need to re-establish or reconsider national identity was related to the fact that Greece 'for the first time had defined borders, a homogenous population and more Greeks living within rather than outside the state's borders'.[193] Historians tend to relate the reorientation of views towards tradition and *Greekness* to the total collapse of the Great Idea, believing that it was

[192] Konstantinos Psachos, 'Η Μουσική στις Δελφικές Εορτές', *Επιθεώρησης Ηώς*, 198-102(1998), p.136.
[193] Papanikolaou, Dimitris, *Singing Poets: Literature and Popular Music in France and Greece* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association and Maney Publishing, 2007), p.68.

integral to propelling the Greek nation and the arts into an 'aesthetics of autonomy'.[194]

Great poets of that time, including Greek Nobel Laureates Odysseus Elytis (1911-1996) and George Seferis (1900-1071), Giannis Ritsos (1909-1990), Nikos Gatsos (1911-1992) and Andreas Embiricos (1901-1975), as well as renowned Greek writers such as Stratis Myrivilis (1890-1969), M. Karagatsis (1908-1960) and Giorgos Theotokas (1906-1966), were the first to introduce European methods of modernism and tried to incorporate them into the Greek tradition. They dismissed the old-fashioned methods of writing and introduced the modernistic forms and formulas in their work which they adjusted to their own Greek subject-matters. Hence, for the first time in Greece, the terms 'modern' and 'modernism' appeared and became some of the most problematic and ambiguous terms the Greek intellectual world would need to deal with.[195]

Even though the term *Generation of the 1930s* indicates a unified, monomorphous and age-defined group of intellectuals, it is worth noting that the term is until today used contractually to include a variety of artists who present significant diverges in their views as well as the forms and formulas of their writings. The hyperrealism of poets of the generation has proved problematic for generic classifications and thus academics have struggled with both the concepts of 'generation' as well as 'modernism'. According to Stathis Maras, the ideological and aesthetic diversion of different intellectuals who allegedly belong to the generation is problematic since what is usually perceived by the Greeks as the term Generation of the 1930s only applies to certain poets -and later on painters- whereas it has been arbitrarily used for a much wider range of intellectuals of the period.[196] Dimitris Tziovas, on the

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[194] Gregory Jusdanis, Belated *Modernity and Aesthetic Culture: Inventing National Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), p.78; Linos Politis, *Ιστορία της Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας*, (Athens: Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Εθνικής Τραπέζης, 1998), p.302.

[195] Dimitris Tziovas, 'Mapping out Greek Literary Moderning', in *Greek Modernism and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Peter Bien,* ed. Dimitris Tziovas(Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997), 25-42. See: Jusdanis, *Belated Modernity...;* Mario Vitti, *Η Γενιά του 30: Ιδεολογία και Μορφή* (Athens: Ερμής, 2000); Dimitris Tziovas, *Οι Μεταμορφώσεις του Εθνισμού και το Ιδεολόγημα της Ελληνικότητας στο Μεσοπόλεμο* (Athens: Εκδόσεις Οδυσσέας, 2006); Nikos Stabakis, *Surrealism in Greece: An Anthology* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 2008); Dimitris Tziovas, *Ο Μύθος της Γενιάς του Τριάντα: Νεοτερικότητα, Ελληνικότητα και Πολιτισμική Ιδεολογία* (Athens: Πόλις, 2011).

[196] Stathis Maras, *Η Ξένοιαστη Γενιά του 1930* (Athens: Εξάντας, 2006), pp. 32-39.

other hand, suggests that there has been an effort for a scientific and strict definition of the term which he does not fully accept, since a plethora of writers and poets would be left out. Thus it is more useful to accept a wider interpretation of the generation which played a significant role in its holistic subsequent establishment and created what he refers to as the 'myth' of the Generation of the 1930s.[197] It is not in the intentions of this work to closely examine the origins of the term or even its homogeneity. Thus, for the purposes of this thesis we will accept the latter, wider and polymorphous terminology of the Generation of the 1930s which subsequently allowed the inclusion of a wider variety of artists in its narratives.

According to Tziovas, the views regarding tradition prior the 1930s can be summarised in two main categories. The first, the symbolic or archaeological view, sought to bridge the chasm of the past and the present either symbolically through the revival of classical past as an idealised prototype, or through the reconstruction of the past by the purification of archaeological monuments or language. The second, the romantic view, managed to bring the present into the past through continuity, with the extensive use of folklore.[198] The predominance of a third, modernist approach towards tradition in the 1930s evoked a discussion on Greekness and its symbolic representation. According to Tziovas, the spiritualisation of tradition and the aestheticisation of Hellenism generated the question of Greekness for the modernists. It has also been suggested that the discussion on Greekness was a first effort by Greek intellectuals to bridge the chasm of a synchronic and diachronic approach towards the concept of nation. Influenced by the European movement of Modernity and the inherent refusal of European Modernism to accept the past and its cultural heritage[199], they attempted a shift

[197] Tziovas, *Ο Μύθος της Γενιάς...,* pp.50-54.
[198] Tziovas, *Ο Μύθος της Γενιάς...,* pp.295-299.
[199] Michael Leveson, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism*, ed. Michael Leveson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp.1-8.

from the past to the present as well as a reconstruction that involved a modern intercourse with history.[200]

The greatest achievement of this literature Generation was the dialogue it opened with the West. Being conscious of the duality of the Greek identity, the Generation of the 1930s tried to balance the rigid gap between the *Hellenic* and the *Romeic* view of Greece and present those two faces in a total harmony: the western, urban, cosmopolitan, synchronic, extrovert face and the more diachronic, introvert, even populist, one. There was an ideological dilemma which required the formation of a modern Greek cultural identity in an epoch when Europe was experiencing the crest of national competition. Paradoxically, from the 1930s onwards, Greekness meant internationalism and overcoming of borders for the Generation of the 1930s. This is one important disparity of the character of the Generation of the 1930s. Their injunction for ideas such as freedom, independence and personal liberty was at the same time characterised by a singular ethnocentricism that was retrospectively received as an ultimate ambivalence regarding the 'authentic' Greek in combination with the European elements that characterised it.[201]

Even though the term Generation of the 1930s chiefly refers to the literature movement, this period of time saw significant development and modernisation of other forms of art as well. The terms 'modern', 'modernism' and 'modernisation' entered the Greek intellectual circles and consequently all forms of art were inevitably influenced. This movement of modernisation though was not positively received by the conservative nationalists of the time. With this modernisation of Greek tradition, the conservatives feared the 'impurification' of their tradition and culture and they demanded the safekeeping and preservation of anything they considered originally ancient Greek and rightfully theirs.

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[200] Dimitris Tziovas, 'Reconfiguring the Past: Antiquity and Greekness', in *A Singular Antiquity: Archaeology and Hellenic Identity in Twentieth Century Greece*, ed. Dimitris Damaskos and Dimitris Plantzos (Athens: Mouseio Benaki, 2008), pp. 287-298.

[201] Nasos Vayenas, 'Hellenocentricism and the Literary Generation of the Thirties', in *Greek Modernism and Beyond*: *Essays in Honor of Peter Bien*, ed. Dimitris Tziovas (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997), 43-48.

Alongside the flourishing literature of the time, there is also an important development of theatre and the revival of ancient Greek drama. Intellectuals of this period, but not always necessarily those of the literary Generation of the 1930s, were now into two opposing groups, the 'conservatives' and the 'progressives'. As a consequence, we also have two distinct opposing groups of artists and intellectuals who worked in the theatre, and specifically the staging of ancient Greek drama. The conservatives treated ancient Greek drama as an ancestral legacy: it needed to be preserved in its original form, as this was the only way to reveal the truth of ancient Greece. On the opposite, the progressives held that in order to revive ancient Greek drama and make it comprehensible for contemporary audiences, they needed to modernise it and bring it closer to the modern Greek culture and tradition. Intellectuals from both the conservative and the progressive side were now trying to resolve the matter with an intense interest in the field of ancient Greek drama.

Before moving on to the examination of the performances of the 1940s onwards, it is worth making an interesting but at the same time obscure observation. During the period of time covering the years between 1863 (the first Greek revival of *Antigone* in Constantinople) and the 1930s, *Antigone* has been constantly at the centre of attention: various performances by professional theatrical companies within as well as outside Greece, performances by groups of amateur actors or university students, semi-professional performances combining amateur and professional cast, presentations and lectures, and national celebratory events. However, and as this research is going to reveal hereafter, there is a dramatic change of the theatrical scene of the time with the reopening of the *Vasilikon Theatron* in 1932, under the new name of *Ethniko Theatro* (National Theatre). Since then, the most significant performances of *Antigone* have been produced solely by the National Theatre, with few exceptions among professional productions.

The fact that the matter of revivals was now developing into a conflict between national and non-national, Greek and foreign, automatically allowed the National Theatre to take the sole responsibility of preservation and presentation of ancient Greek drama on the modern stage. There was a huge propagation from the inside, which cultivated the idea that as a national theatre, the *Ethniko* was not only

responsible for the revivals but also the most appropriate and equipped carrier of the ancient Greek spirit from antiquity to modern times.[202] Especially during the years between 1940 and 1974, the National Theatre staged some of its most renowned performances of *Antigone* with many repeat performances and tours within as well as outside Greece, all of which will be closely examined in the following chapter. During the same course of time, there are only four productions of *Antigone* by professional theatrical companies other than the national theatre and no more than five amateur or student performances, majority of which were not even presented in Athens.

[202] See Introduction, Part 2.

Part 4: The First *Antigone* of the Greek National Theatre 1940

The *Vasilikon Theatron* (Royal Theatre) was founded in 1900. In 1908, after only seven years of operation, it was closed down by the state, mainly due to financial difficulties.[203] It re-opened twenty two years later in 1930 under a new name, the *Ethniko Theatro* (National Theatre), although the name *Vasilikon* was not completely eliminated and was still in partial use approximately until the 1940s.[204] During the theatre's period of closure, Greece did not have an official state theatre. Nevertheless, throughout these years, many theatre professionals were active and they later formed a generation of bright and talented artists who operated at the re-opened National Theatre in 1932. The re-opening of the National Theatre coincided with the years of Greek modernism. This was very significant and definitely not coincidental. The flourishing arts, including poetry, literature and painting, during this period, also saw important developments in drama, and especially the revival of ancient Greek plays. Considering the proliferation of strong nationalistic feelings throughout the twentieth century, it seems almost inevitable that the Greek artistic circles, active mostly in Athens, dealt with ancient Greek plays and regarded them as their rightful legacy.

The representatives of the Generation of the 1930s, academics and intellectuals, introduced 'modernist' ideas to all forms of Greek art. Poets, painters and writers of the time were adopting European elements of modernism and they were incorporating those elements into the Greek contemporary tradition. The theatre professionals grasped that movement and tried to adapt these modernist elements into their art. However, the term 'modernist' -even the term 'modern'- has always been problematic for the Greek intellectuals who were specifically concerned with

[203] Antonis Glytzouris, 'Η Δημιουργία Θέσης Σκηνοθέτη στο *Βασιλικόν Θέατρον', Μνήμων*, 18(1996), 61-88.
[204] Thodoros Grammatas, *Το Ελληνικό Θέατρο στον 20ο αιώνα: Πολιτιστικά Πρότυπα και Πρωτότυπα* (Athens: Εξάντας, 2002), pp.237-243; Vasilis Fotopoulos, *100 Χρόνια Εθνικό Θέατρο* (Athens: Ίδρυμα Λάτση, 2000).

the staging of ancient Greek plays. On the one hand, they felt the need to preserve their ancestral 'heritage'. On the other, they could not ignore the move of all other forms of art towards 'modernity'. These conflicting forces generated long arguments over what 'modern' was, should or could be.[205]

The National Theatre was the one of the first theatrical companies in modern Greece to produce professional performances of ancient Greek plays. In the official programme notes of those first performances, the representatives of the National Theatre state their views and aims explicitly. Their objective was to revive ancient Greek plays for a contemporary audience. It was their conviction that these plays should not remain locked up in libraries and museums but belonged on stage. The authors of these early programme notes wanted the truth of the ancient Greek poets speak to contemporary Greek audiences. In theory, the National Theatre, and its professionals understood at an early stage that the revival of ancient Greek drama required modern, contemporary settings. They acknowledged that 'modern' theatrical elements and methods needed to take the place of the supposed original elements and methods used in ancient Greece. As the study of the National Theatre performances hereafter reveals, in practice, when it came to the staging of modern adaptations for contemporary audiences, 'modern' turned out to be a hotly disputed term.

According to its own performance archives, the first revival of an ancient Greek play at the National Theatre took place the year after the re-opening of the company, in 1933. Not surprisingly, the first play to be revived was Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*. The choice of *Oedipus Rex* presumably has to do with the reputation of the play through Aristotle's *Poetics*. It could also have to do with the reputation that the play gained through Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* (1899) and the famous Oedipus complex. Other plays, including Aeschylus' *The Persians* and *The Cyclops* in a united performance in 1934, Sophocles' *Electra* in 1936, Euripides' *Hippolytus* in 1937 and

[205] The term 'modernist' refers to modernism; the term 'modern' refers to new, contemporary methods which do not necessarily reflect on the movement of modernism. However, the Greek word 'μοντέρνο' has often been used by scholars, intellectuals and artists to describe both 'modernist' and 'modern'.

The Persians again in 1939, followed in the next seven years but *Antigone* only made her depute in 1940.[206] The coming of World War II does not seem to have affected the National Theatre productions, at least until 1939. However, we do have very limited sources and materials regarding those early performances, including the *Antigone* of 1940. Considering the ongoing events of World War II, it comes as no surprise that even the sources from the official press archives of the country are extremely scarce.[207] In contrast, subsequent performances in the early National Theatre are much better documented. There is a considerable amount of primary sources that will contribute to the analysis and understanding of the socio-political nature of the performances.

The first *Antigone* of the National Theatre was directed by Takis Mouzenides (1909-1981)[208] who used a different translation than that of Manos which was widely used during the first three decades of the twentieth century. The new translation in demotic was by Ioannis Gryparis (1870-1942) who at the time was the General Director of the National Theatre.[209] Gryparis' translations of ancient Greek drama are, to this day, amongst the most commonly used. His translation of *Antigone* has been repeatedly used in later performances by the National Theatre, by other theatrical companies, in secondary and high school curriculums, and in universities for the teaching of the Sophoclean tragedy. It is not a coincidence that Gryparis' translation has probably been the most famous and widely used translation in the history of modern Greek revivals. As we learn from Kakridis in *Meletes kai Arthra*, Gryparis worked for more than fifty years in order to revive the ancient Greeks in the modern language. Thus, he was considered by his contemporaries (and beyond) not a translator of opportunity or necessity like many others of his time; he was rather considered the scholar who translated out of pure love for both the ancient Greek past and the modern Greek present. He was also considered amongst the

[206]Katerina Arvaniti, *Η Αρχαία Ελληνική Τραγωδία στο Εθνικό Θέατρο: Θωμάς Οικοόμου,Φώτος Πολίτης, Δημήτρης Ροντήρης,* Vol.1 (Athens: Νεφέλη, 2010), pp.199-235.

[207] The National Theatre archives, as well as other Ancient Greek drama archives, and the official press archives do not provide any materials on these performances, apart from basic archival information.

[208] Ioannis Passas, 'Τάκης Μουζενίδης', in *Νεότερο Εγκυκλοπαιδικό Λεξικό*, Vol.13 (Athens: Εκδόσεις Ηλίου, 1960).

[209] Giorgos Valetas, *Ιωάννης Γρυπάρης, Ο Πρώτος Μετασολωμικός: Βίος - Έργο - Εποχή* (Athens: Εκδόσεις Πηγής, 1971).

very few Greek translators who really grasped the enormity of the responsibility that a translation carries, not only as far as the classical past was concerned, but also as far as the modern Greek nation was concerned.[210] As I have mentioned above, it is not in the purposes of this thesis to discuss in linguistic terms the specifics of Gryparis' translation, neither in comparison with the original ancient text, nor in comparison with any previous or later translation. However, a closer look into the translation style of Gryparis might give us some insights as to why his translations came to be considered faithful to the original, and therefore respectful and protective of a national heritage. All his translations in general, including *Antigone* in particular, are lyrical, strongly rhythmical, and maintains much of the richness of the ancient text. His language is strong, firm and muscular, particularly at the epic parts of tragedy, but at the same time maintains plasticity and elegance, especially at the dialogue parts of the play. He successfully translates complex adjectives, poetic words, even metaphors and images. We cannot say with certainty whether directors and producers preferred Gryparis' translation based on these linguistic and aesthetic criteria or rather based on the reception and interpretation of his work in the context of the national which he was thought to have preserved. Kakridis goes as fas as to claim that all subsequent translators will attempt to exceed Gryparis, but this will not be possible, because Gryparis' translations were so influential to the point that every other translator would inevitably have to go through Gryparis and his translations first.[211] Last, Gryparis' decision to use demotic rather than *katharevousa* but still remain loyal and respectful to the original text, reinforced the view that the modern Greek language does not require any 'cleaning' and was capable of adequately capturing the richness of the classical language.

Antigone (Sophocles):[212]

Ὦ κοινὸν αὐτάδελφον Ἰσμήνης κάρα,
ἆρ’ οἶσθ’ ὅ τι Ζεὺς τῶν ἀπ’ Οἰδίπου κακῶν
ὁποῖον οὐχὶ νῷν ἔτι ζώσαιν τελεῖ;
Οὐδὲν γὰρ οὔτ’ ἀλγεινὸν οὔτ’ ἄτης ἄτερ
οὔτ’ αἰσχρὸν οὔτ’ ἄτιμόν ἐσθ’, ὁποῖον οὐ 5

[210] Kakridis, *Meletes kai Arthra...*, p. 176.
[211] Kakridis, *Meletes kai Arthra...*, p. 197.
[212] Sophocles, *Antigone*, 1-10.

τῶν σῶν τε κἀμῶν οὐκ ὄπωπ’ ἐγὼ κακῶν.
Καὶ νῦν τί τοῦτ’ αὖ φασι πανδήμῳ πόλει
κήρυγμα θεῖναι τὸν στρατηγὸν ἀρτίως;
Ἔχεις τι κεἰσήκουσας; ἦ σε λανθάνει
πρὸς τοὺς φίλους στείχοντα τῶν ἐχθρῶν κακά;

as compared to Antigone (trans. Gryparis) in demotic:[213]

Ω αγαπημένη αυταδερφή μου Ισμήνη,
ξέρεις ποιο τάχ' απ' τα κακά, που ο Οιδίπους
μας άφησε κληρονομιά, να μένη
που ο Δίας να μην το 'στειλε στις δυο μας
που είμαστε ακόμα στη ζωή; Γιατί
κανένα πόνο και καμιά κατάρα,
καμιά ντροπή κι ούτε καμιά ατιμία
δεν είδα εγώ να λείψη απ' τις δικές σου
κι απ' τις δικές μου συφορές. Και τώρα
τί 'ναι αυτή πάλι η προσταγή, που λένε
πως ότι και διαλάλησε στη χώρα
και σ' όλους τους πολίτες ο άρχοντάς μας;
Ξέρεις κι άκουσες τίποτα; ή δεν έχεις
είδηση πάρη πως κακό ετοιμάζουν
για τους αγαπημένους μας οι εχθροί μας;

Beyond the language argument, the use of Gryparis' modern Greek text by the National Theatre is important with regard to the staging of ancient Greek plays. Earlier we observed that many intellectuals and artists of that time who had worked for the National Theatre held conservative cultural perspectives. By using a fresh modern Greek text instead of the repeatedly used translations of the past, the National Theatre seemed to understand the modernist tendency of the epoch as well as the expectations of a contemporary audience. However, it seems that the nationalistic feelings which had been cultivated among the intellectual circles during the beginning of the twentieth century did not allow the artists in the National Theatre to fully comprehend and successfully interpret any modernist elements or formulas. The characterisation of 'modernisation' for this performance rested on the sole fact that it used the new translation by Gryparis, when the performance as such does not necessarily carry any particular modernist elements.

[213] Ioannis Gryparis, *Οι Τραγωδίες του Σοφοκλέους* (Athens: Εστία, 1987).

The rest of the elements of this first *Antigone,* including the costumes, the music and the set design, were, as we are going to see shortly after, old-fashioned and only portrayed a form of art distant and alien for the contemporary Athenian audience. Earlier we observed that from the liberation from Ottoman rule onwards, the intellectual circles in Athens were occupied in intensive efforts to define national identity. However, ordinary Athenians as well as rural populations in Greece were, by and large, rarely a part of this pursuit. The majority of the population was concerned with more pragmatic and practical problems. For these people the staging of *Antigone* and other ancient Greek plays was not a priority. The National Theatre was well aware of this fact. The 1940 production reveals that the National Theatre made an honest attempt to revive the play for a wider audience. However, the events of the war did not leave the National Theatre unaffected; there was still much work to be done for the introduction of new, modern elements and formulas in the productions after the war.

When the *Vasilikon Theatron* re-opened under the name *Ethniko Theatro* in the early 1930s, the name *Vasilikon* remained and was still used in programme notes and in the press -as indeed was the case in the notes to the first production of *Antigone*.[214] These programme notes only include the name of the play, the names of the actors and their roles and a short analysis of the Prologue, the five Episodes and the Exit Scene. The success of the first series of performances in September of 1940 paved the way for another series of performances in the summer of 1941. In the notes from the second series the name of the company changed and was now given as *Ethnikon Theatron*. The text of the analysis now appeared in three languages, Greek, German and Italian which was only expected considering the fact that Greece was occupied by the Axis by the summer of 1941. This text explains some of the basics of *Antigone*: the structure of the play through the major events as well as some general information on the content of the play. The notes make no attempt to analyse the play in more general, philosophical, political or poetic terms or to link it to the long tradition of interpretation of *Antigone* in other European

[214] The use of the name *Vasilikon Theatron*, even after the re-opening of the company with official name the *Ethnikon Theatron*. See n.63 and 64.

countries such as Germany, England, France and Italy. References to such traditions would only be introduced decades later onto the theatrical stages in Greece. Despite the observation that the notes text included German and Italian due to the ongoing events of the World War, the National Theatre recognised early on that ancient Greek drama had wide resonance and the staging of ancient Greek drama was a matter of great interest for the rest of Europe.[215] Whether practitioners in the Theatre believed that the rest of Europe had the same 'rights' over ancient Greek drama as the Greeks had, is a different matter which I will consider further below as I discuss subsequent performances.

In regards to the staging of ancient Greek plays, the National Theatre always insisted on open-air performances, as practised in antiquity and as attested, of course, by some of the archaeological remains of theatres (or the Roman theatres built on the original sites) that survive today.[216] Both series of performances of this first *Antigone* production were presented at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus, in Athens.[217] Open-air theatres provide many advantages: good acoustics, the surrounding landscape vistas and the high visibility of steep natural stepped inclines. However, productions in ancient open-air amphitheatres also linked the modern performance to its ancient roots and classical ancestry and imposed an obligation of preserving ancient Greek plays in their 'original' context.[218]

This performance of *Antigone* was not, by any means, an attempt to extract the original play and reposition it in the modern world. On the contrary, it only made references to a world distant and alien to the contemporary audience. The sparse photographic record from the 1940 performance seems to support the idea of a strong affinity to its ancient sources. The mise-en-scène was minimalist and relied

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[215] Oscar Brocket, 'The Greek National Theatre's Staging of Ancient Greek Drama', *Educational Theatre Journal*, 9:4(1957), 280-286.

[216] Wiles, *Greek Theatre Performance*..., pp.89-127; Nikos Vrisimtzis, *Greek Temples and Theatres: A Look at Ancient Greek Religion, Art and Architecture* (S. Nanos, 1994); Richard *Leacroft, Helen Leacroft, Theatre and Playhouse: An Illustrated Survey of Theatre Building from Ancient Greece to the Present Day* (London: Methuen, 1984).

[217] Lambert Surhone, Mariam Tennoe and Susan Henssonow, *Odeon of Herodes Atticus* (Saarbrücken: VDM Publishing, 2010).

[218] Eleftheria Ioannidou, 'Towards a National *Heterotopia*: Ancient Theatres and the Cultural Politics of Performing Ancient Drama in Modern Greece', *Comparative Drama*, 44:4(2010)/45:1(2011), 385-403, pp.336-337.

exclusively on the natural setting of the amphitheatre with the addition of a wooden floor - presumably in reference to ancient Greece. The costumes for the performance were designed by the renowned Greek costume designer Antonis Fokas (1889-1986).[219] Like other aspects of the production, they were an attempt at archaeological reconstruction based on what we assume to be ancient Greek garments, according to the research of archaeologists on clothing and military costumes in ancient Greece.[220] As observed in the photographic records of the performance, the ancient-like garments were supplemented by various objects which seemed to offer little to the interpretation of the play apart from associate to ancient Greece: canes and bay-leaf garlands for the old men chorus, shields for the soldiers and the guardians and a long wooden stick for the Sentry. However, it is worth mentioning here that Fokas' costume for the role of Antigone was considered a masterpiece at the time and would become the centre of attention a few years later during a subsequent *Antigone* production by the *Ethniko*.

[219] Antonis Glytzouris, 'Εύα Πάλμερ-Σικελιανού και Αντώνης Φωκάς: Η Κοσμική Ερασιτεχνία, ο Αισθητισμός και οι Απαρχές της Ενδυματολογίας στο Νεοελληνικό Θέατρο', *Ελληνική Σκηνογραφία-Ενδυματολογία*, σσ. 128-142.

[220] Linda Jones Roccos, *Ancient Greek Costume: An Annotated Bibliography, 1784-2005* (London: McFarland, c2006); Liza Cleland, Glenys Davies, Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, *Greek and Roman Dress from A to Z* (London: Routledge, 2007).

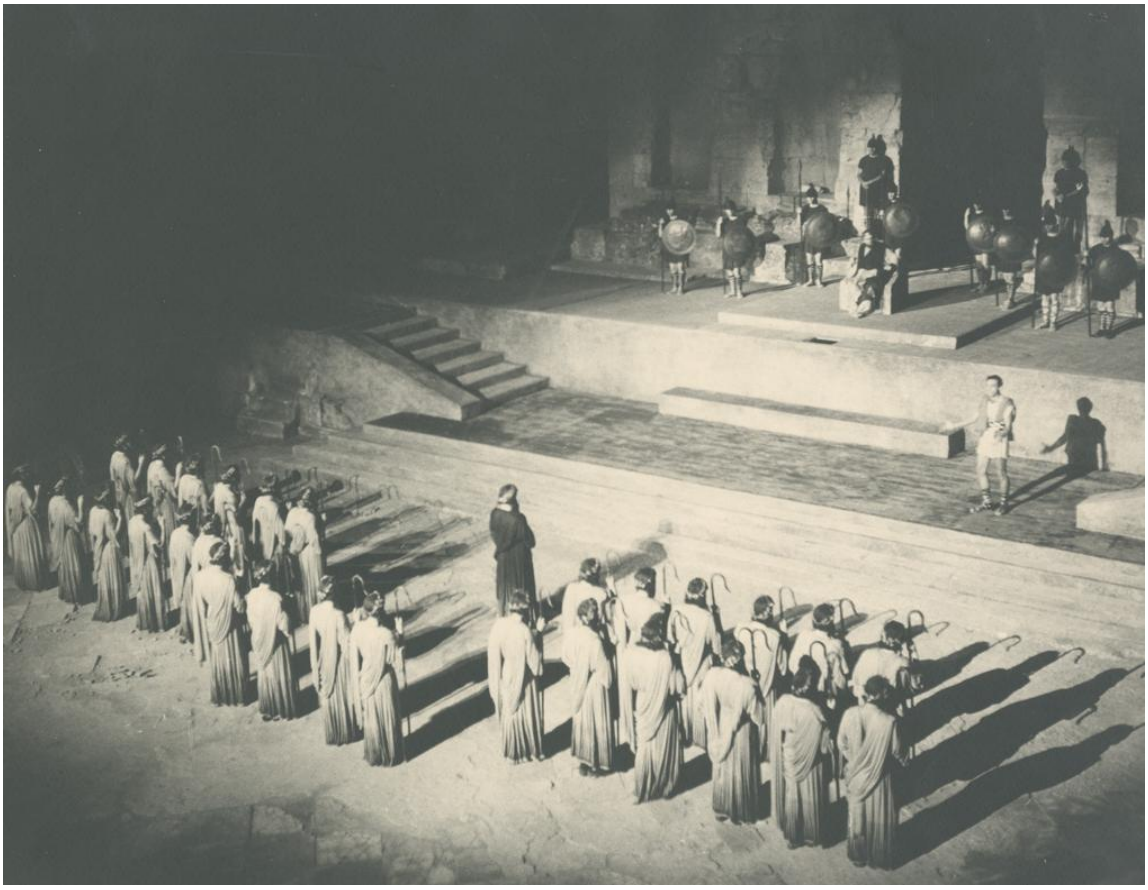

Fig. 1.2. Overview of the National Theatre *Antigone* performance in 1940 at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus in Athens.
Performance archive of the Greek National Theatre

Last but not least, the performance was accompanied by music composed especially for this production by Georgios Ponirides (1887-1982).[221] Ponirides worked for the National Theatre and held conservative views with regard to the modernisation of monophonic music and its transfer into polyphonic formats, and especially with regard to the alteration of Byzantine music from monophonic to quadraphonic.[222] These views are clearly reflected in his compositions for the *Antigone* production of 1940. No recordings of the original musical performance survive – actually we have no information on whether any recordings were made in the first place. However, Ponirides's scores are preserved in an excellent condition in the archives of the National Theatre. He used monophonic melodies in the Dorian and Phrygian modes, echoing contemporary scholarly assumptions about

[221] Takis Kalogeropoulos, 'Πονηρίδης Γεώργιος', in *Το Λεξικό της Ελληνικής Μουσική,* Vol.5 (Athens: Γιαλλέλης, 1998), 146-148
[222] Georgios Ponirides, 'Η Ελληνική πολυφωνική μουσική', *Νέα Εστία,* 26(1939), 925-927.

ancient Greek music.[223] As a conservative, Ponirides insisted on the monophonic music system and the ancient Greek rhythms in order to preserve what he considered the original music of Greek antiquity. Even though the musical compositions are significantly different from those of Sakellarides for the performance of Mistriotis, the two of them shared the same view: they both desired the preservation of what they assumed to be the authentic Greek spirit with references to the ancient Greek roots based on historical continuity.

With its approach to its first *Antigone*, the National Theatre initiated the beginning of a long theatrical tradition, the tradition of the National Theatre school. The vast majority of subsequent performances of *Antigone* of the National Theatre, and beyond, would be received and interpreted 'in accordance with', 'similarly to' or 'in contrast with' what the national theatre had set as the authentic revival of ancient Greek drama.

As Chapter One comes to an end, we need to be reminded of the reasons why all the above mentioned different kinds of first *Antigone* performances were of great significance, not only for the period when they were produced but also for the period which followed. The first *Antigone* in Constantinople in 1863 showed the desire of the Greeks to cut all bonds with the East, as well as to create new bonds with the West. The use of the text in translation, the Italian contributors, even the approach of the production, all indicated a Western tradition. The Greeks of Constantinople wanted to establish themselves amongst the rest of the Europeans. In the heart of Constantinople, they claimed their Greekness by staging one of the works of their ancestors, but at the same time, they positioned this Greekness facing towards the West instead of the East.

At the same time in Greece, the pursuit of a distinct national identity was at its peak. In that process, the references to the ancestral heritage were repeated and

[223] See: Solon Michaelides, *The music of Ancient Greece: An Encyclopaedia* (London: Faber, 1978); Martin Litchfield West, *Ancient Greek Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Warren Anderson, *Music and Musicians in Ancient Greece* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1994); Stefan Hagel, *Ancient Greek Music: A New Technical History (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, c2010).

consequently the ancient Greek plays were 'used' as a reminder of the authentic Greek spirit. Similarly to the Constantinople performance, and in accordance with the folklore studies of the time which invested efforts in discarding all Eastern elements, the first productions of *Antigone* in Greece were celebrating the authentic ancient Greek spirit. In contrast to the Constantinople production though, the productions in Greece took their distance and showed their opposition to European approaches as well. To cut bonds with the East was only one aspect of the complicated matter of revivals. To determine what kind of bonds they desired as far as Europe was concerned, would turn out to be another problematic aspect which would haunt the Greek revivals for many years to come. The complex relationship with the Greek past and its re-imagination and re-invention in the present as part of the ongoing process of the definition of a modern national identity would remain problematic throughout the whole twentieth century, especially as far as the revivals are concerned.

Chapter Two

Antigone on the *Metapolemiki* (Post-war) Stage 1945-1974

The examination of revivals of *Antigone* during the period between the second half of the nineteenth century until the beginning of the fifth decade of the twentieth century which has been covered in Chapter One, has set the basis on which all subsequent interpretations of the play should be examined. Even though one of the primary conflicts of the revivals during the period already examined was strictly connected to language, it is already obvious that this conflict did not usually deal with the text of *Antigone* per se. For many decades, the problem of translation had led the Greek intellectuals, artists and academics to conflicts, however almost none of the studies, analyses or critiques of the time has dealt with the actual text. Even though there are sporadic discussions about translators, such as Kakridis' on Gryparis which I metioned in the Introduction and later in greater detail in Chapter One, there is not any academic discussion specifically on the various modern Greek translations of *Antigone*. There are no comparative works between the original Sophoclean text and the translations, as there are no comparative works between the different translations themselves, a problem which I have attempted to address in the previous chapters, as well as the chapters to follow. What we are faced with is a conflict rising from *Antigone*, both the text (original and translations) and the performances, but in the process of reception and interpretation, *Antigone* is somehow lost, or at least neglected. In a way, *Antigone* has been used as a platform for the formation, development, promotion or imposition of different and usually opposing social, ideological and political agendas.

As a play with much to offer a divided society, *Antigone* has been repeatedly used in many different ways in order to promote political stances, political agendas and political ideologies of the people involved, sometimes directly and other times concealed. In his *States of Ireland,* first published in 1972[224], Conor Cruise O'Brien characteristically mentions that Antigone's action was one of non-violent civil disobedience but the consequences of her non-violent action emerge in acts of violence. There is an interesting analogy drawn here: in the case of the modern Greek revivals, *Antigone* has repeatedly been used with, at least seemingly, non-political intentions, but somewhere in the process of production making and during

[224] Conor Cruise O'Brien, *States of Ireland* (London: Faber & Faber, 2015).

the performances, *Antigone* was turned into a powerful, even violent, political statement.

As we have seen in both the Introduction and Chapter One, the conflicts of *Antigone* have frequently found justification in opposing sides of artists and academics, conservatives and progressives, etc. However, the conflict between Left and Right as distinct political stands or movements only made its appearance during the 1930s. The rise of polarisation between Right and Left finds its roots during 1936 and 1941 under the Dictatorship of Ioannis Metaxas(1871-1941), a controversial political figure in the history of modern Greece, seen as a dictator on the one hand and as a patriot and saviour of the country on the other.[225] It is during this period when the sentiments of demonization of the Left had started to be cultivated amongst the country, sentiments which would eventually be cultivated amongst artistic circles and reflect on the revivals of ancient Greek drama. Referring to the development of this polarisation between the Left and the Right, and eventually the marginalisation of the Left, Neni Panourgia argues that to examine the history of this period means to tell a story:

> [This] story is one of abjection, of multiple abjections, of miasmas, danger and dehumanization. It is the story of the Greek Left, or rather of the Greek Leftist as a paradigmatic figure of abjection. Or, rather, of how the Greek Left has been constituted by the Greek state. It is the history and the story of how a zone of danger was instituted in the early years of the twentieth century and how it was both populated and inhabited by what came to be construed, understood, conjured up as "the Left".[226]

As opposed to the conservative Right which held the responsibility of the preservation of Hellenism through patriotism, the Greek Left had been since then charged with the accusation of endangering the Nation. The cultivation of this danger of the Left, would eventually lead to the events of the Greek Civil War (1945-1949) shortly after the end of WWII and would also create the frame for the subsequent treatment of the Left during the second half of the twentieth century.

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[225] Marina Petrakis, *The Metaxas Myth: Dictatorship and Propaganda in Greece* (London: Tauris, 2006); Mogens Pelt, 'The Establishment and Development of the Metaxas Dictatorship in the Context of Fascism and Nazism 1936-41', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions,* 2:3(2001), 143–172.

[226] Neni Panourgia, *Dangerous Citizens: The Greek Left and the Terror of the State* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), p.xxiii.

> [The] Civil War and the anti-communist witch-hunt until 1974 legitimated semi-institutionalised mechanism of repression, provided a pretext for the advent of the colonels in April 1967, and can even be held responsible for the deep polarization between Left and Right in the post-authoritarian period. Clearly the communist defeat in the Civil War ensured that Greece remained part of the Western system laying the groundwork for its post-war economic development and its post-1974 democratization and Europeanization. However, the social cost to be paid for that was particularly high.[227]

The period covered in this chapter is the so-called *Metapolemiki Periodos* (Post-war Period) which refers to the years between the end of World War II the fall of the Military Dictatorship in 1974. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Greece was constantly undergoing unstable political situations and wars: the Balkan Wars in 1912, World War I between 1914 and 1918, the Greco-Turkish war between 1919 and 1922 and World War II between 1940 and 1944. After the end of World War II and the withdrawal of the German army from Greece, the exiled British-backed Greek government returned to Athens, and during this period which is characterised as a period after war, yet another war begun in Greece, the Civil War.[228]

The major resistance group during WWII *Ethniko Apeleftherotiko Metopo* (National Liberation Front), led by communist Ares Velouchiotis (1905-1945), was mainly supported by the *Kommounistiko Komma Ellados* (Greek Communist Party) and the *Ellinikos Laikos Apeleftherotikos Stratos* (Greek People's Liberation Army).[229] All the above groups had major control over most of the country not only during WWII but also after the end of the war. This situation caused tension between the groups and the government which led to the *Dekemvriana* (December Incidents), a series of

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[227] Nicos Mouzelis, George Pagoulatos, 'Civil Society and Citizenship in Post-war Greece', in *Citizenship and the Nation-state in Greece and Turkey*, ed. Faruk Birtek and Thalia Dragonas (London: Routledge, 2005), 87-103, p.89. On the anti-communist propaganda after the Civil War, see: Alexander Kazamias, 'Antiquity as a Cold War Propaganda: The Political Uses of the Classical Past in Post-Civil War Greece', in *Re-imagining the Past: Antiquity and Modern Greek Culture*, ed. Dimitris Tziovas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 128-144.

[228] Philip Carabott and Thanasis Sfikas, eds, *The Greek Civil War: Essays on a Conflict of Exceptionalism and Silences* (London: Ashgate, 2004).

[229] John Iatrides, 'The Doomed Revolution: Communist Insurgency in Postwar Greece', in *Stopping the Killing: How Civil Wars End*, ed. Roy Licklider (New York: New York University Press, 1993), pp.205-234.

clashes between the left wing protesters and the British Army supported by the Greek government, from 3 December 1944 until 22 January 1945. The account of the events reported more than twenty eight dead and one hundred forty eight injured amongst two hundred thousand protestors in the city centre of Athens which led to the resignation of the government of Giorgos Papandreou (1888-1968) in 1945.[230] The Greek Civil war lasted for four years, from 1944 until 1949. It cost the lives of more than one hundred thousand people, as well as more than twenty five thousand people to forced or voluntary exile and it left the country in a terrible financial exhaustion. The Greek governments which followed the Civil War were, in their vast majority, led by right wing, or at best centre-right, Prime Ministers.

It is under the lights of the above events as well as the demonization of the Greek Left that the performances of *Antigone* will be examined in this chapter. The resulting polarisation between the Right and the Left would be repeatedly used as artistic interpretational tool for different kinds of art, but especially of the revivals of ancient Greek drama. In this process, the use of the Hellenic past and the bonds with the glorious ancestors would be an asset and a weapon in the hands of the patriotic Right against the threatening miasma of the Left. The Greek Left which came to be regarded by its opponents as a danger to the nation and the national identity, was also considered a danger for the arts in general as well as for the staging of ancient Greek drama in particular. This phenomenon was not only evident throughout the period of time which is covered in this chapter but also throughout the period after the fall of the military dictatorship in 1974 which is examined in the following chapter.

[230] C.M.Woodhouse, *The Struggle for Greece 1941–1949* (London: Hurst & Company, 2002); David H. Close, The Origins of the Greek Civil War (New York: Routledge, 2013); Alexandors Zaousis, *Η Τραγική Αναμέτρηση 1945-1949: Ο Μύθος και η Αλήθεια* (Athens: Ωκεανίδα, 2014).

Part 1: The *Antigone* Performances of 1945-1967

In less than a decade, Greece underwent two very difficult wars, which did not allow the development of the arts during that specific period of time, as well as the first half of the 1950s. According to its own performance archives, after the performance of 1940 the National Theatre did not produce another *Antigone* for sixteen years. During these sixteen years, only four performances of *Antigone* are recorded in the archives and the press, local, national or international. All four performances were produced by the theatrical company of Crenio Papa and Spyros Mousouris, who were also holding the leading roles of Antigone and Creon. Bearing in mind the political turbulence during the 1940s', it is not surprising that the first three performances were not staged in Athens, or anywhere else in Greece. According to the archives of the Theatrical Museum in Athens, the three performances were given in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in 1949, Johannesburg (South Africa) in 1949 and Buenos Aires (Argentina) in 1953. Apart from the intense events of the time which caused practical difficulties in the staging of performances of any kind, the heavily politically charged nature of the play made *Antigone* an unsuitable or inconvenient choice. It was only in 1955 during the recovery period after the wars when the company performed their *Antigone* in Greece, but instead of the capital, they performed in Thessaloniki. As this was an Athens-based company, the choice of Thessaloniki instead of Athens seems slightly obscure, considering the fact that during that period other theatrical companies were repeatedly staging ancient Greek plays in the capital.

The very political nature and of the Sophoclean tragedy, did not prevent the prisoners on the Greek island of Makronisos to stage their own *Antigone* performance. On the contrary, it worked as a strong political statement. Makronisos was one of the exile prison islands during the Greek Civil War. The political prisoners of the island formed the all-male cast of the *Antigone* performance, written and directed by the exiled Aris Alexandrou. There is one

surviving photograph from the performance which reveals a lot about the production as far as the costume and setting design are concerned.[231] However, the most significant information on this performance is found in the testimonials of prisoners which had formed an early context of the conflict between Right and Left ideologies, supporters and political parties which, as we are going to see in the next chapter, would later on form the main frame of interpretation of revivals of ancient Greek drama. The significance of the performance according to the prisoners' testimonials, not only as a vague political interpretation but as a specific interpretation which reinforced the political polarisation between the Right and the Left, is reported by Gonda Van Steen in two of her articles as well as in an authored book on the performances of the Greek prison islands of the Civil War:

> Grivas characterized the staging as a protest statement that carried 'symbolic' political meaning. He implied that [...] the Antigone production lent itself to a theatre of ideological complicity, in which actors and audiences took chances and seized upon lines to spark off shows of support and solidarity. The prisoners' reading of the tragedy brought out the 'democratic' political elements of a -common but not necessarily justified- interpretation hostile to the 'tyrant' Creon. Creon's edict, for instance, was seen as a test of true patriotism: failing the test signified treason for the Right, but moral victory for the Left.[232]

After sixteen years of absence, *Antigone* returned to the National Theatre in 1956 and for the first time as a part of the Epidaurus Festival, an annual festival at the ancient site of the Epidaurus Theatre situated in the greater area of modern Argolis. The history of the Epidaurus Festival dates as back as 1940 when the National Theatre staged Sophocles' *Electra* and the performance was given at the ancient theatre of Epidaurus. However, the events of WWII as well as the following events of the Civil War prevented the establishment of the Epidaurus Festival which was postponed until 1954 when the National Theatre returned to the ancient site with Euripides's *Hippolytus.* Since then, the Festival takes place at the ancient Epidaurus

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[231] Michalis Katsigeras, *Ελλάδα 20ος Αιώνας: Οι Φωτογραφίες*, Vol.2 (Athens: Ποταμός, 2001), p.68.

[232] Gonda Van Steen, 'Forgotten Theatre, Theatre of the Forgotten: Classical Tragedy on Modern Greek Prison Islands', *Modern Greek Studies*, 23:2(2005), 335-395, pp.358-359. See also: Gonda Van Steen, *Theatre of the Condemned: Classical Tragedy on Greek Prison Islands* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Gonda Van Steen, 'The Audacity of Truth: The *Antigone* of Aris Alexandrou, a Play of Island Detention from the Greek Civil War', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, 54:1(2011), 115-136.

Theatre every summer, with few exceptions. As it has been mentioned above, during this period the revival of ancient Greek plays was a monopoly of the National Theatre. This view is reinforced by the fact that for the first twenty one years of Epidaurus Festivals between 1954 and 1975, only the productions of the National Theatre were performed at the ancient site.[233]

The majority of the National Theatre productions have throughout time been highly successful. The *Antigone* of 1956 though, was a success beyond any expectation. It was a performance which was kept within what the Greeks considered an original context, respectful towards the ancestral heritage. The director was Alexis Minotis, the director of the first *Antigone* of the National Theatre in 1940 and the translation used for the performance was once again by Ioannis Gryparis like most of the performances since the publication of Gryparis's translation. Minotis' direction and Gryparis' translation served, in that sense, in two ways. Firstly, the National Theatre was establishing a tradition as far as the revivals were concerned. As the official stage of the state, the artists of the National Theatre were setting the benchmark for all other independent companies. They were promoting a framework of 'classical' revivals, where classical came to mean classic, eternal and diachronic, a link between the idealised ancient Greek past and the present and future of modern Greece. Secondly, but certainly not unrelated to the first, was the establishment of the ideology of the Right amongst the artistic circles of the time as a result of the defeat of the 'threatening' Left after the Civil War. As Van Steen argues,

> From the perspective of the Right, the division was drawn between the 'nationally-minded' patriots and the communists who were referred to as traitors, suspects, or subjects of suspect values. [...] The main goals of the Right from the 1940s to the early 1960s were to penalize those who had fought the communist-led Resistance against the Nazis and to arrest the broad sociopolitical changes that the communists had spearheaded.[234]

As the discussion of the performance details aims to show, the 1956 National Theatre *Antigone* production serves, in that sense, as a great example of the political situation described by Van Steen. The leading role of Antigone was held by

[233] Ioannidou, 'Towards a National *Heterotopia*...', pp.336-337.
[234] Van Steen, 'Forgotten Theatre...', pp.335-336.

great tragic actress and know for her right-wing stances, involvement with the conservative parties and specifically a New Democracy Member of the Parliament from 1974 to 1990, Anna Synodinou (1927-2016) who received excellent reviews. The premiere of the production at Epidaurus on 7 July 1956 was sold out; in matter of fact, the organisers sold about twenty thousand tickets when the Epidaurus Theatre can only accommodate fourteen thousand at full capacity. This created a chaotic environment on the day of the performance which led to the hissing of Minotis when he entered the theatre. However, the jocosities of the event did not end with the hissing of Minotis. The conservative prime minister at the time, Constantinos Karamanlis, arrived late and entered the theatre after the performance had already started, something which led to the departure of the actors from the stage. This incident was paid way more attention by the reviewers compared to the attention paid to the performance itself, the acting or the text of the translation, a betoken of the context into which yet another *Antigone* would be received and interpreted.

However, the most characteristic example of political involvement in the matter of Greek revivals in general and this National Theatre production in particular, is the one which concerns Synodinou's costume as Antigone designed by Alexis Fokas, who also designed the costumes for the first National Theatre *Antigone* in 1940. In the 1940 production, the leading role of Antigone was held by actress Eleni Papadaki (1908-1944)[235]. Papadaki was arrested and executed on 21 December 1944 by a group of Leftists, after the events of the *Dekemvriana* which I have mentioned above. She was accused of being a traitor as well as a German spy during the World War II and the German occupation in Greece.[236] Amongst other accusations, the press also accused Papadaki for receiving very expensive gifts by her wealthy partner, conservative Prime Minister of Greece between 1941 and 1944, Ioannis Rallis (1878-1946) who was also accused by the leftists of collaboration with the German forces. One of these gifts was a ridiculously

[235] Manos Eleftheriou, *Η γυναίκα που πέθανε δύο φορές* (Αθήνα: Μεταίχμιο, 2006).
[236] Maria Malliou, 'Το Ανυποψίαστο Θύμα: Η Δολοφονία της Ελένης Παπαδάκη 1903-1944', *Δεκέμβρης '44: Οι Μάχες στις Γειτονιές της Αθήνας* (Athens: Ελευθεροτυπία, 2010), p.162.

expensive belt and the press commented on that in comparison with the general population of Greece who was lacking the essentials at the time.[237]

Fig. 2.1. On the left, Eleni Papadaki in her 1940 National Theatre *Antigone* costume and on the right, Anna Synodinou preparing for the 1956 National Theatre *Antigone* holding the cloth-belt given to her by Papadaki's family to honour the death of Papadaki by the leftists during the Civil War.
Left: Performance archive of the Greek National Theatre
Right: Courtesy of Maria Hintiraki

Sixteen years after Papadaki's performance of *Antigone*, and twelve years after her death, her family decided to honour her by offering something to the new actress who was now portraying Antigone in the 1956 performance, Anna Synodinou. Interestingly, the family's decision was to offer the cloth belt and the buckle from Papadaki's costume designed by Fokas for the 1940 performance.[238] It is strikingly surprising that the family decided to offer the belt instead of any other item from the famous costume. One should here bear in mind the aforementioned

[237] Malliou, 'Το Ανυποψίαστο Θύμα...', p.164
[238] Polyvios Marcan, *Ελένη Παπαδάκη: Μια φωτεινή πορεία με απροσδόκητο τέλος* (Athens: Καστανιώτη, 2001).

accusations against Papadaki based on the expensive belt she was gifted by her right-wing partner and prime minister, in combination with her execution by the Leftists as a German spy and a traitor. These two facts elevate the gesture of the family to a purely political message which was sent out through the National Theatre as Synodinou received and accepted the Papadakis family gift and worn it with pride for all the performances of the 1956 *Antigone* productions with repetitions until 1962.

The connection between the belt incidents has not been discussed and as a result there is no evident to support this theory, but it would be an serious omission not to draw the attention to such a symbolism. The restoration of Papadaki's belt on the 'authentically' Greek garment of Synodinou signified the restoration of her name after the accusations she received by the Leftists, which resulted to her execution. But most importantly, it signified the restoration of the right (as well as the Right) order in the country. The Left was now pushed to the margins while the Right was growing to power and there was no means more appropriate than ancient Greek drama to remind the Greeks of the, ironically, *right* image of Greece. Synodinou's photographs wearing the renowned costume, including Papadaki's belt, became so popular in Greece to the point that it became a kind of a *national* image. In 1975, the conservative Greek government which rose to power after the fall of the dictatorship in 1974, commissioned and printed a post stamp portraying Synodinou in that very same costume.

It is worth noting here that the Greek government officially acknowledged the significance of theatrical performances of ancient Greek drama and thus it repeatedly commissioned and printed postage stamps with themes of ancient Greek drama and its revival. The first series was printed in 1959 with general themes of ancient Greek theatre. The second series was printed in 1965 and pictured the two ancient theatres, the Epidaurus Theatre and the Odeon of Herodes Atticus. The third series was a celebratory series for the two thousand five hundred years of ancient Greek drama.[239] This is another affirmation that the

[239] Information on the history, special editions, themes and printing of Greek postage was gathered after a visit at the Athens Postal and Philatelic Museum established in 1970, operated by Hellenic

revival of ancient Greek drama was never a merely artistic matter. It was a matter of the state, it was a national matter.

2.2. On the left, Anna Synodinou in the National Theatre *Antigone* at the Epidaurus Festival in 1956 and on the right, a postage stamp printed by the Greek government in 1975 resembling Synodinou in the iconic Antigone costume.
Left: Performance archive of the Greek National Theatre
Right: Postal Museum in Athens

The financial success and wide acceptance of the 1956 production led to the restaging of the performance during the summer Epidaurus Festivals of 1957 and

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Post, and a personal unrecorded discussion with the director of the museum. See also: Asterios Karamitsos, *Hellas 2012: Stamp Catalogue and Postal History*, Vol.1-3 (Thessaloniki: Karamitsos A., 2011).

1959, as well as performances outside Athens and outside Greece. Synodinou remained with the National Theatre in the role of Antigone for all performances. The significance of the performance though lies in factors which exceed beyond the success and the acceptance it received and finds its roots in the details of the surviving materials. The programme notes for all National Theatre *Antigone* performances during the 1956, 1957 and 1959 Festivals were provided in Greek, English, French and German as part of the programme notes of the whole performance series of each Festival and they all share two common elements: the first is a paragraph about the ancient Epidaurus Theatre and the second is an introduction text entitled 'Το Εθνικό Θέατρο και το Αρχαίο Δράμα' in the 1956 programme notes. The title changed to 'Το "Εθνικό" και το Αρχαίο Θέατρο' from 1957 onwards. In the English translation of the programme notes, the title remains as 'The National Theatre and the Ancient Drama' throughout all programme notes of all years. It is interesting that they decided to remove the word 'θέατρο' (theatre) from the original Greek title when they kept it for the English text. In addition, the word 'εθνικό' (national) was presented in inverted commas, the use of which is unexplainable. One could argue that the National Theatre was in a way stressing the importance of 'national' rather than 'theatre' especially when the matter at stake was the 'αρχαίο δράμα' (ancient drama). Small details like the above come to reinforce the claim that the discussions on the revival of ancient plays especially by the National Theatre was never really a matter of a text or a performance or the combination of the two. It was, and has always remained, a matter through which the 'national' was finding its justification.

The introduction begins with a brief history of the National Theatre since its first years when it was still functioning under the name of *Vasiliko Theatro* (Royal Theatre), its closure after seven years and the reopening as *Ethniko*. It stresses the fact that the National Theatre repertoire covers a wide range of classic plays, ancient and modern, Greek and foreign. The main body of the introduction covers the revival of ancient Greek plays by stressing that the National Theatre has, since its first years, been concerned with this matter. Many issues had been raised as far as the modern staging is concerned and the National Theatre introduction

characterises them as 'doubtful' and 'obscure' based on two major questions (as quoted in the text):

> First, does the Ancient Drama, irrespective of its high literary value, belong exclusively to its own epoch, or does it have the power of survival in present times? Second, which is the best way for the Ancient Drama to be made accessible to the modern public?[240]

In principle, the National Theatre was suggesting that an attempt of a historical representation of the ancient plays would be neither possible not helpful to the modern audience. However, while claiming that a historical reconstruction was not the aim, the National Theatre did not fail to stress the significance of the preservation of historical continuity through the revivals:

> Historical reproduction must be excluded by all means: the ancient tragedy is a living organism which does not belong to the historical past of Greek people, but is as well in direct contact and relation with the continuous flow of life from the past to the present.[241]

It is indeed interesting that this abstract from the programme notes text states clearly the negative position of the National Theatre towards historical reconstruction, when the actual performance details reveal the exact opposite. However, the concept of historical representation had be discussed and rejected by numerous leading figures and the artistic circles of the National Theatre could not have ignored it. The interest of the argument though lies in that part of the text which refers to 'the continuous flow of life from the past to the present'. It is evident throughout the text that the notion of historical continuity was now incorporated and used as a tool for the 'proper' revival of ancient Greek drama. Functioning under a conservative government, the National Theatre represented one of the most important safe keepers of the true Hellenic spirit as well as of the heritage of the glorious past.

In contrast to the performances of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century which were targeting academic or highly intellectual audiences familiar with ancient

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[240] Epidaurus Festival Programme Notes (1956), p.11.
Note: the same text can be found in the programme notes of the 1957 and 1959 Festivals, however on different page numbers.
[241] Epidaurus Festival Programme Notes (1956), p.12.

Greek or *katharevousa*, the National Theatre made great efforts to approach a wider public audience:

> Even if an archaeological performance could be considered practically attainable –which is highly improbable- it would again be useless and, worst of all, quite erroneous in its results. It is inconceivable that a modern public should be asked to attend a performance of a tragedy staged for an ancient audience.[242]

Regardless the debatable final result of their productions, the National Theatre claimed that it was their priority to find the elements which would be respectful towards the ancient texts but simultaneously appropriate for their contemporary audience in order to allow the eternal truth of the ancient *logos* to find its way into the conscious of the eternal human being. This is a rather sophisticated understanding of continuity in the part of the National Theatre, however the examination of their performances shows that their (pretentious) intentions have not always complied with their actual work.

Apart from the three years at the Epidaurus Festivals, the production of 1956 gave performances as part of the National Theatre tours across Greece. The National Theatre archives also record a performance in Paris at the *Theatre des Nations* in March 1962 as well as a performance at the ancient theatre of *Dodona* (close to the city of Ioannina in North-West Greece) in August 1962. The programme notes of the *Dodona* performance are of great significance for two reasons. Firstly, apart from the National Theatre Organisation, the cover of the programme notes mentions the Greek Tourism Organisation, a rather interesting observation regarding the Greek revivals, especially when presented at the ancient sites. It is worth noting here that the Festivals at ancient Greek theatres have been, and still are, managed by the Ministry of Tourism instead of the Ministry of Culture as one would normally expect. In her discussion of the above paradox in Greek revivals, Vassiliki Lalioti argues that

> Ancient drama performances, due to specific characteristics, constitute something more than mere theatrical events (as they are defined within the Western tradition). These performances, which convey, sustain, and

[242] Epidaurus Festival Programme Notes (1956), p.12.

> transmit perceptions of a glorious culture of the past, become, for their creators and spectators, as members of an ethnic group, occasions for consciously remembering their ethnic past, and coming, in a way, to a 'mythical identification' with it.[243]

This takes us back to the initial suggestions of this chapter, as well as of this thesis in its whole, that the revivals of ancient Greek drama in Greece have always been treated as an ancestral heritage; a gift from the past passed on to the present which would firstly serve as a reminder of their historical continuity for the Greeks and then as a piece of attraction and promotion of the 'true Hellenic spirit' for the 'foreigners'. Secondly, the programme notes of the *Dodona* performance include a note from the General Director of the National Theatre at the time, Emilios Hourmouzios.[244] Throughout his note, Hourmouzios does not only praise the festivals organised at *Dodona* by stressing the importance of the staging of ancient plays at historical archaeological sites. He also refers to Sophocles and the performances of *Antigone* and *Ajax* in particular and he mentions:

> The tragic *logos* of the Sochoclean plays, acts as a proud voice of the classical Hellenism, which claims the sentimental echoes [of the past] from the souls of contemporary men, so that the national continuity and the legendary struggle of the nation can find justification throughout the centuries.[245]

Approximately one hundred years had passed since the very first revivals of ancient Greek drama in modern Greece. However, the matter of historical continuity argued within and promoted through ancient Greek drama was not yet resolved, and as suggested through this research, it still remains so.

The National Theatre was promoting a very clear vision about the 'appropriate' revival of ancient Greek drama for a modern audience during this period of time. They did not make grandiose political statement in relation to their revivals. Instead, they subtly promoted their political ideologies through their choice of artists, their programme notes and the style of their performances. However, the

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[243] Vassiliki Lalioti, 'Social Memory and Ethnic Identity: Ancient Greek Drama Performances as Commemorative Ceremonies', History and Anthropology, 13:2(2002), 113-137, pp.113-114.
[244] Hourmouzios' note is provided only in Greek, where subsequent content of the programme notes, such as cast, description of the play, etc, are also provided in English.
[245] Emilios Hourmouzios, 'Ιερό Χρέος', Dodona Festival Programme Notes (1962), p.7.

end result -or rather, the reception of the end result- of their productions did not necessarily agree with their original vision. For example, they claimed that the archaeological reproduction of ancient plays was not their aim and they rather aimed at revivals which would address the modern Greek audience. The 1956 *Antigone* production, however, did not introduce any truly modern or innovative elements as far as the translation text, the costume or setting designs, the music and the directorial lines were concerned. In their turn, the reviewers of the performance had very little to comment on the performance itself. One would expect that the commentaries would confront the initial statements of the National Theatre by claiming that the performance was not in the least addressing its contemporary audience, at least not more than the performances of the previous decades did. But once again, it was not the artistic choices which were judged. It was the National Theatre *intention* for modernisation as stated in their programme notes which evoked the arguments, even though the performance itself did not provide sufficient modern or innovative material for such discussion.

Testimonials from the press of the time record different opinions as far as the 1956 production as well as the subsequent performances of the same production are concerned. The majority of the criticism as discussed hereafter was not the result of an examination from an artistic perspective; nor was it the result of a political interpretation of the text or the performance. It was rather the product of a discussion from a political perspective serving for or against conservative nationalistic agendas. In his article in the Athenian newspaper *Nea Estia*, Alkis Thrylos mentions:

> The performance of *Antigone* revealed clearly that the basic intention of Mr. Minotis as far as his directions of ancient tragedies are concerned, is to differentiate and promote the characteristics of each play on a higher level. We are talking about a radical and original direction.[246]

Even though Thrylos provides a strongly opinionated criticism of the production, he fails to provide any substantial evidence to support his claims. Looking into the specifics of the production, we observe that there was nothing original or radical

[246] Alkis Thrylos, 'Η Έναρξη της Καλοκαιρινής Περιόδου Β΄Αρχαίο Θέατρο Επιδαύρου', *Νέα Εστία*, 15 July 1956.

about the commonly used translation by Gryparis, the uninspired settings, the ancient-like garments, did not significantly differ from those of the 1940 performance and the chorus was used in a much conventional way. This leads us to the assumption that Thrylos might be referring to the intentions for modernisation as stated by the National Theatre, rather than to the actual modern or radical elements of the performance. As a result, the supporters of the idea that the National Theatre should be the official carrier and safe keeper of the ancestral heritage, defended the National Theatre productions regardless of their originality or their innovation. One should not forget that the National Theatre and its supporters invested efforts in establishing the notion that the national stage was the most appropriate stage to carry the ancestral heritage forth, from the past to the present, as early as its first years of operation, and they would continue to do so for many years. In the same article, Thrylos makes specific references to Fokas' costumes, the designer of the costumes for the National Theatre *Antigone* sixteen years earlier, in 1940, which differ very little in comparison:

> Once again, the costumes of Mr. Fokas have convinced us that he is unparalleled and unique. [...] There are very few costume designers, even foreign costume designers, who would be able to even compete with him.

The comparison between local Greek and foreign artists was a very common phenomenon not only at the time but also during the following years until present. Implied or directly, the comparison was made repeatedly in order to stress the fact that the Greeks, closer than anyone to the ancestral heritage, have the ability to comprehend and represent the ancient elements better than anyone else.

As it has been mentioned above, the 1956 production toured around Greece and Thessaloniki, the second biggest city situated in north Greece was of course included in the tour. The audience of northern Greece was equally satisfied as the Athenian audience. In an article of the local newspaper *Ellinikos Vorras*, Nikos Sfendonis praised all elements of the performance from the direction to the setting design, the costumes, the acting skills of all cast including the Chorus, and the music without any specific references or a detailed analysis concerning either the text or the performance. The significance of his article lies in this particular excerpt:

> The direction by Minotis, the setting design by Klonis, the famous costumes by Fokas and the music by Papaioannou provided a harmonious total outcome. However, the actors who revived the tragedy are not only worthy of artistic gratitude, but above all they are worthy of national gratitude. What they gave us was not a simple performance of the tragedy characters; it was a reincarnation of the tragedy of the family members of Labdacus and his ancestors.[247]

Not only did Sfendonis elevate an artistic matter to a national matter, but he also made references to the ancient spirit which had been transferred from the Labdacids family, to Antigone and from her to the modern Greeks: a historical blood line from antiquity to modernity.

In another article from the Athenian newspaper *To Vima*, the matter of ownership is raised again by an anonymous author who discusses the foreign criticism for the 1956 *Antigone*:

> Very flattering are the comments of foreign critics. […] We [the Greeks] are allowed to complain, to express our oppositions, to give negative feedback for any performance we do not like. After all, this [the revival of ancient Greek plays] is a familial matter to us, it concerns us, it bothers us, in a few words, it hurts us.[248]

The fact that they considered it a 'familial matter' elevates it to something greater than just a performance. The matter at stake seemed to be not the artistic value; the matter at stake was the revealing of the true spirit of the ancestors. The article clearly differentiates the expectations of the foreigners from the expectations of the Greeks. The performance might had been sufficient for the foreigners, but the Greeks would never see it from the same perspective because the matter was, and should always remain, personal.

Quite different in comparison to all previous critiques was the article published in the local newspaper of Ioannina *Proinos Logos Ioanninon* after the 1962 performance of the 1956 *Antigone* production at the ancient theatre of *Dodona*. The author is not indicated, but the first paragraph of the article mentions that the

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[247] Nikos Sfendonis, 'Η Αντιγόνη: Βασιλικόν Θέατρον', *Ελληνικός Βορράς*, 16 November 1956.
By 1956, the National Theatre had stopped using its previous name, *Vasiliko Theatro*. The reason this newspaper used the name *Vasilikon*, instead of *Ethniko*, is unknown.
[248] Anonymous, Article title not available, *Το Βήμα*, 02 October 1956.

review came from the arts critic of the newspaper. The negative criticism is based on the reviewer's claim that on the night of the performance the average spectator was disappointed. He argues that the performance was overall dull and monotonous, characterised by demureness and unnecessary mewling and a far-fetched connection with a distant past. As a result, the article raises the crucial questions:

> What if the connection with the past is unfortunately lost forever? Is this happening because the message of ancient tragedy is beyond and above the major problems of the present? What if tragedy can now only sustain its value as *logos* instead of *drama*?

By the end of the article, the author gives answers to his own questions:

> In order to properly revive ancient Greek tragedy, [Greeks] need to do two things: firstly they need to be less arrogant as organisers and secondly they need to be more educated and prepared as an audience. In that sense, they will never allow any negative criticism from the incredulous foreigners.[249]

The author did not avoid the comparison with the foreign critics, but he managed to highlight one of the most important issues of the Greek revivals: what is the meaning of a revival if it fails to address a modern audience. That is a question which would haunt the Greek artistic and intellectual circles for many years to come.

The 1960s were one of the most significant periods of economic growth in Greece since the Revolution of 1821. Having survived several wars and difficult years of recovery, the Greek state was now establishing its position within the rest of the European states by opening its markets and investing great amounts of money on internal development. Accordingly, the arts saw a period of intense flourishing and the whole decade (as well as the first years of the next decade) was later on characterised as the *Chrysi Epohi tou Ellinikou Kinimatografou* (Golden Era of Greek Cinema)[250]. More than ninety films were produced every year, some of which still

[249] Anonymous, 'Η Αντιγόνη στη Δωδώνη: Κριτικές Εντυπώσεις Μετά την Χθεσινή Παράσταση', *Πρωινός Λόγος Ιωαννίνων*, 12 August 1962.
[250] Gianna Athanasatou, *Ελληνικός Κινηματογράφος (1950 - 1967): Λαϊκή Μνήμη και Ιδεολογία* (Athens: Finatec A.E., 2001); Giorgos Arambantzis, *Λαίκισμός και Κινηματογράφος: Μελέτη για τον Ελληνικό Λαϊκό Κινηματογράφο της Δεκαετίας του 60* (Athens: Ροές , 1991).

remain amongst the most popular Greek films of all times. Renowned directors, actors, composers gained their popularity, as well as enormous amounts of money, throughout this period. The themes of the films varied and of course the cinematographic representation of ancient Greek plays could not be absent from the long list of films produced during that time. Internationally renowned filmmaker of Cypriot origins Michael Cacoyannis (1921-2011) produced amongst other great films (such as *Zorba the Greek* by Nikos Kazantzakis in 1964), an *Electra* film in 1961, a *Trojan Women* film in 1972 and later on an *Iphigenia* film in 1976.[251] At the beginning of the 1960s another famous director produced a film based on *Antigone*. The director was Giorgos Tzavellas (1916-1976) and the film followed the basic Sophoclean storyline in an adaptation in demotic by the director himself. The film was presented at the Thessaloniki Film Festival in 1961 and many of the contributors were nominated or won prizes in both national and international film festivals.[252] Irene Papas, was the actress who portrayed the part of Antigone in the film, with a characteristic accent that still remains a reference in modern popular culture, such as television series.

A characteristic example of the influence of Irene Papas' Antigone in popular culture, as well as the influence of the *Antigone* revivals in Modern Greece, is found in one of the most popular and successful Greek television series of the late 1990s. The series was entiteld *Dyo Xenoi* (Two Strangers) and aired for two season on MEGA Channel Greece, between 1997 and 1999. The screenplay was written by Alexandros Rigas and Dimitrios Apostolou, a renowned duo of screenwriters famous for their comedy series. The series was based on the love story between the mature professor of Theatre Studies, director and owner of a small private drama school, Constantinos Markoras (played by Nikos Sergianopoulos, 1952-2008) and the younger and uneducated pop icon and TV presenter, Marina Kountouratou (played by Evelina Papoulia, 1971-). Coming from a wealthy upper-class family,

[251] Kenneth MacKinnon, *Greek Tragedy Into Film* (London: Routledge, 2013), pp.66-96. See also: Pantelis Michelakis, *Greek Tragedy on Screen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
[252] Giannis Zoumboulakis, 'Ο Πρίγκιπας του Ελληνικού Κινηματογράφου', *Το Βήμα*, 14 September 2014; Maria Paschali, 'Γιώργος Τζαβέλλας: Αγόρι μου, Εν Αρχή ην ο Λόγος σου (Ο Γιος του Σκηνοθέτη Θυμάται τον Πατέρα του και Ιστορίες από τα Γυρίσματα των Ταινιών του)', *Το Βημα*, 8 April 2012.

Markoras has completed his studies in London, United Kingdom. Upon his return to Greece, his mother funds the opening of his drama school and supports him, financially and beyond, in his dream to produce an *Antigone* performance. The series begins with Markoras' pursuit of his protagonist, a young and fresh girl, as Antigone should be. The first scene of the series pilot starts at his drama school, where a clearly untalented woman is auditioning for the part. She is reciting the first lines of the play in modern Greek, playing both the roles of Antigone and Ismene. When reciting the lines of Ismene, she speaks clearly without any accent. However, when reciting the lines of Antigone, she changes her accent to one which resembles the characteristic accent of Irene Papas in the *Antigone* film.[253]

Throughout the total of fifty eight episodes of the series, there are constant references to *Antigone*.The screenwriters depicted and portrayed in a comical way the general notions of the time as far as the revival of ancient drama is concerned. They also frequently mocked the National Theatre's privilage in staging ancient Greek plays in the Epidaurus Theatre. In addition, they frequently commented on prominent Greek actresses' fixation on the role of Antigone. And last, thet repeatedly stressed the significance of the Sophoclean play in modern Greek culture.

Regardless the frequency with which ancient Greek plays were revived in films during this period, very few Greek productions of *Antigone* were staged by Greek companies both in the country and outside, none of which gained particular success. Perhaps the reasons behind this lie in the fact that as a rapidly growing media, cinema gained, at least temporarily, the greater interest of the contemporary audience. In 1965, the ancient theatre of Lycabbetus was opened to the public for the first time with a performance of *Antigone* produced by the theatrical company *Elliniki Skini* (Greek Stage) owned by Anna Synodinou, who had

[253] *Dyo Xenoi*, Season 1, Episode 1, 00:02:18-00:04:55 <http://www.megatv.com/classics.asp?catid=31819> [accessed 12.09.2016]. A complete list of the series episodes can be accessed on the official website of MEGA Channel Greece under the tab 'Web TV Classics'.

resigned from the National Theatre on the same year.[254] The reasons behind Synodinou's resignation are not clearly stated, therefore an assumption that it was a result of a political conflict with the administrators of the National Theatre would be unjustified. However, the details of her *Antigone* performance reveal some interesting information which indicates towards a rupture with the National Theatre.

Interestingly, Synodinou chose to present her *Antigone* in a different from the commonly used Gryparis translation, a translation she herself performed for years when she had the leading role of Antigone for the 1956 National Theatre production, as well as for all the repetitions until 1962. The name of the new translator cannot be stated with certainty, as different sources provide different information. In her publication entitled *Archive of Anna Synodinou*, Constantina Stamatogiannaki mentions renowned poet Yiannis Ritsos (1909-1990) as the translator and author of modern Greek theatre history, Tasos Lignadis (1926-1989)[255] as the one responsible for the literary attribution of the text.[256] In the archives of Desmi though, the roles of the two are recorded vice versa. Regardless, the translation received very negative criticism based on the fact that it was very liberal and innovative, and did not strictly follow the original text. It is worth mentioning that Ritsos was known for his leftist ideology, he was officially part of the Greek Communist party and amongst other very famous works, he also wrote a series of poems dedicated to leftist Ares Velouchiotis immediately after his death in 1945.[257] Giorgos Sevastikoglou also made his debut as a director of ancient Greek drama with this performance. Sevastikoglou was also known for his leftist stances and had been previously exiled during the Greek Civil War.[258] The involvement of two leftists with the theatrical company of the widely know conservative supporter Synodinou is a peculiar fact in itself which does not necessarily answer the question

[254] Constantina Stamatogiannaki, *Αρχείο Άννας Συνοδινού* (Athens: Μορφωτικό Ίδρυμα Κεντρικής Τραπέζης, 2010), p.6.
[255] Alexandros Argyriou, 'Λιγνάδης Τάσος', in *Παγκόσμιο Βιογραφικό Λεξικό,* Vol. 5 (Athens: Εκδοτική Αθηνών, 1986); Dimitris Stamelos, 'Λιγνάδης Τάσος', in *Μεγάλη Εγκυκλοπαίδεια της Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας*, Vol. 9 (Athens: Χάρη Πάτση).
[256] Stamatogiannaki, *Αρχείο Άννας Συνοδινού...,* p.23.
[257] Chapter 2, Part 1.
[258] Dimitris Gkionis, 'Ο Σεβαστίκογλου του Θεάτρου και του Αγώνα: Χρονικό μιας Ζωής Περιπετειώδους και Γόνιμης', *Ελευθεροτυπία*, 11 December 2010.

regarding her resignation from the National Theatre, but it does indeed indicate that her new artistic choices were now pointing towards a different political direction. Last, bearing in mind the events and the treatment of the Left during the Civil War as well as the marginalisation of the Left during the following years, one might argue that the performance did not receive positive criticism based on the mere fact that many leftists were involved with the production. However, this could only be an assumption as the research itself did not reveal any evidence to support such a theory.

Part 2: The *Antigone* of the Junta in 1969

Despite the economic, social and cultural flourishing of the country in the 1960s, Greece underwent a political crisis which led to the announcement of elections by the end of April 1967. The elections never took place as scheduled because a group of right-wing colonels led by Georgios Papadopoulos (1919-1999) grabbed power in a coup d' etat on 21 April 1967 and established the Regime of the Colonels known until today as the Dictatorship of Papadopoulos, the Junta or simply Dictatorship. Throughout the years of the Military Junta, many civil rights were suspended and basic human liberties were suppressed.

Besides all other ills, the Junta imposed censorship on music, theatre, cinema, schools and universities. Over 800 books of Greek and foreign authors were considered 'dangerous' and were removed from bookstores, libraries, schools and universities or destroyed. In the long list of banned or censored writings are the works of the heroes of the 1821 Greek Revolution, numerous European authors and of course any text with references to communism, such as the writings of Marx, etc. The works of ancient Greek playwrights Aeschylus, Euripides and Aristophanes were no exception to the rule. The National Theatre was given a list of plays which they were allowed to perform. The Junta also forbade the involvement of Alexis Minotis and Katina Paxinou in any of the National Theatre productions due to their 'suspect political involvements'.[259] As for the musical compositions, there was a large number of songs which underwent severe censorship, something which forced the artists to adjust their lyrics to the preferences of the Junta. The prohibition of live performance or recorded listening of inappropriate songs such as those of renowned leftist composer and lyric writer Mikis Theodorakis (1925-present) forced many artists to flee abroad in order to physically survive. It is worth noting here

[259] Both Minotis and Paxinou were not leftists. On the contrary, they were both leaning towards right wing ideologies. However, the relationship between the Right and the Colonels is a rather interesting one. Even though the Right was supportive of the Colonels at the beginning, it then withdrew, apart from old royalists and extreme conservative nationalists.

that the works of Theodorakis were some of the first works which were announced as prohibited by the Junta. The announcement was given with a letter from the chief of the Greek army at the time, Odysseas Aggelis which started with the infamous phrase *apefasisamen kai diatassomen* (we have decided and we order), a phrase which has since remained as a reference to the Junta.

ΔΙΑΤΑΓΜΑ ΑΓΓΕΛΗ

1) Ἀπεφασίσαμεν καί διατάσσομεν τά ἀκόλουθα, ἰσχύοντα δι' ὁλόκληρον τήν ἐπικράτειαν:

Ἀπαγορεύεται:

α) ἡ ἀνατύπωσις ἤ ἡ ἐκτέλεσις τῆς μουσικῆς καί τῶν ἀσμάτων τοῦ κομμουνιστοῦ συνθέτου Μίκη Θεοδωράκη, τέως ἀρχηγοῦ τῆς νῦν διαλυθείσης κομμουνιστικῆς ὀργανώσεως «Νεολαία Λαμπράκη», δεδομένου ὅτι ἡ ἐν λόγῳ μουσική ἐξυπηρετεῖ τόν κομμουνισμόν·

β) τό ἄδειν ἅπαντα τά ἄσματα, τά χρησιμοποιούμενα ὑπό τῆς κινήσεως τῆς κομμουνιστικῆς νεολαίας, διαλυθείσης δυνάμει τῆς παραγράφου 8 τοῦ διατάγματος τῆς 6 Μαΐου 1967, δοθέντος ὅτι τά ἐν λόγῳ ἄσματα ὑποκινοῦν πάθη καί διενέξεις εἰς τούς κόλπους τοῦ πληθυσμοῦ.

2) Οἱ παραβαίνοντες τήν ὡς ἄνω διαταγήν πολίται θά παραπέμπονται ἀμέσως ἐνώπιον στρατοδικείων καί θά δικάζωνται συμφώνως πρός τά διατάξεις τῆς ἐκτάκτου νομοθεσίας.

Ὀδυσσεύς Ἀγγελῆς
Ἀρχηγός τοῦ Ἐπιτελείου
τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Στρατοῦ

Fig. 2.3. Announcement of the Junta officials on the prohibition of the music of communist composer Mikis Theodorakis, starting with the infamous *apefasisamen kai diatassomen* (we have decided and we order).
Archives of the Library of the Greek Parliament

In her Introduction to *Ancient Sun Modern Light*, Marianne McDonald mentions that 'productions of Antigone were blacklisted by the Greek colonels after their

coup in 1967'.[260] Strangely though, a few years after the establishment of the Regime of the Colonels, the National Theatre produced another performance of *Antigone* as a part of the summer Epidaurus Festival on 6 July 1969, and returned with repetitions during the next summer of 1970. The fact that the Junta allowed the National Theatre the staging of such a strongly political play, a play which directly addresses matters of civil disobedience, is in itself very obscure, especially when other ancient plays were forbidden. There is no information on how or when the National Theatre received the Junta approval for such a performance. *Antigone* is a play which raises questions about authority, imposed laws and the inhuman treatment of those who oppose to the law of the governors. If there was one ancient play that the Colonels of the Junta should be worried about, that should be *Antigone*. However, the National Theatre proceeded with this production with no obstacles by the Junta. A possible explanation would be that the Colonels did not forbid the play because of the fact that Antigone is punished and sentenced to death as a result of the disobedience, however such a suggestion would exclude the ending of the play when the authoritative figure opposite Antigone is also punished. Another possible explanation would suggest that the Colonels did not fear the staging of such play as they drew their confidence from the fact that as the official stage of the country, the National Theatre was closely controlled by them. It is worth mentioning here that throughout the seven years of the Dictatorship, only one other Antigone was staged and interestingly it was also by a company under the official control of the state, the National Theatre of Northern Greece in Thessaloniki.

Apart from the translation by Gryparis which had been repeatedly used by the National Theatre in the past, and the setting design by Klonis who also worked with the National Theatre for the 1956 *Antigone*, the rest of the elements had nothing in common with the 1956 production. As a result of the Junta prohibition, Alexis Minotis was no longer allowed to work as a part of the National Theatre which now needed to seek for a another director. The replacement of Minotis for this new production was Lambros Costopoulos. The costume design was not assigned to

[260] McDonald, *Ancient Sun, Modern Light*..., p.4.

Fokas, who was replaced as a costume designer by the setting designer Klonis. A new musical composition was produced by Dimitris Dragatakis and Anna Synodinou was replaced by Vera Zavitsianou in the role of Antigone. Even though there was no official announcement by the Junta as far as Synodinou is concerned, her involvement with leftists Sevastikoglou and Ritsos in her 1965 performance might have been the reason why she was not re-invited by the National Theatre for the leading role of Antigone which she held with great success in the past. The rest of the cast was also different from the 1956 performance cast. However, there is no evidence to support that either the previous cast was dismissed or the new cast was hired based on political stands. Even though eleven years had passed after the production of 1956, the 1969 production did not deviate or develop in any significant way. The setting design was once again very basic, making references to ancient Greece. Like Fokas' designs for both productions of 1940 and 1956, the costumes were again ancient-like garments and the cast was holding canes and shields, elements which were supposed to refer to or remind of ancient Greece.

The performance notes of the summer Epidaurus Festival remained identical to the previous. They included the short text about the ancient theatre of Epidaurus, the longer text on National Theatre and ancient Drama and the details of all the performances of the 1969 Festival including a short plot summary of each ancient play that would be performed during the Festival. All texts were provided again in English, French and German. The only difference between the programme notes of the 1969 and the programme notes of any previous Festival is the Greek text. As it has been mentioned above, the demotic had been long established for decades. Expectedly, all previous programme notes of the National Theatre were only provided in demotic. However, the Greek text of the 1969 production was composed in *katharevousa* instead of the demotic. A comparison between the 1956 text and the 1969 text reveals that the two of them are identical[261], apart from the use of a different form of language for each of them. Bearing in mind that the Junta consisted of military, right-wing colonels, it is not surprising that they favoured an

[261] The texts are identical throughout, apart from the last paragraphs of the 1969 text which are an addition to the 1956 text, commenting on the thirty six years of successful functioning of the National Theatre.

older, elitist and conservative form of the Greek language which made references to the ancient Greek language of the ancestors, over the progressive living language of the common modern Greek people. This would also find justification in their greater ideology, as, according to Van Steen, 'They claimed to defend the "eternal values of the Helleno-Christian civilization" against detrimental cultural and political influences'.[262] The available sources do not reveal whether it was a deliberate decision of the National Theatre to use the text in *katharevousa* or whether they were following orders or were forced to do so. But as the official theatre of the state, we would assume that the National Theatre was the first theatrical company which needed to comply with the orders of the Junta.

According to the performance archives of the National Theatre, the 1969 *Antigone* was performed two times at the Epidaurus Theatre in July and August 1969, as well as three times at the open-air summer public theatre *Skylitsio* in Piraeus, in September 1969. Lastly, performances were also given at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus, one in May 1970 and four in August 1970. Major alterations were made to the cast of the *Skylitsio* and the Odeon performances, most important of which was the replacement of Vera Zavitsianou by Elli Vazikiadou in the leading role of Antigone. According to the sources from the contemporary press, all performances of the 1969 production were very poorly received. A closer examination and analysis of the materials will reveal so. The most striking observation about the criticism concerning the performance derives from the fact that there were no political references or connections. This is understandable to some extent, considering the strict censorship of all writings applied by the Junta. But the argument here is not one which only seeks the references to the political situation of Greece at that time. As it has been observed in previous performances, the political discussion as far as the revivals are concerned, was not only deriving from the current political events of each epoch. It also derived from other politically charged issues which usually found their roots in a deeper need of the Greeks to make connections with their historical past in order to define their present. In this case, there are absolutely no references to the historical continuity, the ancient

[262] Van Steen, *Stage of Emergency*..., p.8.

Greek spirit or the preservation of the ancestral heritage. One would naturally expect that in order to satisfy the right-wing, nationalist and conservative Colonels, the critics of the 1969 performance would stress the ancient Greek element with greater passion than ever before. As it turned out, the 'apolitical' criticism for this performance was, in a way, sending a very strong, though silent, message to the Colonels: if the preservation of the historical continuity of the Greeks was a priority for the Junta, then the people of modern Greece would not be a part of it.

Over and above any politically charged discussions, the criticism of the production focused on general issues which arise from the staging of ancient Greek plays, in contrast to the criticism for all previous performances which repeatedly made references to the ancestral heritage and the bonds with the past. As the examination of the contemporary press reveals, the production was received and interpreted in a unique way, dissimilar to all previous (and even future) performances in the history of *Antigone* revivals on the modern Greek stage. The performance reception varied according to the personal preferences of each critic or author, but the general sentiment was not very positive. Having already staged two different productions of *Antigone* (1940 and 1956) which both received astonishingly positive criticism, the National Theatre had set the expectations very high. As Alkis Thrylos commented in an Athenian newspaper,

> Staging the same play with different cast is always interesting. It was indeed interesting to watch another *Antigone* by the National Theatre, relatively interesting though, because the performance did not manage to comply with the universal law which orders that every new performance should be on a higher level than the previous ones. This new performance did not comply with the law; it failed.[263]

The question that arises here is one concerned with the 'universal law' that Thrylos refers to. Which is this universal law which orders that every performance should be on a 'higher level than the previous ones? And how would one define 'higher level'? It would be easier to answer the question if the 'universal law' was translated or interpreted as a 'national law', or even a 'law of the National Theatre'. Since its foundation in the early 1930s, the National Theatre had set the bar as far

[263] Alkis Thrylos, 'Επαναλήψεις Αρχαίων και Ημικλασσικών Ελληνικών Έργων : Θέατρο Επιδαύρου, Οργανισμός Εθνικού Θεάτρου', *Νέα Εστία*, 01 September 1969.

as the revivals of ancient Greek plays were concerned. Therefore, not only this performance, but also all subsequent performances of the National Theatre, would be expected to be on a 'higher level', a situation which would cause problems to the National Theatre for many years to come.

Another Athenian newspaper held a review of the 1969 production at the Epidaurus Theatre. The article by Fanis Kleanthis is mainly concerned with the directional views and lines of Costopoulos. Kleanthis reports Costopoulos as the director of the production and he subsequently provides a list of the views and perspectives of the director as far as the revival of ancient Greek drama is concerned[264]:

> While discussing about his revival, Costopoulos mentioned that the direction is guided by the text itself. We are not allowed to trespass over this line just because we want to serve personal preferences or because we want to reveal or stress elements.[265]

The matter of the text as the most essential element of the revivals is a recurring topic in various critiques of this production. Unlike the performances of the past, the matter at stake was no longer the translation of the text. The use of translated texts was commonly used for all productions, particularly the translation by Gryparis. The matter now at stake was the preservation and promotion of the richness of *logos* through the appropriate staging and performance:

> The research for innovative ways of staging should be sought within the *logos*, not within the theatrical methods. He also stated that his aim was a homogeneous performance without unnecessary pomposity. And last, he said that his intention was to stage a performance which would be closer to the epoch of the original play rather than the time of his contemporary performance.[266]

Many were the Greek artists who held that anything and everything innovative concerning the staging of ancient plays should be solely sought in the text. The rich

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[264] The source of Kleanthis' information on the director's views is no revealed anywhere in the article. It is unknown whether Costopoulos gave any interviews prior to the premiere of the performance. The available sources do not provide such an interview, a lecture or a presentation where Costoboulos would have analysed his ideas about the revival of Ancient Greek drama.
[265] Fanis Kleanthis, 'Η Αθάνατη Τραγωδία του Σοφοκλή: «Αντιγόνη» στην Επίδαυρο - Η Βέρα Ζαβιτσιάνου στον Επώνυμο Ρόλο', *Τα Νέα*, 01 July 1969.
[266] Kleanthis, 'Η Αθάνατη Τραγωδία...'.

and powerful *logos* should always be the only source of inspiration for any innovation or modernisation of a long tradition. This was not a stand merely of the conservatives of the revivals. On the contrary, both conservative and progressive artists (such as Karolos Koun) repeatedly commented on the primacy of the text in modern staging. This does not necessarily mean that all artists followed the directorial lines of Costopoulos who attempted a performance closer to the time of Sophocles rather than the time of his contemporaries. Progressive artists of the time might have always had the text as their first source of information and inspiration; however their staging was aiming towards a contemporary audience. The constant references to the primacy of the text, though, allow the rise of an interesting observation: for a generation which was so deeply concerned with *logos*, there is a relatively small number of *Antigone* translations. One would assume that due to this concern, intellectuals would invest a greater deal of efforts in translating the Sophoclean play. However, the fact that *Antigone* (as well as other works of the ancient Greek world) was considered sacred ancestral heritage and should be preserved as such, made it difficult for the modern Greeks to attempt challenging translation.

Another critic who is concerned with the matter of *logos* is the author of the following article, Perseus Athineos, where he argues that

> The Sophoclean drama always comes across with great emotion, even in our days. The rich and deep *logos* is shocking, because it teaches us about humanity, justice and respect towards the ancient laws.[267]

It is obvious that each critic interpreted the matter of *logos* from a very different perspective and always based upon personal aesthetic and linguistic preferences. The close attention Costopoulos paid to *logos* was widely discussed by his contemporary critics who acknowledged the fact that he worked closely and thoroughly with the text. But a thorough analysis of the text did not secure the success of the performance. On the contrary, it was characterised as strict, dull or flat. Foti Trezou is amongst the critics who commented on Costopoulos' flat use of *logos*:

[267] Perseus Athineos, 'Η Αντιγόνη του Σοφοκλεους στην Επίδαυρο', *Ημερήσια*, 10 July 1969

> The direction of the performance of *Antigone* (by Mr. Lambros Costopoulos) was characterised by severe lack of inspiration, intensity and elation. Everything was kept at a sensible level according to a thorough analysis of the text and regardless the fact that it was heard clearly, the *logos* of the performance was very languid. Mr. Costopoulos achieved on giving us an Antigone with veins empty of blood.[268]

The next source was retrieved from the archives of the National Theatre but there, however it does not provide details as far as the author is concerned. The anonymous author's review reaffirms the aforementioned view that the performance was flat and Costopoulos' particular use of *logos* resulted to a lifeless performance:

> Unfortunately, the performance which was directed by Lambros Costopoulos was not equally worthy of the Sophoclean masterpiece. As for the direction, the tragedy was presented without rhythm, without uniformity, without vibration to stress the grandiosity of the *logos* and without inspiration.[269]

One could argue that the fixation on the text might be a result of the many years of cultivation and spreading of the idea of preservation of the ancestral heritage. The contemporary audience though, which was now gradually getting all the more familiar with the ancient Greek plays, demanded performances which would go beyond the traditional and the expected, not only as far as *logos* was concerned, but also in respect to the setting designs and the costume designs: 'The setting design of Mr. Klonis was heavy and dull. His costumes were strict, thrifty and concordant in line and colour tones.'[270] The setting and costume designs as well as the musical compositions were commonly characterised as heavy, dull and uninspired:

> The setting design by Mr. Klonis was rather heavy and the costumes which were inspired by the older costumes of *Antigone* performances and adjusted to the purposes of this performance were unsuccessful. Last, the music compositions of Mr. Dragatakis was foreign to the spirit of tragedy as well.[271]

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[268] Fofi Trezou, 'Κριτική: Αντιγόνη του Σοφοκλέους, Θίασος Εθνικού Θεάτρο, Θέατρο Επιδαύρου', *Επίκαιρα*, 18 July 1969.
[269] Anonymous, 'Η Αντιγόνη: Το Φεστιβάλ Επιδαύρου', *Εστία*, 07 July 1969.
[270] Trezou, 'Κριτική: Αντιγόνη του Σοφοκλέους...'.
[271] Anonymous, 'Η Αντιγόνη: Το Φεστιβάλ...'.

The Athenian journalist Thodoros Kritikos, also commented negatively on the 1969 production. His comments refer to the closing paragraph of the programme notes, and he quotes the last phrase which praised the success of the National Theatre in approaching the contemporary audience with performances of ancient Greek drama. His opposition to the above statement is clear as he argues that

> If we take the *Antigone* performance as a criterion, we will have a very difficult time finding an excuse for such an excessive self-praising. Everyone who attended the performance was amazed by the outstanding number of spectators at the theatre. However, they were all equally amazed by the spectators' outstanding lack of comprehension towards everything that was happening on the stage.[272]

Kritikos wisely pointed out the fact that the majority of the contemporary audience, especially those who were not experts in the field, found difficulties in following and comprehending Costopoulos' performance. Kritikos' comments did not attack the audience of the performance as far as their comprehensive abilities or skills were concerned. They were rather an implied attack on the spiritual inflexibility of Costopoulos' approach as well as a suggestion for reconsideration from different perspectives:

> In order to interpret those texts which were composed for a completely different audience under completely different social situations, we most and for all need to acquire a spiritual flexibility unfamiliar to us, which will allow us to reconsider the narrow terms of theatre imposed by different contemporary theories of aesthetics, under a wider spectrum.[273]

The examination of all available sources as far as the 1969 production is concerned, leads us to an interesting observation. By 1969, Antigone had already been on the Greek stage for more than a century. During this century, both the production and the reception of the revivals had frequently been driven by political sentiments. The productions were usually driven by very specific political events of the time or they were the result of specific political stances of the people involved with the productions. But most commonly, the political tone of the reception of those performances derived from a deeper need of the Greeks to define their modern

[272] Thodoros Kritikos, 'Επιδαύρια '69: Η Αντιγόνη του Σοφοκλέους από τον Οργανισμό Εθνικού Θεάτρου', *Ακρόπολις*, 12 July 1979.
[273] Kritikos, 'Επιδαύρια '69...'.

Greek identity by fixating on the preservation of the past. In the case of the 1969 production, there was an evident shift of interest which finds its roots in the initial suggestions at the beginning of this section.

As has been previously mentioned, the official theatre of the state had no alternative than to comply with the rules, verdicts and preferences of the Junta. This is supported by the fact that the National Theatre terminated its cooperation with artists who were openly holding political stances, such as Alexis Minotis and Anna Synodinou. Instead, for the 1969 production, the National Theatre employed artists who were holding milder political stances or were uninvolved with the political scene of the country, such as Lambros Costopoulos and Vera Zavitsianou. In that respect, the National Theatre achieved to prevent direct political references and interpretations by the contemporary press. However, one should bear in mind that the criticism of performances of a similar style was usually very positive in the (recent) past. As a result, what initially seemed to be an apolitical reception of the 1969 production, turned out to be political in its own way. By criticising negatively the archaeological performance, the contemporary critics opposed to the preferences of the Colonels who repeatedly used the historical past of Greece and the ancestral heritage as part of their ideology and their propaganda.

Part 3: The Return of *Antigone* after the Fall of Dictatorship 1974

In the year 1973, the leader of the Colonels, Georgios Papadopoulos, attempted the democratisation (or liberalisation) of the Military Junta by freeing political prisoners, partly removing censorship and announcing elections and a new constitution. This allowed the opposition, including members of the Socialist movement, to take political action against him, and by extension, against the Junta in general. The movement against Junta had its roots within the University of Athens. During the Junta years, student syndicalism was suppressed, university students were forcibly registered to the Junta army and national student union presidents were undemocratically imposed by the Junta. A university student named Costas Georgakis, is reported to have committed suicide in Genoa, Italy, in 1970 as an act of protest against Junta. All the above led to the 21 February 1973 strike of law students on the streets of central Athens. A police intervention suppressed the strike and sources report that a large number of students were arrested and tortured. The events of February acted as a milestone for the subsequent events of November 1973 which remained in history as the *Exegersi tou Polytechniou* (Athens Polytechnic Uprising).[274]

On 14 November 1973, University students decided on abstention from classes and started demonstrations against the military regime. They barricaded themselves inside the faculty building in central Athens. They also initiated the operation of the independent radio station of Athens which was broadcasting slogans such as 'Down with Junta', 'Bread-Education-Freedom' and 'Our struggle, your struggle, our common struggle against dictatorship and for democracy'. In the early hours of 17 November, an intervention of the army was decided by the government and one of the three tanks which had lined up outside the Polytechnic was instructed to bring down the main gate which students were still standing on. The Polytechnic radio

[274] Kostis Kornetis, *Children of the Dictatorship: Student Resistance, Cultural Politics and the 'Long 1960s' in Greece* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), pp.225-311.

station appealed to the soldiers to defy their superiors' orders and then the announcer recited the Greek National Anthem. The transmission was interrupted by the entrance of the tank on the school's premises. Students, who watched the tank invasion followed by police forces, started leaving in masses while others found refuge in neighbouring buildings. Police snipers opened fire from nearby rooftops while policemen chased and attacked the demonstrators. The events continued on until the next day, resulting in several deaths in the area around the University, and the rest of Athens. The numbers of dead and injured vary; different sources report different number. Right-wing as well as far right-wing parties and representatives deny any deaths caused by the events until this day.[275]

The events of the uprising caused the fall of dictatorship and the reestablishment of democracy in Greece. Exiled Prime Minister Constantinos Karamanlis (1907-1998) returned to Greece and won the elections of November 1974 with his liberal-conservative party *Nea Demokratia* (New Democracy). In 1974, Greece entered its final phase of Democracy, a period of time characterised as *Metapolitefsi* (Regime Change) and since then it has remained under democratic constitutions. During the years to follow the dictatorship, Greece underwent great financial, social and cultural development, something which inevitably reflected on the arts.

Shortly after the fall of the Dictatorship on 24 July 1974, the National Theatre produced its next *Antigone* for the purposes of the summer Epidaurus Festival, on 10-11 August 1974. The performance is highly significant for two reasons. Firstly, the contemporary audience saw in *Antigone* the young protestors who rose against power and lost their lives while fighting against the unfair laws imposed by the Junta authority figures. Secondly, now that the Colonels were removed from power, the matter of historical continuity as sought through the ancestral heritage in general and the revival of ancient Greek drama in particular, would reappear in the social, political and intellectual circles of the country.

The organisers of the Festival announced seven different ancient Greek plays for the summer series of 1974: *Prometheus Bound*, *Alcestis* in combination with

[275] Dimitris Hatzisokratis, *Πολυτεχνείο '73: Αναστοχασμός μιας Πραγματικότητας* (Athens: Πόλις, 2004).

Cyclops performed on the same day as a double performance, *Lysistrata*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Hippolytus* and, as the finale of the series, *Antigone*. This was the largest number of ancient Greek plays ever performed in one Festival and it was probably a result of the new developing era which emerged after the deposition of the Junta. Responsible for the direction of this new production was Alexis Solomos (1918-2012), renowned Greek director, student of Karolos Koun, frequent contributor to the National Theatre productions and general director of the National Theatre in the early 1980s. Even though there were more recent translations to be used, Solomos chose to work with the commonly used translation by Gryparis. The choice might had been a result of the recent political events of the country and the Colonels' preference towards more traditional forms of language, or it could simply be a stylistic, linguistic preference of the director. Either way, the final outcome of his 1974 production was, and still remains, a milestone for the revivals of ancient Greek drama in general and *Antigone* in particular. The performance itself introduced themes which had already been introduced to European audiences: the conflict and boundaries between good and bad, the divine law as opposed to the human law, the femininity –or masculinity- of Antigone, etc. The contemporary press grasped this movement of development in reception. However, the political reception from nationalistic perspectives remained the most hotly disputed matter as far as this, as well as subsequent productions, is concerned.

Anna Synodinou, the protagonist of the 1956 production who was removed from the National Theatre cast for the 1969 production due to her widely known political stances, now returned to the National Theatre holding the leading role of Antigone. Ismene was portrayed by Elli Vozikiadou who previously held the leading role of Antigone in some of the 1969 National Theatre production performances and Stelios Vokovits, who received highly positive criticism, held the leading role of Creon. For the setting and costume designs, the National Theatre employed a new artist, Nikos Nikolaou. Very limited photographic materials of the production survive in the performance archives of the National Theatre[276] and their

[276] There are many surviving photographs from all the previous productions of the National Theatre which date as back as 1940. The reasons behind this lack of photographic material for the 1974 production are unknown. Even though there are only two photographs of the 1974 *Antigone* in the

examination does not reveal any significant modernisation compared to all previous performances of the company. The innovative, by Greek standards, use of chorus, on the contrary, was received as a significant modernisation. The choruses were accompanied by music specifically composed for the production by Vasilis Tenides[277]. Whereas in previous productions there was music as an accompaniment of the choruses, for this production the National Theatre escalated to a greatly significant innovation. Tenides did not only compose music to accompany the choruses; he also composed lyrics based on the text of the choruses. Therefore, the chorus was singing and moving across the stage with the accompaniment of music.[278]

Without the censorship imposed by the Junta, the National Theatre returned to its normal function with many improvements, renewals and innovations such as the programme notes for the summer Festival of 1974. The 1974 programme notes were significantly different than those of all previous Festivals. Firstly, there were two sets of programme notes: the first was solely in Greek, whereas the second combined English, French and German in order to accommodate the European audience which was frequently visiting the performances of the summer Epidaurus Festivals. Secondly, the new programme notes included a thorough plot analysis of each of the seven plays which were presented during the Festival that year. And last but most importantly, since 1940, all programme notes included the same introductory text with a few additions or alterations. However, the 1974 notes included a different text by University of Athens Prof. N.A. Levadaras.

The new text by Levadaras discussed the historical continuity of ancient Greek tragedy from antiquity to modernity by taking the readers and spectators onto a journey which begins with the first festivities dedicated to ancient Greek god Dionysus, goes through the western Middle Ages and European Enlightenment to

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performance archives, there is some photographic material in the Epidaurus Festival Programme Notes of that year.

[277] Vasilis Tenides is a classically trained musician. He composed music for an endless list of films, television series and performances, for all different genres. Information on his musical education as found on the website supported by Greek National Book Centre: <http://www.biblionet.gr/author/62644/Vassilis_Tenidis> [accessed 28 July 2015]

[278] Partial musical scores survive in the archives of the National Theatre: there is a score for flute and voice. In the scores folder, there is also information on the use of percussions.

end with the modern Greek revivals and their diachronic value. The most important arguments of the text though which elevate ancient Greek tragedy to a national matter, are found in the last two paragraphs. Levadaras noted that

> It is a truly touching phenomenon that Greeks of every age and educational level gather there [at the Epidaurus theatre] in the thousands because of an internal desire due to the belief that the play which is presented is an intellectual tradition of our nation.[279]

At the same time though, he stressed the fact that the tradition he refers to is not a religious one. ancient Greek drama might have had its roots in religious festivities and have since then been associated with religiousness of many sorts. However, the neither the ancient not the modern audience's interest relies on this religiousness. On the contrary, he held that

> The motive of attendance was and still is the aesthetic and dramatic enjoyment of the play. If the ancient Greek sought the catharsis of his emotions through tragedy, then for the modern Greek the entire play constitutes a catharsis of his soul and fills his heart with a noble feeling of a national pride.

The analysis of Levadaras' introductory note is a reminder of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century cultivation of nationalistic sentiments based on historical continuity which finds its justification in ancient Greek drama and its revivals. Traces of these nationalistic sentiments are not only found in the criticism of the contemporary press for the 1974 production, but also in all criticism of the productions to follow until present.

Similar to the majority of National Theatre productions, the 1974 *Antigone* received mainly positive criticism and it was repeated the following summer during the 1975 Athens Festival at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus. A closer examination of the performance reviews leads to two interesting observations. The first is concerned with the nationalistic sentiments in relation to the revival of ancient Greek drama were not, as it seems, only cultivated through the National Theatre and its representative. These sentiments were also cultivated by the representatives of the contemporary press who also held authoritative intellectual positions. The second

[279] N.A. Levadaras, 'Introductory Note on the Ancient Thetare', Epidaurus Festival Programme Notes, 1974.

matter is concerned with the 'apolitical' criticism of the 1969 production. The seven years of undemocratic military Junta imposition in combination with the very recent events of the Athens Polytechnic Uprising, could not leave intellectual Athenian circles unaffected. Therefore, the analysis of the 1974 production criticism, reveals that there are not only repeated references to historical continuity, ancestral heritage and national ownership; there is also a considerable number of references to the recent political situation of the country which was deliberately ignored and uncommented during the 1969 production.

During the years of the dictatorship, many voices were silenced. These voices were now freely expressing their opinions. The intense events of the past years had added a new dimension to the already rich *logos* of the Sophoclean text. Solomos' initiative as far as the choruses innovations were concerned, helped this new interpretation significantly. By emphasizing the chorus parts, Solomos allowed his contemporary critics to discuss the play in a way that it had never been discussed before. The play was no longer interpreted as a mere conflict between two powerful protagonists, but rather as a conflict which concerned the public opinion which might have been silenced but now gained a powerful voice. The connection between the powerful protagonists of the play (representing the powerful authorities of the political scene) and the voice of the chorus (representing the public voice of the Greeks) was therefore inevitable. In one of the leading Athenian newspapers, an anonymous author argues that

> With his direction for this new Antigone performance, Mr. Solomos portrayed the political nature of the play not only by stressing the conflict between Creon (the representative of the state laws) and Antigone (the representative of the unwritten divine laws), but also by giving power to the chorus (the representative of public opinion and dominion).[280]

The above discussion concerning the chorus as representative of the public opinion was not an isolated incident. In another newspaper article, Tonis Tsirimbinos also

[280] Anonymous, 'Αντιγόνη', *Εστία*, 14 August 1974.
Note: The article is signed by 'T.' but there is no further information indicating the author's identity. There is also no indication as why the author did not sign in his/her full name.

discusses Solomos' new directional methods for the chorus according to political perspectives:

> Mr. Solomos' directional lines clearly revealed the political tone of the play, […] a political tone which was not the result of the conflict between Antigone and Creon. It is rather the chorus who was responsible for this political tone. The chorus has never been as active as in Mr. Solomos' performance. The voice of the chorus, representing not the leaders but, instead, the common civilians, was louder than ever before.[281]

To claim that Solomos intentionally used the chorus innovations in order to give this specific political tone to his performance would only be an unsupported assumption. There is no evidence to support such a claim, neither in his personal memoirs, notes, and interviews nor anywhere else in the sources of the contemporary press. Whatever the political intentions of Solomos, the tendency to interpret the performance in such a way reveals that the suppressed critics of the Junta censorship were now reclaiming their voices.

The political references were not limited to the growing power of the chorus in comparison to the growing power of the civilians after their freedom from the dictators. There were critiques which provided more direct references to the sacrifice of the lives of young people who fought for justices and freedom, for their basic human rights. A frequent critic of ancient Greek drama performances, Perseus Athineos commented on the performance by making connections between the themes of *Antigone* and the recent deaths of young people as a results of the Polytechnic Uprising events:

> The apotheosis of universal love, of self-sacrifice, of the total holocaust of the soul, and as to contemporary events, of the implementation of comradely[282] affection: all the above are elements of the immortal and shocking Sophoclean poem, which has always touched and inspired every spiritual and intellectual person since 442BC when it was taught for the first time. […] The power of love is heartrending for the youth, who very

[281] Tonis Tsirmbinos, 'Σοφοκλέους Αντιγόνη: Στο Αρχαίο Θέατρο της Επιδαύρου', *Θεσσαλονίκη*, 17 August 1974.

[282] In the original Greek text of the source, the word 'comradely' was found as 'συντροφικότητα' (*syntrofikotita*). 'Συντροφικότητα' and 'σύντροφος' (*syntrofos*, brother, companion) are words which were commonly used amongst the leftists, not only during this specific period of time, but also in the past as well as in the future until present.

> often follow on a tragic path and give an even more tragic solution to their impasses: death...[283]

His analogy is one which brought together the self-sacrifice of Antigone with the self-sacrifice of the students of the Polytechnic. They all opposed to tyrants, dictators or political leaders and sacrificed their lives in order to defend justice and freedom of will and speech.

A year later, and after the repetition of the production at the *Odeon* during the Athens Festival of 1975, Athineos wrote another article throughout which he discussed the same matter again. This time his language and his references were more direct:

> *Antigone* is a play about immense pain and anger, the anger of every spiritual man against the illogical and inconsiderate acts of tyrants who are protected behind their personal power and impose their verdicts upon others. It is also a tragedy which celebrates the young generation's pure love for free life, a free life that nobody can take away from them.[284]

When free life and free choice was denied to them, they willingly sacrificed their lives, but their death did not mean the victory of the tyrants because life continues on as long as there are more human beings whose honourable soul and noble emotions balance out the unfairness and the harshness of the strong.

Besides Athineos, there were other contemporary critics who also commented on the performance by making references to the two analogies, between Creon and the tyrants, and between Antigone and the self-scarified young Athenians of recent history. Stelios Artemakis wrote that Antigone is one of the most recognisable heroines of all times,

> Especially in our age, because she reminds us that humans will always admire ethical heroism, faith in ideals, universal values, devotion to duty and respect towards divine law instead of human law, even when this human law is ordered and imposed by the peoples' leaders.[285]

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[283] Perseus Athineos, 'Σοφοκλέους Αντιγόνη στο Θέατρον Επιδαύρου, *Ημερήσια*, 14 August 1974.
[284] Perseus Athineos, 'Σοφοκλέους Αντιγόνη στο Ηρώδειον – Φεστιβάλ Αθηνών, *Ημερήσια*, 17 September 1975.
[285] Stelios Artemakis, 'Σοφοκλέους Αντιγόνη από το Εθνικό Θέατρο: Ένα Κορύφωμα του Αρχαίου Πνεύματος, Συγκλονιστικό Έργο-Δυνατή Παράστασις', *Ελεύθερος Κόσμος*, 16 September 1975.

It might have been unconceivable to question the authority of Junta during the past seven years; however, the freedom of speech of this new era, allowed contemporary critics to question, judge and condemn the injustices of their recent past.

The political references evoked the reaction from the opposite side, as many where those who questioned the appropriateness of political interpretation of the play. The theatre critic Costas Georgousopoulos, observed the tendency towards political interpretation in accordance with recent political events and argued that

> It is very common in our days to interpret *Antigone* through a 'political' spectrum rather than a human spectrum. But those who do so, how can they not understand that if the actions of Antigone are not purely human, then she is politically reactive? And why cannot they understand that Creon's failure is also purely human? What do they want to prove after all? Do they want to prove that if Creon was less humane and more politically flexible, he would have become a better leader?[286]

Georgousopoulos was a well-read intellectual influenced by international scholarship and European trends. As we shall see, he was also responsible for the translation of *Antigone* which was used for the purposes of the 1984 National Theatre production, one of the most controversial productions in the history of the Greek *Antigone* revivals. As his review revels, Georgousopoulos does not merely question the appropriateness of political interpretation of the play according to the recent historical and political events of the country. He rather questions the appropriateness of political interpretation through a polarised spectrum which highlights the two opposing sides of good and evil. At the same time, he suggests a humanistic reading of the play: both Antigone and Creon are humans, thus they are both entitled to simultaneously carry bad and good qualities. The point of reference for Georgousopoulos' influence is unknown but his views on the interpretation of *Antigone* seem to distant from a Hegelian perspective and move towards a more Heideggerian reading of the play.[287]

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[286] Costas Georgousopoulos, 'Αντιγόνη του Σοφοκλή: Επιδαύρια '74', *Το Βήμα*, 30 August 1974.
[287] Martin Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn 'The Ister'*, trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1996).

Apart from the recent political events, which affected the contemporary criticism of the 1974 production, the matter of Greek historical continuity and ownership of the ancestral heritage had not yet been resolved. Greek intellectuals and artists were well informed of the thorough research and deep knowledge of the foreigners as far as the revival of ancient Greek drama was concerned, but this did not prevent them from despising them. Even though we should bear in mind the fact that he was writing for the Colonels' own newspaper, views similar to the following by Angelos Doxas were very common expressed in the contemporary press:

> Foreigners and admirers of ancient Greek drama from all over the world might have had the chance to watch performances (some of which were produced by their own theatrical companies) which introduced many innovations and promiscuous alterations. But when they visit this place, they come to watch the authentic ancient Greek drama, the texts and meanings of which they might know even better than the Greeks themselves.

Regardless the tremendous amount of work devoted to ancient Greek drama in general and *Antigone* in particular, modern Greeks considered themselves the most appropriate for the revivals and condemned even their own Greek directors who received influences from foreign elements:

> Affected by the foreigners, the director [Solomos] attempted a modernisation by deeply analysing the meaning of the text. However, it is absolutely unacceptable to allow performances of experimental modernisation and vandalism of the meaning and reception of the play. Anything could be acceptable at an independent space. But not in the sacred ancient theatres and especially not within the official frame of the Epidaurus Festivals.[288]

As an ancestral legacy, ancient Greek drama should be protected and preserved within the authentic Greek context in which it was initially invented and presented. Interestingly, the article author differentiated between performances by independent companies at independent spaces and National Theatre productions which were presented at the ancient theatres of Epidaurus and the Odeon. Independent companies were 'allowed' to improvise and experiment. The National Theatre was not. It carried the responsibility of preserving the national heritage of

[288] Angelos Doxas, ' Στο Αρχαίο Θέατρο Επιδαύρου η Αντιγόνη του Σοφοκλή: Η Ανθρωπιά Πάνω από τους Νόμους, *Ελεύθερος Κόσμος*, 14 August 1974.

ancient drama especially when presented at authentic ancient sites. This view is reinforced by Artemis Matsas' critique when he mentions that

> Ancient Greek tragedy is our most precious national heritage, capable of awakening awe inside us by reminding us of the immortal Greek spirit. We should all be very proud![289]

The 1974 production was received and interpreted mainly as an innovative and modernistic attempt by many of its contemporaries. However, the surviving materials examined above do not reveal any significant or extreme innovation, something which was observed by some intellectuals of the time who held more progressive views as far as the revival of ancient Greek drama is concerned:

> What is it about this allergic sensitivity and concern of the National Theatre against... anything new, especially when it comes to this theatrical genre which is still under experimentation and questioning?

And he continues on with another question which has previously concerned this research:

> 'There are other directors [apart from Solomos] –within and outside the National Theatre- who have given excellent samples of innovative suggestions for the revival of ancient Greek drama. Why are they treated under different terms and why are they never given the same opportunities in order to present their work during these cultural events [Athens and Epidaurus Festivals] which are so important to our country?[290]

It has been previously mentioned that since the 1940s onwards, the National Theatre claimed the sole responsibility for revivals. The most significant performances were produced within the National Theatre. In addition, the National Theatre was the only theatrical company who presented ancient Greek plays at the ancient theatre during the Epidaurus Festivals, a situation which was observed and criticised by contemporary artists and critics of the time.[291]

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[289] Artemis Matsas, 'Η Άννα Συνοδινού στην Αντιγόνη', *Θησαυρός*, 30 September 1975.
[290] Solon Makris, 'Ηρώδειο, Εθνικό Θέατρο, Αντιγόνη: Μετάφραση Ιωάννη Γρυπάρη, Σκηνοθεσία Αλέξη Σολομού', *Νέα Εστία*, 15 October 1975.
[291] The theatrical company of Karolos Koun *Theatro Technis* was allowed access to the ancient Epidaurus Theatre in 1975 for the first time in the history of the Epidaurus Festival.

Apart from the references to other significant performances, the core of Chapter Two has closely examined three productions of *Antigone* by the National Theatre, each of great significance for different reasons. The 1956 production, and particularly the belt incident, has shown in a very characteristic way the marginalisation of the Left and the rise of conservative power which established the right, patriotic and nationally-minded order in the country by using the Hellenic past. The same use of the past was deployed by the far-right Colonels in their attempts to 'defend' and 'protect' the nation during the seven years of the Dictatorship. This was an awkward moment for Greek society. In contrast to the majority of *Antigone* performances of the past, the 1969 production received much apolitical criticism, which was in its own way, another political statement. The relationship between the past and the present, the ownership of the ancestral heritage and the modern Greek identity based on the ancient Greek spirit, are matters which were frequently discussed in the past in relation to the revivals of *Antigone*. In the case of the 1969 production, the above matters were silenced, partly because of the censorship of the junta and partly because of the awkwardness which arose from the tendency of the Colonels to promote this connection between the past and the present. The answer to the apolitical criticism of the 1969 Antigone, came of course with the intense political criticism of the 1974 production after the fall of the Dictatorship. Inspired by the text of Sophocles itself, the Greek society saw in *Antigone* the opposition of the Greek people against the cruel face of power and authority.

Chapter Three

Antigones of the *Metapolitefsi* (Regime Change) 1974-2000

The '*Ellada tis Metapolitefsis*' (Greece of the Regime Change) is the term which has been, and still is, used to politically describe the last quarter of the twentieth century in Greece. The term itself, in combination with the period of time it refers to, creates a paradox. The change of regime is usually an event which covers a short and specific period of time. In Greece, the regime change started with the events of the Polytechnic in November 1973 until the fall of the Military Junta in July 1974. However, modern Greeks who lived during the regime, as well as later generations, refer to the regime as an ongoing event. The acceptance of this paradox lies in the fact that this change of regime was a highly significant historical moment for modern Greece which led to a long period of internal national unity. The definition of this internal unity is a matter for discussion elsewhere and it differs between historical analysts, but unity was and remains the general sentiment across the country as far as the last decades of the century are concerned. The beginning of this period of unity is specific and undoubted and it started in July 1974 with the fall of the Junta. In contrast, the end of the period is unclear and undetermined. Unlike the beginning of the period, there is no significant political event to determine the end of the change. The term *Metapolitefsi* is commonly used to this day as if the regime change is -or at least was for a long time, the duration of which varies from one scholar to the other- an ongoing situation. In the introduction of his book entitled *Greece of the Metapolitefsi,* prominent Greek historian of this particular period of time Giannis Voulgaris argues about this term and its use.[292] The discussion as far as this paradox is concerned does not end with Voulgaris. Other scholars have also been concerned with the paradoxical nature of the term, such as Takis Pappas who mentions that the term *Metapolitefsi* might literally translate as change of regime, it however covers a period of approximately thirty years and it metaphorically translates into post-authoritarianism.[293] 'The term *Metapolitefsi* (regime change) is commonly understood in Greece to mean the replacement of the seven-year (1967-1974) dictatorial rule by democratic rule. In a broader sense, this term is sometimes used to describe the period in Greek politics that started in

[292] Giannis Voulgaris, *Η Ελλάδα της Μεταπολίτευσης 1974-1990: Σταθερή Δημοκρατία Σημαδεμένη από τη Μεταπολεμική Ιστορία* (Athens: Θεμέλιο, 2001), pp.13-14.
[293] Takis Pappas, *Populism and Crisis Politics in Greece* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p.2.

1974 and ended roughly in 1989.'[294] Bearing in mind the unsettled political situation, the numerous wars, and the internal conflicts of Greece since the beginning of the nineteenth century, this period of democracy was indeed a newfound phenomenon for the country, regardless the unspecified period of time which it covers.

As has been argued at the beginning of this thesis, modern Greece has always been characterised by intense conflicts and polarisation: Eastern and Western identity, conservative and progressive language supporters, academics and artists, royalists and anti-royalists, leftists and right-wing supporters during the Civil War, militarists and antimilitarists during the dictatorship. During the years of *Metapolitefsi*, there are not any intense political events which would explain another polarisation between the Greeks. However, the cultivation of polarisation between the Right and the Left since the 1930s, the events of the Civil War in the 1940s, the marginalisation of the Left in the 1950s and the rise of the far-right dictatorship in the late 1960s and early 1970s played very significant role in the political polarisation which emerged after the fall of the dictatorship: the polarisation between the two major political parties which governed the country from 1974 until very recently in January 2015. The first is the conservative political party of *Nea Demokratia* - ND (New Democracy), which rose to power in 1974 when Greece had its first democratic elections after the fall of the dictatorship. The second is the socialist political party of *Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima* - PASOK (Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement) which succeeded ND after winning the elections of 1981.[295] Since 1974, the two parties have been alternating in power; their representatives held the majority of the parliamentary seats, the ministries of the country and of course the positions of the Prime Minister and the President of the Hellenic Republic. Even though Greece was undergoing the most united and peaceful period in years, the last quarter of the twentieth century was characterised by a strong political polarisation between ND and PASOK. Inevitably, this socio-political

[294] Dimitris Kioukias, 'Political Ideology in Post-dictatorial Greece: The Experience of Socialist Dominance' , *Modern Greek Studies*, 11(1993), 51-73 (p.71).

[295] Detailed facts of Greek parliamentary elections between 1974 and 1985, as well as detailed analysis of the formation of both political parties PASOK and ND: Richard Clogg, *Parties and Elections in Greece: The Search for legitimacy* (London: C. Hurst, 1987).

polarisation reflected on all aspects of life including the arts. The Greeks' past has revealed that they have rarely managed to separate their political stances from their artistic choices. These last twenty five peaceful years of the twentieth century reveal that even under politically settled situations, the Greek artistic circles were still separated and opposed, always according to reasons which find their roots in political differences.

The third and final chapter of this study is thus going to examine the *Antigone* performances of the *Metapolitefsi* in the years between 1975 and 2000. It is also worth mentioning here that during this period, specifically in 1981, Greece became an official member of the European Community and a new round of 'negotiations' with the West had begun. This new interaction with the West divided the Greeks yet another time between those who supported the modernisation and internationalisation of the revivals and those who supported conservative and archaeological reproductions in order to avoid the 'impurification' of their heritage, and thus their national identity. The aim of this chapter is to suggest that the revival of ancient Greek drama has been politically driven not only during politically intense periods of time or intense politically related events. As it has been strongly stressed in the introduction, *Antigone* served as a political play in ways which exceed the strict meaning of the term politics. It has rather been used as a political play in social context, sometimes partly and other times chiefly driven by politics. Thus, *Antigone* was, and has always remained, a national matter driven by political ideologies and agendas regardless the stability of the political situation of the country.

Part 1: The 'Fiasco' of *Antigone* in 1984

The reestablishment of democracy contributed significantly to the development of the country. The years between 1975 and 1984 saw rapid financial, social and cultural development. During these years, the arts in general and theatre in particular were a constant reminder of this development. In his book on modern Greek theatre, prominent scholar of theatre studies at the University of Athens Platon Mavromoustakos argues that the *Metapolitefsi* allowed the foundation of new professional theatrical companies as well as new amateur theatrical groups which were constantly producing numerous performances of Greek and foreign repertoire a situation which helped in the establishment of a more complex character of modern Greek Theatre. Apart from the National Theatre in Athens, the National Theatre of Northern Greece and the *Theatro Technis* (Art Thetare - Karolos Koun) which were well established organisations, some of the most significant theatrical companies which were founded during these years were the *Amfi-Theatro* (Amphi-Theatre - Spyros Evangelatos), the *Laïko Piramatiko Theatro* (Popular Experimental Theatre - Leonidas Trivizas), the *Theatro tou Pirea* (Piraeus Theatre - Takis Vouteris), the *Theatro tis Aniksis* (Spring Theatre - Giannis Margaritis), and many more.[296] The works of many European playwrights were translated into Greek and were presented in Athens as well as other major cities. Eleni Varopoulou whose performance reviews in contemporary newspapers are frequently cited in this study, gives an extensive list of translated playwrights in her two volumes on theatre in modern Greece which includes Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg, Anton Chekhov, Mikhail Bulgakov, Friedrich Schiller, Arthur Schnitzler, Bertolt Brecht, Victor Hugo, Luigi Pirandello, William Shakespeare, Paul Claudel, Arthur Miller, Eugene O'Neill, Federico Garcia Lorca, etc.[297] Modern methods as far as stage settings, costumes, musical compositions and of course directional lines

[296] Platon Mavromoustakos, Το Θέατρο στην Ελλάδα..., pp.145-146 and pp.159-162.
[297] Eleni Varopoulou, *Το Θέατρο στην Ελλάδα: Η Παράδοση του Καινούργιου 1974-2006*, Vol.1 (Athens: Άγρα, 2009) & Vol.2 (Athens: Άγρα, 20011).

were introduced and adapted by artists who received foreign education and influences. The numerous performance reviews mentioned by Varopoulou reveal that the contemporary Greek audience usually received these modern methods very positively, as long as they were not applied to the revivals of ancient Greek drama. After more than one century of Greek revivals, the ancient plays were still considered the most precious ancestral heritage, the sacred gifts of antiquity to modernity. And the Greeks, who assigned themselves the role of safekeepers, were still fighting from opposing sides of two rival political parties this time, for the preservation of that which was rightfully theirs.

In the greater frame of development during the first years of *Metapolitefsi*, the state opened the doors of the Epidaurus Festivals at Epidaurus as well as the Athens Festival at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus to theatrical state companies other than the National Theatre. In 1975, the National Theatre of Northern Greece took part in the Epidaurus Festival for the first time in the history of modern Greek theatre, followed by the official state Theatre Organisation of Cyprus. The only exception to state theatres was the *Theatro Technis* (Karolos Koun) as it was at the time the second most renowned company of Athens, after the National Theatre. In the years to follow, other independent companies, some of which are mentioned above, joined the festival. The participation of other theatrical companies in these festivals was very important. In the past years, many were those who criticised the National Theatre for monopolising the ancient theatres for decades based on fake claims of responsibility to preserve the ancestral heritage. Mavromoustakos, however, explains how the National Theatre as the official theatrical stage of the state had monopolised the ancient theatre of Epidaurus for its own growth and establishment:

> The first 20 years, during which the theatre at Epidaurus was used exclusively by the National Theatre, went through a period of relative bewilderment where, within the particular political and social environment of post-Civil War Greece, the performances, though aimed

> towards a large audience, sought to confirm the importance of the first National 'scene'/theatre and its main actors.[298]

These accusations are of great importance as we will see shortly. The critics and artists who accused the National Theatre, and by extension the state, of considering the revival of ancient Greek drama their own legacy as discussed in the last part of Chapter Two, are those who would later on be the harsh critics of performances which did not comply with the original context of revivals firstly introduced and imposed to the audience by the National Theatre itself. By gaining access to the festivals, the independent companies attempted to prove that the revivals might be a national matter, but they are definitely not a matter which only concerns the National Theatre. As a result, numerous companies, including the ones mentioned above, invested on productions of ancient Greek plays, not only for the festivals but also as part of their standard annual repertoire.

After the 1974 National Theatre production, the National Theatre did not produce another *Antigone* for the following ten years. During those ten years, many other theatrical companies frequently staged *Antigone*, including the 1980 production of the National Theatre of Northern Greece which, interestingly, premiered in an open-air theatre in Nicosia, Cyprus. Cyprus was a British colony and went into a Revolution in 1955-1959 which led to the independence of the country and the formation of its first official democracy and constitution in 1960 with a population of approximately seventy five percent Greek Cypriots and twenty five percent Turkish Cypriots. Both Greece and Turkey signed as guarantors of the 1960 London-Zurich Treaty. The intense political events of 1973 and the fall of dictatorship in Greece caused an unstable political situation between the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots which led to the Turkish army intervention of 1974. The intervention cost the lives of thousands of Cypriots, both Greek and Turkish and resulted to the division of the island into two separate parts with huge population exchanges.[299]

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[298] Platon Mavromoustakos, 'Ideological Parameters in Reactions to Performances of Ancient Greek Drama at the End of the Twentieth Century', *Athens Dialogues* (2010), <http://athensdialogues.chs.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/WebObjects/athensdialogues.woa/wa/dist?dis=77> [accessed 26 September 2015], p.4.

[299] Brendan O'Malley and Ian Craig, '*The Cyprus Conspiracy: America, Espionage and the Turkish Invasion* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1999); William Mallinson, *Cyprus: A Modern History* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005).

The island is still divided into two and Nicosia remains until this day the only divided capital of the world. In addition, there is a long list of allegedly two thousand missing persons after the incidents of 1974. Many assume that a large number of the missing persons are dead and have been claiming the bodies since 1974. Bearing this in mind, it becomes cleared why the Sophoclean *logos* was intensified and the performance was positively and warmly received by the Greek Cypriot audience. In the opening scene of the Sophoclean play, Antigone cries for her dead at war brother that 'none shall bury him or mourn for him; He must be left to lie unwept, unburied, for hungry birds of prey to swoop and feast on his poor body.'[300] These lines must have echoed the pain and the anguish of the Greek Cypriot audience at the time. In his *Bodies of Evidence,* Paul Sant Cassia discusses in depth the matter of the Cypriot missing people in accordance with the Sophoclean myth, by characterising them as the 'heirs of Antigone', the people who have been asking for the bodies of their families in order to bury them and eventually achieve some kind of closure, both for the dead and for the living.[301] The choice of Nicosia for the premiere of the National Theatre of Northern Greece production should not be considered coincidental. There is indeed an evident resemblance between the myth of *Antigone* and the real events of modern Cypriot history but the bonds between the Greeks and the Greek Cypriots go far deeper than this incident as far as ancient history, language, religion, customs and traditions are concerned, and it is a matter to be discussed elsewhere.

Another significant *Antigone* production of this period was the 1976 production of the theatrical company *Desmi* (Bonds). In contrast to the 1980 National Theatre of Northern Greece production in Cyprus, the particular significance of this production does not lie in the performance itself as far as thematic connections, historical contexts or political events are concerned. The significance of the production rather lies in the foundation and operation of the theatrical company responsible for the production. The company was founded in 1975 under the name *Pnevmatiki Kallitehniki Etairia Desmi* (Spiritual Artistic Company *Desmi*) with 'the primary aim

[300] Sophocles, *Antigone, Oedipus the King and Electra*..., pp.3-4, ln.27-30.
[301] Paul Sant Cassia, *Bodies of Evidence: Burial, Memory and the Recovery of Missing Persons in Cyprus* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), pp.1-18.

of cultural de-centralisation'[302] as a response to the National Theatre monopoly in the field of ancient Greek drama revivals. In 1991, the company also introduced the *Centre for Ancient Greek Drama and Research and Practical Applications*, the first official institute for the study of ancient Greek drama in the country. The institute holds a very rich archive of ancient Greek drama revivals, which includes performance history, photographic and audiovisual materials, press articles and performance critiques, and many more. One of the founders and amongst the most significant contributors was Aspasia Papathanasiou, who also held the leading role of Antigone in the 1976 production of the company, presented during the summer *Kallithea Municipality Festival* in Athens. The significance of this does not only lie in the foundation of the *Desmi* as a reaction to the National Theatre; it also lies in the interest of Papathanasiou to portray the Sophoclean protagonist. As we are going to see in this chapter, to play the role of Antigone would become a goal as well as an achievement for every Greek actress who wanted to be considered amongst the most renowned.

Before examining the next *Antigone* performance, it is worth paying attention to two major political events which affected not only the performances but also the criticism concerning the performances of the following years. In January 1981, Greece became the tenth member of the European Community, the community which would later on become the European Union. This was a very significant moment as Greece was eventually weakening its bonds with the Eastern world and its influences after the four centuries under the Ottoman rule and it was now officially established within the European family. A few months later, in October 1981 the socialist party PASOK won the elections and became the first socialist government in Greek history with Andreas Papandreou (1919-1996) in the position of Prime Minister. As we shall see, these two political events were strongly associated with the National Theatre *Antigone* production of 1984.

Ten years after their last *Antigone*, the National Theatre returned to the Epidaurus Festival with a new production, the work of a totally new cast and crew. The general director of the National Theatre at the time was renowned journalist and

[302] For detailed information on the company, see Introduction, p.???

pioneer in the field of theatre Kostas Nitsos.[303] Prior to his position at the National Theatre, Nitsos was actively involved with the theatrical scene of the country as the founder of one of the most significant and progressive Greek theatrical journals entitled *Theatro* (Theatre) first published in 1961. He was also known for his leftist political stands as well as his participation in the National Resistance groups in the 1940s.[304]

The director of this new production was Giorgos Remoundos, who studied and worked as a theatre director in German speaking theatres in Austria.[305] His German School education and influences would haunt him especially as far as his directions for the National Theatre are concerned. As we will see, his progressive ideas and influences by prominent European figures, probably such as Brecht and his *Antigone*, would not be welcomed by the majority of his contemporary Greek audience, the critics or the National Theatre itself. Other members of the new National Theatre cast and crew included setting and costume designer Giorgos Patsas, music composer Giorgos Tsangaris, choreographer Charis Mandafounis and in the leading roles of Antigone and Creon the actors Maria Skountzou and Nikitas Tsakiroglou respectively. In contrast to the majority of performances from the 1940s, the director Remoundos used a new translation by K.H. Myris, a literary pseudonym for writer and theatre critic Costas Georgousopoulos[306], in contrast to the commonly used translation by Gryparis. Even though both translations are in demotic, Myris' version of Antigone is less musical compared to Gryparis' and closer to the spoken language of the time. Otherwise, the two translations in demotic do not significantly differ in content, neither between them, nor between the original ancient Greek text. The differences between the two translation texts lie in the

[303] On the life and work of Kostas Nitsos: Sofia Adamidou, 'Κώστας Νίτσος: Φωνή Δημιουργικής, Επίκαιρης Διαμαρτυρίας', *Ριζοσπάστης*, 26 April 1998; Costas Zafiropoulos, 'Σε Ευχαριστούμε Κώστα Νίτσο', *Εφημερίδα Συντακτών*, 01 April 2015.
[304] Van Steen, *Stage of Emergency...*, p.40.
[305] The archives of the National Theatre do not hold a biographical note for Giorgos Remoundos . However, information on his life and work could be accessed through the official archives of the National Theatre of Northern Greece which he had also worked for: <http://www.ntng.gr/default.aspx?lang=el-GR&page=64&item=310> [accessed 30 July 2015]
[306] Sophocles, *Αντιγόνη*, trans. K.H. Myris (Costas Georgousopoulos)(Athens: Κάκτος, 1994). Apart from writer and translator, Georgousopoulos is also a journalist. Some of his performance reviews for *Antigone* performances in the contemporary press have been examined and cited in this thesis.

choice of words. For example Sophocles uses the word ' τῆς μελλονύμφου', and Gryparis, whose translation was considered to have kept the rhythm and style of the original, uses the same word in a demotic form 'τη μελλόνυφη', whereas Myris uses the word more commonly used in colloquial demotic 'τη μνηστή'. The contemporary audience of the 1984 performance would have definitely been more familiar with Myris' choice of words. However, this was an issue for those who believed in the defining of modern Greek identity based on ancient Greek roots. More examples similar to the above given can be found throughout a comparison between the three texts:

Antigone (Sophocles):[307]

ΚΡΕΩΝ
Τάχ’ εἰσόμεσθα μάντεων ὑπέρτερον.
Ὦ παῖ, τελείαν ψῆφον ἆρα μὴ κλύων
τῆς μελλονύμφου πατρὶ λυσσαίνων πάρει;
ἢ σοὶ μὲν ἡμεῖς πανταχῇ δρῶντες φίλοι;
ΑΙΜΩΝ
Πάτερ, σός εἰμι, καὶ σύ μοι γνώμας ἔχων
χρηστὰς ἀπορθοῖς, αἷς ἔγωγ’ ἐφέψομαι.
Ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἀξιώσεται γάμος
μείζων φέρεσθαι σοῦ καλῶς ἡγουμένου.

as compared to *Antigone* (trans. Gryparis):

ΚΡΕΟΝΤΑΣ
Θα το ξέρωμε ευτύς κάλλιο από μάντεις.
Παιδί μου, μη τυχόν μαθαίνοντας
την αμετάκλητή μου απόφαση
για τη μελλόνυφή σου, ήρθες ίσως
με μένα τον πατέρα σου ωργισμένος;
ή μ' ό,τι και να κάνωμε, για σένα
φίλοι πάντα θα σου είμαστε;
ΑΙΜΟΝΑΣ
Πατέρα,
είμαι δικός σου κι οδηγός μου εσύ 'σαι
με τις ορθές σου συμβουλές, που πάντα
εγώ θ' ακολουθώ· γιατί για μένα
ποτέ δε θα 'ναι κανείς γάμος άξιος

[307] Sophocles, *Antigone*, 631-638.

να τον βάλω πιο πάνω από σένα, όταν
το σωστό συμβουλεύης.

and the 1984 translation of *Antigone* (trans. Myris):

ΚΡΕΩΝ
Αμέσως θα το μάθουμε κι από μάντεις καλύτερα.
Παιδί μου, μήπως άκουσες την τελεσίδικη ποινή
για τη μνηστή σου και φτάνεις χολωμένος στον πατέρα σου,
ή ό,τι και να κάνουμε μας αγαπάς ακόμη;
ΑΙΜΩΝ
Είμαι δικός σου, πατέρα. Με κρατούν ορθό
οι καλές συμβουλές σου και θα τις ακολουθώ.
Γάμος κανένας δεν βαραίνει στο ζύγι για μένα,
μπροστά στις δικές σου καλές συμβουλές.

Having been used to Gryparis' verse rendering, Myris' prosaic translation caused a great deal of a jolt to the audiences. For reasons which have been discussed in detail in the previous chapters, Gryparis' translation was by that time considered a classic masterpiece, and no other translation was expected to be, even in the slightest, as appropriate as his. With his prosaic style, Myris came to challenge this long established notion, and expectedly the audience reacted negatively. In combination with the foreign directional influences adopted by Remoundos (costume designs, stage settings, chorus movement and singing) which will be further discussed shortly, the new prosaic translation was one of the most significant progressive elements of this production which caused the initial negative criticism that later escalated to a major political conflict. This was the production which shook the stability and credibility of the National Theatre which was, until then, renowned for its classic performances of ancient Greek drama in the original context.

The programme notes of the 1984 Epidaurus Festival do not differ in structure from any previous programme notes. They are only provided in Greek in the surviving materials of the National Theatre archives, in contrast to all previous programme notes which survive in English, French and German. Also we might assume that they

were also provided in other languages for the foreign audience of the Festival as this was the case with all previous years. The programme notes included a new introductory note by the professor of the University of Ioannina, Fanis Kakridis. The note was entitled *Archeo Elliniko Theatro* (Ancient Greek Drama), a shortened version of the titles which always mentioned the 'National Theatre' in their titles. In contrast to the previous introductory notes, Kakridis' text is less patriotic or nationalistic as far as the ownership of ancient Greek tragedy is concerned. It is a generic text about the origins of ancient Greek drama and its reception in the modern world which only makes references to nationalistic sentiments in a brief comment at the very end:

> Today, we are trying to keep the ancient theatre alive among us, as the highest spiritual good, as a par excellence social achievement and as a democratic institution: a valuable heritage [κληρονομιά], a talisman [φυλαχτό] and a compass [πυξίδα].[308]

Unlike all previous Antigone productions of the National Theatre, this 1984 production was indeed innovative, with many modern elements and adaptations. The testimonials of the surviving press sources, supported by the photographic materials of the National Theatre performance archives, inform us that the audience of the 1984 Festival was presented with a performance which was totally different to any previous one. The setting design made no references to ancient Greek settings; it was a plain black background with a shiny black round central stage. Unlike all previous performances of the National Theatre, the costumes of which made references to ancient Greek garments, the 1984 *Antigone* costumes were adapted to relatively more recent times, making references to late nineteenth century dresses. Creon was dressed in a long coat, Antigone and Eurydice wore velvet Victorian gowns and the members of the chorus (twenty in total, another innovation of the performance) also wore long coats, white scarves and tall hats and held walking sticks. Taking into consideration all previous performances of the National Theatre which used musical compositions which attempted to make references to ancient Greek melodies, the musical compositions of this performance were another progressive element. Tsangaris used melodies with

[308] Fanis Kakridis, 'Αρχαίο Ελληνικό Θέατρο', Epidaurus Festival Programme Notes (1984), p.5.

influences from cabaret music in a combination with the traditional Greek rhythms of *syrtaki* (Greek traditional folk dance where multiple dancers form a line and open their arms to hold the shoulders of the dancers next to them, the meter is 4/4 and it usually has an increasing tempo)[309] and *zeibekiko* (Greek traditional folk dance where a single male dancer with opened arms dances in a sorrowful and drunken state, the meter is 9/4 in a relatively slow tempo).[310] The contemporary press testimonials, as well as an interview of the director himself, also inform us that Remoundos removed parts of the fourth *stasimon* of the play, as he considered them too 'literary' for the performance. As we have seen, the revival of ancient Greek drama, had for over a century been treated in a sacred, almost ceremonial way in modern Greece and the translations of ancient Greek texts were in their own a hotly disputed recurring matter. But to remove whole parts of the Sophoclean text was considered an unparalleled provocative act. This 'unacceptable' act was not discussed by contemporaries in relation to the text. The questions which would reasonably arise 'What does the removal of these parts do to the text? What does it mean? Why and how were the removed parts chosen?', were neither asked, nor answered. The question which prevailed the rest was the one asking 'What does the removal of these parts do to our ancestral heritage?'. Yet another *Antigone* was destined to be received and interpreted without taking into consideration the details of the translation, which would otherwise be the essence of the play. The combination of all the above resulted in an extremely negative reception of the performance. No other production in the history of the National Theatre seems to have received such negative criticism. The audience of the National Theatre, as well as the audience of the Epidaurus Festival, had been until then accustomed to traditional performances.

[309] Nikolaos Varvitas, 'Hasapikos "Syrtaki" Dance: Rhythmical and Kinetic Analysis and Rhythmical Numeration', *Research in Dance Education*, 5:2(2004), 139-158.
[310] Dimitri Monos, 'Rebetiko: The Music of the Greek Urban Working Class', *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, 1:2(1987), 111-119 (pp.117-118).

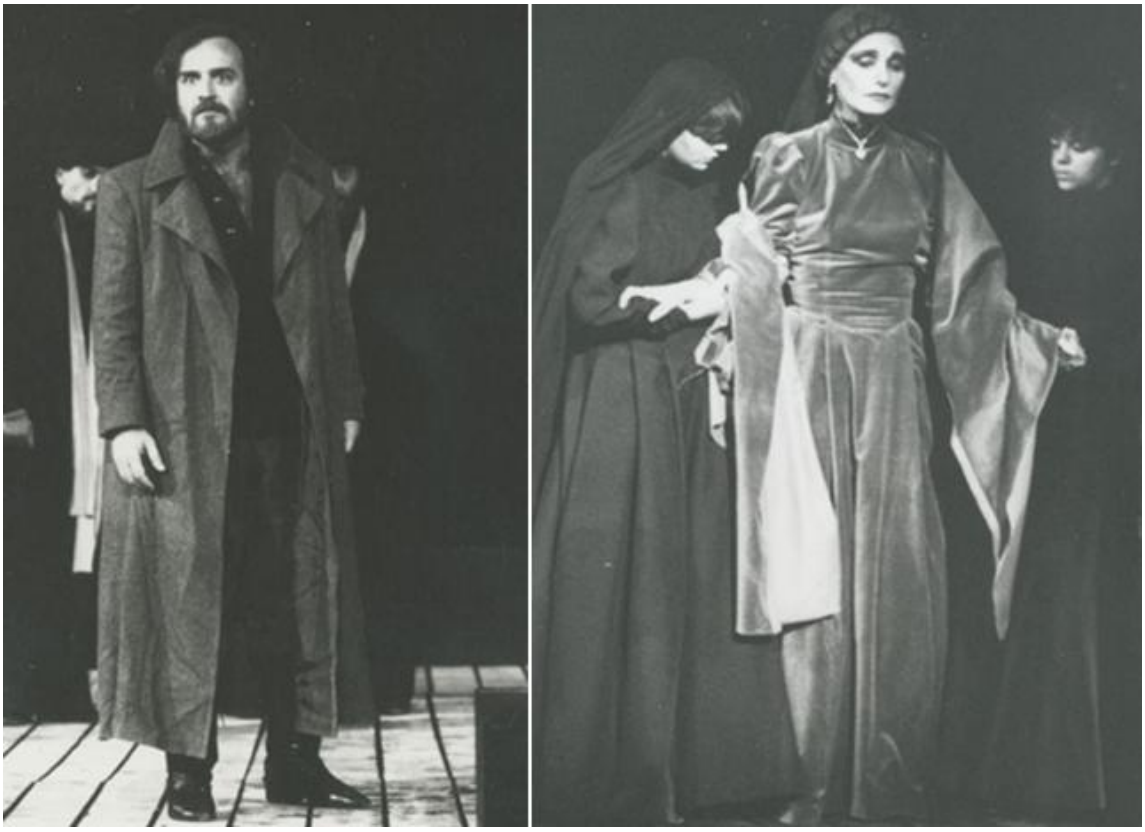

Fig. 3.1. Scenes from the National Theatre *Antigone* performance in 1984 at the Epidaurus Festival. On the left, Messenger and on the right, Antigone.
Performance archive of the Greek National Theatre

As we have seen in the examination of previous National Theatre productions, even the slightest modernisations in the history of the revivals had not been positively received. As a result, the new elements adopted and incorporated by Remoundos caused the extreme reaction of his contemporary audience and his reviewers in particular. Reports mention that the audience of Epidaurus shouted 'shame' when the performance finished and some of the special guests left the theatre before the end of the performance. Some even talked about an 'insulting' performance as Anna Synodinou, who previously portrayed Antigone in the notorious National Theatre productions of 1956 and 1974 and was in the audience for this performance, was accused of having left the theatre while the performance was still in progress, accusations which she later denied.[311] Numerous articles were

[311] Anonymous, 'Το Εθνικό δεν Ξέρει Τίποτα για το Φόνο της Αντιγόνης: Τρεις Κορυφαίοι του Θεάτρου Μιλάνε για την Παράσταση', *Απογευματινή*, 17 July 1984.

published during the days after the premier and amongst them there are only very few which do not condemn the performance. The positive criticism came from only very few reviewers who seemed to favour the political party in power, the socialist party PASOK.

Even though the initial criticism and opposition to the performance was concerned with the aesthetic elements of the production (costumes, setting, music, etc), it rapidly escalated to a political attack towards the National Theatre, which was responsible for the production, and, by extension, the state, which was responsible for the National Theatre. After the first two performances at the Epidaurus Festival, the insulted by Remoundos' modernisations audience, including theatre critics, former directors of *Antigone,* actors, authors, artists and intellectuals, demanded the withdrawal of the performance from the Athens Festival at the Odeon in August 1984. The matter took extreme dimensions:

> The ancient theatre of Epidaurus saw conditions similar to those in a football stadium this year. The whistling and shouting of phrases like 'shame on you' and 'disgrace' put the actors in a very difficult position and they struggled to finish with the performance. Some famous guests stood up and left the theatre ostentatiously in the middle of the performance.[312]

This was not the first time that the National Theatre had presented a performance which was not satisfactory or received negative criticism. In the past, less satisfactory or successful performances had always received the warm applause of the audience and negative criticism had always remained within a politically correct frame. As far as the 1984 production is concerned, the criticism was politically direct and personal. A characteristic cartoon in one of the leading newspapers of the time shows how Remoundos was 'put against the wall and shot'. Interesting, the executors in the sketch resemble old-school state officials in suits and police officers in uniforms, stating that the criticism of Remoundos was not the result of artistic opposition but was rather directed by political agendas.

[312] Eugenia Kaltezioti, 'Τα 2 Κακά Παιδιά της Επιδαύρου', *Πάνθεον*, 09 October 1984.

Fig. 3.2. Cartoon in leading newspaper of the time, portraying director Giorgos Remoundos outside the National Theatre as being 'executed' for his National Theatre *Antigone* in 1984.
Έθνος, 26 August 1984

Interestingly, the official announcements of the National Theatre were very positive in contrast to the rest of the criticism. Reporters had followed Remoundos while he was on a family holiday a few days after the first two performances at the Epidaurus Festival and had a brief interview with him. During the interview, he denied the episodes during the performance:

> Firstly, I need to say that nobody shouted 'shame' or disgrace', only a couple of disapproving exclamations were heard. Apart from those, the audience was satisfied and applauded the performance.

In the same interview, his wife also commented to the reporters by making a comment which would later on initiate the political discussion around the performance:

> The performance was applauded by the wide audience. The disapproving exclamations only came from a Member of the Parliament who belongs

> to the political party of ND and her friends, a group of around ten people. Nobody shouted 'disgrace'.[313]

The matter was no longer one which needed to be resolved between the director and his audience as far as directorial decisions were concerned or between the National Theatre and its reviewers as far as artistic choices were concerned. It was rather a matter which needed to be resolved between the supporters of two opposing political parties.

There were many reasons which contributed to the escalation of the affair. Firstly, Greece had in 1981 become a member of the European Community. On the one hand, the Greeks had been waiting for almost two centuries for their establishment within the western world. On the other hand, many were those who feared that the European influences were a threat to the authentic Greek spirit, culture and heritage. The fact that Remoundos was educated in Europe and was influenced by European movements while he worked abroad was not positively received by conservative and nationalist intellectual circles. Iro Lambrou commented ironically on Remoundos' German education and influences by comparing his *Antigone* to Peter Stein's *Oresteia* and a British performance where Hamlet was wearing a tailcoat[314].

> However, these foreigners were not directing at a monumental ancient open-air theatre like that of Epidaurus. Unfortunately, some of our own [Greek] directors, setting and costume designers, amateurs and untalented, adopt foreign elements MADE IN U.K., GERMANY, and adapt them to the ancient tragedy. The result is to destroy the works and disrespect the sites.[315]

Secondly, there was tension prior to the performance based on the grounds of political and ideological differences, between the leftist General Director of the National Theatre at the time, Kostas Nitsos, and the socialist government. This prior

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[313] Smaragda Michalitsianou, 'Ρεμούνδος: Ποιος Φώναξε… Αίσχος; - Ο Σκηνοθέτης που Ξεσήκωσε την Επίδαυρο Ξεκουράζεται Αμέριμνος 350 Χιλιόμετρα Μακριά από την Αθήνα', *Ελεύθερος Τύπος*, 20 July 1984.

[314] It is not specified which British *Hamlet* performance Lambrou refers to. It could possibly be the 1984 *Hamlet* production by the Royal Shakespeare Company, directed by Ron Daniels. The online history of performance archives of the Company provide a limited selection of photographic material and the costumes of the production seem to have quite a few similarities with the costumes in the Remoundos *Antigone* in 1984.

[315] Iro Lambrou, 'Για την Αντιγόνη του Εθνικού', *Γράμματα*, 02 August 1984.

tension allowed the attack on the General Director after the *Antigone* performance.[316] Last, the ongoing political battle between PASOK and ND was yet another reason for polarisation amongst the Greeks, from common civilians to artists, academics and press representatives. Bearing in mind all the above, it becomes clearer why in a seemingly peaceful period of time in Greece, an *Antigone* performance became, once again, a platform for opposing sides where they would resolve their political conflicts.

It is of great significance to stress once again that the whole matter did indeed start as an artistic opposition based on an aesthetic response to the performance. Every aspect of the performances was strongly criticised: the new translation and shortened fourth *stasimon,* the modern costumes, the minimalistic setting design, the musical compositions and the dancing of the chorus, and the directorial lines of Remoundos as far as the acting of the leading actors were concerned. However, the artistic and aesthetic analysis soon resulted to a political issue which the public requested to be resolved by the government officials. The first critiques after the premiere were more reserved than those which followed during the next weeks. However, the majority of theatre critics and article authors pointed out their oppositions strongly and firmly:

> It is not acceptable for the National Theatre to continue giving performances at Epidaurus. The legal violation of this *Antigone* production by the National Theatre is so serious that it could really carry the penalty of a temporary -or even permanent- exclusion from Epidaurus, because that was a dangerously ridiculous performance. Than could only happen though, if there were an execution body which would have the power to impose penalties upon actions which are dangerous for the theatre.[317]

As this was a performance review, one would expect the critic Minas Christides to discuss 'artistic violation' or 'aesthetic violation'. The term 'legal' immediately gives violation an official status; it is a violation of the law, a violation of the state and by extension, a 'national violation', one that needed to be punished by the same nation which has been violated. Opinions similar to the above were very commonly

[316] Lambrini Kouzeli, 'Κώστας Νίτσος: Χωρίς Φόβο Αλλά με Πάθος', *Το Βήμα*, 28 March 2015.
[317] Minas Christides, 'Φιάσκο στην Επίδαυρο: Αντιγόνη του Σοφοκλή από το Εθνικό', *Έθνος*, 15 July 1984.

found in the contemporary press during the days after the premiere. As a result, critics and authors gradually started to suggest solutions to the 'problem' caused by the innovations of the production.

The theatre critic, Perseus Athineos, published an article entitled 'A Coup at Epidaurus', which automatically gave the performance a political tone. Not only did he criticise the National Theatre for wasting national money, but he also suggested that such performances should be prevented from going on stage by official national departments:

> Our initial bitterness as soon as we entered the theatre was gradually turning into shame and rage while the performance was in progress. It is very sad that [the National Theatre] has wasted such valuable time and money on this performance. […] I hope that someone -maybe the *Academy of Athens*[318]- will take the responsibility of preventing such shameful and tragic experiments.[319]

The National Theatre was -and still remains- a state funded organisation, therefore the production of such unsatisfactory for the audience performances was considered a waste of public money. And as this performance was not only artistically unsatisfactory, but also insulting towards the precious national heritage of the ancient Greek ancestors, the contemporary audience considered it a waste of time for the National Theatre and a waste of money for the public who paid for it. An article published by an unrecorded author made similar suggestions to those of Athineos. This time the responsibility was assigned to a different official department, however the substance of the suggestion remained the same:

> I insist on my opinion that the solution to the problem caused by the atrocities of performances like this *Antigone*, should be given by the

[318] Founded in 1926, the Academy of Athens is composed of three Sections: the Sciences, Humanities and Fine Arts, and Ethical and Political Sciences. The main purpose of the Academy is the cultivation and advancement of the Sciences, Humanities and Fine Arts, the conduct of scientific research and study, and the offer of learned advices to the state in these areas. In the pursuit of these objectives, the Academy of Athens supports scientific research, participates in international scientific organisations, carries out publications, grants scholarships, and confers awards and honorary distinctions. For more information on the foundation, history and function of the Academy, see: <http://www.academyofathens.gr/ecPortal.asp?id=24&nt=18&lang=2> [accessed 30 July 2015]. On the history of the Academy of Athens see also: Eleni Belia, 'Η Ακαδημία Αθηνών κατά την Πρώτη Δεκαετία της Ζωής της', in the proceedings of the symposium *Ελευθέριος Βενιζέλος και Πολιτιστική Πολιτική* (Athens: Μπενάκη, 2008).

[319] Perseus Athineos, 'Πραξικόπημα στην Επίδαυρο', *Ημερήσια*, 22 July 1984.

> official Archaeological Services Department, which should announce the protection of the ancient sites.[320]

The matter escalated even further during the next days and the attacks were now more direct and they had clear political targets. Critics observed the differences between the foreign, modern and innovative elements of this performance in contrast to the traditional and 'original' elements of the previous *Antigone* performances. This observation which had initially been stated in their reviews soon deescalated while the conflict was escalating into a major political discussion until it became a conflict between the two major political parties, PASOK and ND. As far as this conflict is concerned, Nikos Politis wrote that

> Taking into consideration the fact that we will soon have another round of national elections -as the government says- we should all expect a politico-artistic fiasco as far as all performances are concerned, including the National Theatre *Antigone*. It has already been observed that behind this false dilemma between modernism and tradition, the producers wanted to promote another fake dilemma between [the socialist] PASOK and [the conservative] ND.

The attack became more personal when Politis referred to Anna Synodinou, an active member of the conservative party ND. As it has been mentioned above, Synodinou was accused for leaving the theatre in the middle of the performance. This was interpreted as a political move not only against the National Theatre bus also against the socialist government of PASOK:

> Nobody can convince me that Mrs. Anna Synodinou –an excellent performer, I have to admit, but also known for her involvement in the right wing circles- would have left in the middle of a performance directed by Alexis Minotis while Mr. Karamanlis was the Prime Minister.[321]

Politis' comments clearly depart from the sphere of artistic interpretation; they even exit the sphere of artistic interpretation under political terms, and they become purely political while attacking multiple targets. Firstly and most evidently, he attacked Anna Synodinou, the former protagonist of the National Theatre in the role of Antigone, not for her performance as an actress but rather for her political

[320] Anonymous, 'Ο κ. Ρεμούνδος του Σοφοκλέους', *Ελεύθερος Τύπος*, 23 July 1984.
[321] Nikos Politis, 'Η Αρχαία Τραγωδία και η Αμηχανία των Συγχρόνων', *Ο Πολίτης*, 05 October 1984.

stances and involvement with ND. Secondly, he attacked Alexis Minotis, former director of the National Theatre and director of the 1956 *Antigone* production which was kept in what Greek artists and intellectuals of the time considered 'original' context. And last, he attacked the National Theatre and its relationship with the former conservative government led by Constantinos Karamanlis.[322] What Politis suggests is that if the National Theatre was under the conservative government, and if the direction was assigned to a director such as Minotis, who favoured such political ideologies, members of the audience who also shared conservative stances, such as Synodinou, would not have objected to the performance. In essence, Politis argues that the negative reception of the performance came from the opposing political party and it was totally irrelevant to the actual performance.

The representatives of the contemporary press were divided into two opposing groups according to their political stands: the progressive socialists of PASOK and the nationalist conservatives of ND. Therefore, supporters of the conservative party were writing insulting comments against the socialists, such as

> The daughter of Oedipus was dancing a *buki-buki*[323] style dance, and when her sorrows grew bigger, she threw a couple of rounds of *zeibekiko*, as if she was at a gathering in the Executive Offices of PASOK.'[324]

With this performance, the conservatives of ND found ground for negative criticism as far as the forwarded views of the socialists and leftists of the National Theatre were concerned. On the other side, supporters of the socialist party –and occasionally supporters of the leftist-communist party- were commenting on the artistic stands of the conservatives and the old-fashioned traditions of the National Theatre, especially during the recent past:

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[322] First Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic (1974-1980) with the conservative party ND, after the change of regime to follow the seven years of military dictatorship in 1967-1974, He was succeeded by Andreas G. Papandreou from the socialist party PASOK (1980-1989) and in 1990, when ND rose to power again, he was re-elected, this time as President of the Hellenic Republic (1990-1995).

[323] Kiribati dance where the dancers incorporate large, sweeping hip movements. See: Katerina Martina Teaiwa, 'Choreographic Difference: The (Body) Politics of Banaban Dance', *The Contemporary Pacific*, 24:1(2012), 65-95 (p.70).

[324] Katerina Daskalaki, 'Ο Φόνος της Αντιγόνης', *Μεσημβρινή*, 20 July 1984.

> This performance of *Antigone* has only strengthened the views of those which support the National Theatre's monarchy of the petrified and conservative ideological and aesthetic academic perspective as far as the revivals are concerned.[325]

What they were really suggesting was that one unfortunate performance, as it was seen by some, would lead the conservatives back to their archaeological views on revivals by rejecting any possible modernisation as far as new translation texts, new directorial lines, new musical compositions and new costumes and settings were concerned.

Every time there was a new production of Antigone –or any other ancient Greek play- by the National Theatre, critics and intellectuals felt the need to remind the National Theatre of its 'responsibility'. They also felt the need to defend the people of Greece who paid –in the form of taxes- for the performances and the maintenance of the ancient theatres. This was not necessarily a bad thing. However, the National Theatre had no right to impose verdicts and rules upon any director. On the contrary, it should provide its crew with all necessary means in order to experiment and produce fresh and innovative performances. The majority of the critics failed to accept the experimentations of the National Theatre:

> This unique phenomenon in the history of Greek festivals should have compelled the resignation of the National Theatre administration (General Director and members of the committee). Such a solution would, of course, serve the section of PASOK which is in an open conflict with Mr. Nitsos, but it is time for some to assume their responsibilities.[326]

In her personal newspaper theatre column, Anna Synodinou gave her own negative critique for the performance and she also expressed her opinion for the resignation of the National Theatre committee:

> The National Theatre *Antigone* at the ancient theatre of Epidaurus was a funeral of this unique gift which has been given to us. I suggest the resignation of the General Director as well as of the members of committee. I also suggest that the National Theatre pretends they have

[325] Thymeli, 'Η Αντιγόνη στην Επίδαυρο με το Εθνικό Θέατρο', *Ριζοσπάστης*, 31 July 1984.
[326] Smaragda Michalitsianou, 'Θα Έπρεπε να Παραιτηθεί η Διοίκηση του Εθνικού μετά το Φιάσκο της Αντιγόνης', *Ελεύθερος Τύπος*, 16 July 1984.

> never staged such a performance which presented Greece as a vicious and insane country.[327]

Synodinou's objection was based on the claim that the 'extreme' modernisations of the performance destroyed the most precious piece of heritage that has been given to the modern Greeks and only an insane country would have treated its heritage in such a disrespectful way.

However, there were a few critics who disagreed with the above majority of negative criticism. Yet again, their disagreement was not based on artistic interpretations; it was rather a disagreement which concerned political stands, political preferences and political attacks. On that account, Giannis Kalantzopoulos mentioned

> Of course there were members of the audience who did not like the performance. However, it is one thing to dislike a performance and it is another thing to demand that everyone else would only like what you like. Even worse, it is one thing to dislike and criticise a performance and it is a totally different thing to dislike a General Director or the members of a Committee and judge a whole performance based the fact that they are not the people you associate with in the popular circles of Athens.[328]

In a similar tone, Nikos Langadinos commented that

> If the experiment fails, nobody gives us the right to attack the committee of the National Theatre, the director of the performance or, even worse, demand the resignation of the Minister of Culture. We should be sensible for once, not insane![329]

As a result of the audience uprising and the universal disapproval of the press, the issue was presented before the Parliament. The letter of ND Member of Parliament Mrs. Kontaxi which was addressed to the Minister of Culture Melina Mercouri[330], asked three questions: the first one was whether the Minister had decided on the

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[327] Anna Synodinou, 'Επιδαύρια '84: Στη Χάβρα του Εθνικού Θεάτρου Εκτέλεση εν Ψυχρώ της Αντιγόνης', *Ακρόπολις*, 17 July 1984.
[328] Giannis Kalantzopoulos, 'Ο Γιάννης Καλαντζόπουλοςς για την Αντιγόνη', *Τα Νέα*, 21 August 1984.
[329] Nikos Langadinos, 'Πειραματισμός ή Τέλμα;', *Εξόρμηση*, 27 July 1984.
[330] Melina Mercouri was a renowned Greek actress who starred in numerous films and performances but was also known for her political action especially in relation to the return of the Elgin Marbles from the British Museum back to Athens, her political activism during the years of Junta 'I was born a Greek and I will die a Greek', one of the founding members of PASOK and Greek Minister of Culture in 1981-1989 and 1993-1994, the first woman to ever hold this position. See: Efi Bekou, *Γυναίκες στην Ελληνική Βουλή 1952-2000* (Athens: Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2000), p.27.

dismissal of the National Theatre Committee, the second asked whether the National Theatre would continue the collaboration with the disastrous director Georgios Remoundos for subsequent productions of the company and the last was concerned with the participation of the *Antigone* production in the Athens Festival in August 1984 or in any other festival.[331] In an excerpt from her long speech, Minister Mercouri mentioned:

> I repeat, once again, that I am an enemy of censorship. I consider it the beginning of many evils. I will never be the one to impose censorship and I will not allow censorship to be imposed by anyone else while I am holding this position in the Ministry. […] I am addressing those representatives of the press who demand the intervention of the Government: I need to remind you all that regardless your political stances, you all need to understand that this is a matter of principle, a matter of democratic values and of freedom of expression.[332]

As to Mercouri's official announcement in the Parliament, the Athens Festival performances at the Odeon were not cancelled and the National Theatre General Director and committee did not resign. Before the presentation of *Antigone* at the Athens Festival, Remoundos commented that

> There is not one specific way to revive ancient tragedy; the number of different ways is equivalent to the number of artists who attempt a revival. A tragedy can be staged in as many different ways as human imagination can produce.[333]

Remoundos' progressive and modern views on the revival of ancient Greek drama would not be adopted by his contemporaries, not only during the following years, but also until present. However, the translation text and the performance were yet another time interpreted not in the context of political aesthetics but rather in the context of pure politics.

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[331] Anonymous, 'Η Εκτέλεση της Αντιγόνης στην Επίδαυρο Γίνεται Θέμα στη Βουλή', *Η Βραδυνή,* 26 July 1984.
[332] Soula Alexandropoulou, 'Το Κοινό θα Κρίνει την στο Ηρώδειο την Αντιγόνη: Η Υπουργός Πολιτισμού και 6 Κριτικοί και Καλλιτέχνες Στιγματίζουν Αυτούς που Απειλούν Επεισόδια και Ζητούν τη Ματαίωση της Παράστασης', *Ελευθεροτυπία*, 13 August 1984.
[333] Anonymous, 'Οι Περιπέτειες της Αντιγόνης', *Το Ποντίκι*, 31 August 1984.

Part 2: Foreign *Antigones* and the Identity Confusion

The project of European Capitals of Culture is one of the most highly recognised projects of the European Union until this day. According to the European Commission, 'The idea is to put cities at the heart of cultural life across Europe. Through culture and art, European Capitals of Culture improve the quality of life in these cities and strengthen their sense of community. Citizens can take part in the year-long activities and play a bigger role their city's development and cultural expression. […] Capitals of Culture highlight the richness of Europe's cultural diversity and take a fresh look at its shared history and heritage. They promote mutual understanding and show how the universal language of creativity opens Europe to cultures from across the world.'[334] The project was initially suggested by the Greek Minister of Culture Melina Mercouri, and in 1985 Athens became the first European Capital of Culture in the history of the European Community and later on the European Union. Almost a century after the first revival of the Olympic Games in 1896, Athens was once again in the centre of European attention. For the celebrations of this event, the Greek government organised an opening ceremony on the Acropolis, in front of the Parthenon on 21 July 1985. Apart from Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou and Greek Minister of Culture Melina Mercouri, the event was attended by numerous European politicians including French President Francois Mitterrand and Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi.

During the ceremony, a foreword speech was given by the President of Hellenic Republic, Christos Sartzetakis. Sartzetakis was a socialist supported by both PASOK

[334] History of the European Capitals of Cultures - official information documents European Commission: <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/documents/ecoc-fact-sheet_en.pdf> [accessed 02August 2015]. For further details on the history, political and cultural significance of the European Capitals of Culture project, see (particularly the first part of the book): Monica Sassatelli, *Becoming Europeans: Cultural Identity and Cultural Politics* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

and *Koummounistiko Komma Ellados* – KKE (Greek Communist Party).[335] However, nationalistic sentiments were not only cultivated within the conservative right-wing political circles. The matter of historical continuity and modern Greek identity was one that troubled both the right and the left wing supporters. In his speech, Sartzetakis stressed that the nomination of Athens as the first European Capital of Culture was significant for three reasons. According to Sartzetakis, the first reason was the establishment of Greece within the European Community: 'The nomination of Greece as the first European Capital of Culture reveals the unopposed truth about Greece's primacy within Europe.' The second reason had its roots in the historical continuity of Greece in accordance with Europe: 'All the elements which contributed to the formation of the European civilisation can be traced, in a chronological order, in the Greek spirit, the Roman state tradition, Christianity and the brave blood of the people who created Europe. Because neither Rome can be conceived without ancient Greece, nor Christianity would have survived without the help from the Greek language and the Greek spirit.' And the last reason was based on the cultural contribution of Greece from antiquity to modernity: 'This Greek spirit, untouched and insuperably perfect, has been passed on to us here in Athens and thus provided [Europe] with the invaluable cultural possessions' of art, philosophy and Democracy.[336] Even though Greece was flourishing throughout the 1980s, its economic and social status was not comparable to the rest of the European countries. Its contribution to the European family needed to be justified through different than economic and social means. Once again, the Greeks turned to their ancestral heritage in order to prove not only their legitimacy within the European Community, but also the significance of their role in the formation of the European civilisation as a whole.

Expectedly, the year of 1985 was very rich in cultural and artistic events. Various theatrical performances, dance performances and musical concerts took place in Athens as well as in the rest of the country, by both Greek and international

[335] Nickolas Limberas, 'The Greek Election of June 1985: A Socialist Entrenchment', *West European Politics*, 9:1(1986), 142-147.
[336] Sartzetakis, Christos, 'Αθήναι, Πολιτιστική Πρωτεύουσα της Ευρώπης 1985', 21 June 1985 <http://www.sartzetakis.gr/points/ellinismos2.html> [accessed 02 August 2015]

companies. The National Theatre itself produced fifteen different performances during that year including four ancient Greek plays.[337] The fiasco of the 1984 *Antigone* by Remoundos prevented the National Theatre from staging the play during this culturally significant year and for many years to follow. In 1985 only one Greek production of *Antigone* was presented at the *Romaïki Agora* (Roman Agora)[338] in Athens by the theatrical company of Vasilis Mitsakis *Theates* (Spectators) as part of the cultural events of *Athens European Capital of Culture 1985*. Even though the performance was given in the scandalous Myris translation of the 1984 National Theatre production, the rest of the elements were kept within the traditional, 'original' context and therefore it did not provoke any discussions on either an artistic or a political level.

In the broader context of Europeanisation and engagement with non-Greek cultures, another two performances of *Antigone* were presented during the cultural events of 1985. Both performances were produced by foreign theatrical companies and staged at the ancient site of Delphi. In order to discuss such performances in a modern Greek context one must always bear in mind the complex relationship between the modern and the ancient Greeks as it was cultivated, structured and developed during the past two centuries. It only then becomes more justifiable that even during the 1980s and now as members of the European Community, the Greeks still faced difficulties in accepting and trusting their *own* heritage in the hands of the *foreigners*.

The first of the two performances was *Yup'ik Antigone* by the Alaskan Regional Theatre *Perseverance*[339], directed by Dave Hunsaker. The performance was adapted according to the traditional ceremonies of the Yup'ik Alaskans and the language

[337] Performance History (1985) in the Archives of the National Theatre: The four ancient plays were Aristophanes' *Wealth* and Euripides' *The Bacchae*, *Hecuba* and *The Trojan Women*. A selection of non-Greek plays translated in Greek and presented during the year includes Ibsen's *The Wild Duck*, Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*, Brecht's *The Good Person of Szechwan*, Moliere's *Tartuffe* and Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew.*

[338] M. Hoff, 'The Early History of the Roman Agora at Athens', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, 36(1989), 1-8.

[339] Official Website of the company: <http://www.ptalaska.org> [accessed 03 August 2015]

used was the original language of the tribe.[340] This performance, in combination with the rest of the foreign Antigone performances presented in Greece during the same as well as the following years, could have served as a great opportunity to help the Greek audience realise the universality and the adaptability of their classical heritage; to appreciate it through an international spectrum and obtain a more spherical instead of the one-dimensional understanding:

> For a true cross-cultural community, Greek plays are some of the best to invest in, because the language and the ideas are large and universal. For instance, the *Yup'ik Antigone* was a retelling of the *Antigone* story from an Eskimo -a Yup'ik- point of view.[341]

One could argue here that while the *foreigners* made use of the full potential of the myth, the Greeks denied this opportunity to themselves. From a Greek point of view though, one could claim that the Greek revivals were making use of the full potential of the myths, in the sense that the the matter at stake was the definition of the modern Greek national identity: if the revivals could be 'used' as a link between the past and the present, then the ancient Greek plays were indeed used in their full potential for the modern Greeks.

The performance toured many countries and in each country one local actor was chosen in order to act as a narrator in the local language. The Greek actor chosen for this role was Dimitris Petropoulos. Twenty six years later, Petropoulos wrote an article about his involvement with the performance where he mentioned that regardless the opposition from the Greek conservative artistic circles, the success of the Alaskan production rested heavily on the fact that the Eskimos,

> Freed from references and comparisons, presented the masterpiece of Sophocles with immediacy, simplicity and respect but without awe or confrontational predisposition. […] Most importantly, they did not attempt to connect their legend with ours, despite the similarities. Nor

[340] Dave Hunsaker, 'To Mock the Spirits: *Yup'ik Antigone* in the Arctic' in *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage,* ed. Erin Mee and Helene Foley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp.184-200.

[341] Molly Smith, The Thebans in Alaska', in *International Dramaturgy: Translation and Transformations in the Theatre of Timberlake Wertenbaker*, ed. Maya Roth and Sara Freeman(Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lung, 2008), pp. 261-272 (pp.262-263).

> did they look for affinity beyond the relevant universality of the human condition. They did not seek to see through our [Greek] eyes.[342]

Through his accounts on the Alaskan production, Petropoulos pointed out the main problem of the Greeks, as far as the staging of Antigone was concerned. They inevitable references to a long lost past, the comparisons between two distant civilizations, the imposed awe for the ancestral heritage and the forced attempts to connect the ancient myth with modern realities did not allow the modern Greek audience to fully comprehend the diachronic universality of *Antigone*. On the contrary, the fact that foreigners did not carry the burden of the ancestral heritage, allowed them to interpret Antigone through a clearer and more unbiased spectrum.

The second foreign performance of 1985 was an Indian production of *Antigone*[343] by a theatrical company named *Awadh,* directed by Suresh (Kartik) Awasthi. Awasthi himself spoke at the International Meeting of Ancient Greek Drama in Delphi in 1984, discussing matters of revival and the universality of the myth. Like the Alaskan production, Awasthi's version used traditions of his country for the adaptation of the myth on which he showed very similar approach with that of the Alaskan production:

> The very claim of authority, and the attempt for its realization in doing classics, foreign or our own, is a self-defeating objective. It negates the very purpose of doing a classic, which by its nature lends [itself] to different kinds of interpretation and approaches in accordance with contemporary tastes and values of theatre practice.[344]

Following the foreign Alaskan and Indian performances, another two foreign performances were given at the ancient site of Delphi. The first was the *Antigone* production of the Harbin Theatre of China directed by Luo Jinlin and Nu Jicheng in the Chinese language at the fourth International Meetings of Ancient Drama in

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[342] Dimitris Petropoulos, 'Γιουπ'ικ Αντιγόνη', *Δήμοι News*, 31 December 2011.

[343] The performance is recorded in the Archives of the Theatrical Museum in Athens, in the official archives of the events for *Athens European Capital of Culture* 1985 and in the private archive of Alcibiades Margaritis 1920-1998 (Ref: A.E. 51/98).

[344] Suresh Awasthi, 'Greek Drama in Performance in India', Proceedings of the *International Meeting of Ancient Greek Drama Delphi 8-12 April 1984 and Delphi 4-25 June 1985* (Athens: European Cultural Centre of Delphi, 1987), pp.117-123; Helene Pofey, 'Modern Performance and Adaptation of Greek Tragedy', *American Philological Association*, 129(1999), 1-12, p.4.

Delphi 1988[345]. The Chinese Antigone was another characteristic example of how foreign cultures adopted and adapted the ancient Greek myth into their own culture and tradition:

> Instead of pity, fear, or torment, isolation of the tragic character is the core of the tragic in classic Chinese drama. It is the isolation of a redefined self and the isolation from the inescapable web of interpersonal relationship that define the Chinese sensibility for the tragic.[346]

The second was the *Antygone* production of the Krakow Theatre directed by Andrzej Wajda, an adaptation of the Sophoclean myth according to modern Polish history, at the fifth International Meetings of Ancient Drama in Delphi, in 1989:

> Playing the classics can be a way of expressing discontent with a regime that would censor the performance of a modern play. *Antigone* is one that has been so used. Andrzej Wajda, for instance, has a version with the chorus dressed in miners' helmets, and they represent Solidarity as much as Antigone in their cries for freedom. This version was performed in Delphi in June 1989, so that June's omen has become today's reality. Sometimes a classics provides a 'safe' means for criticising a present regime, and as Peter Weiss says explicitly in his *Marat/Sade,* 'After all, we are only talking about the past.[347]

None of the four foreign performances had received significant attention or positive criticism from the contemporary press. The significance of those performances lies in the subsequent Greek productions which reveal that the Greeks were not yet culturally or emotionally prepared to entrust their own heritage in the hands of foreigners.

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[345] Basic performance information can be accessed through the APGRD:
Antigone (1988), <http://www.apgrd.ox.ac.uk/productions/production/893> [accessed 28 September 2015]

[346] Alexander Huang, 'The Tragic and the Chinese Subject', *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs*, 2(2003), 55-68 (p.55);

[347] McDonald, Ancient Sun, *Modern Light...*, p.9.

Part 3: The High Expectations of a National *Antigone* in 1990

By the beginning of the 1990s, *Antigone* was well established amongst the most valuable plays of the ancient Greek heritage; it was a national symbol. The leading role of Antigone ought to be included in the repertoire of every leading Greek actress. Alternatively, every actress who was securing the leading role was subsequently considered a well-respected actress (Katina Paksinou, Anna Synodinou, Elli Papa, and many more). Accordingly, successful theatre owners, theatrical companies, music composers and theatre directors considered the staging of *Antigone* the ultimate national artistic task. Bearing this in mind, it is not surprising that the 1990 production of the play involved three of the most recognisable names of the Greek artistic scene of all times. The theatrical company responsible for this production belonged to Aliki Vougiouklaki who also took the leading role of Antigone, Minos Volanakis was the director and translator and the music was specifically composed for this production by Mikis Theodorakis. The production was presented during the Epidaurus Festival in the summer of 1990, as well as in Athens and other major Greek cities as a part of the company tour. Bearing in mind the status of the play by that time, the significance of the following performance lies in the combination of the successful trio of nationally recognised and important artistic figures involved. All three were somehow connected with the notion of the 'national', they expressed different sides of the Greek national identity and their audience recognised and supported them based on this notion. With different means and in different ways, all three had occasionally presented the Greece audience with an idealised image of contemporary Greece. Therefore, their collective attempt to stage an *Antigone* performance held a worth-mentioning *national* significance. A brief analysis of the work of the three individually will provide a clearer frame into which this *Antigone* performance can be understood.

Before examining their lives and works and how they relate to the notion of 'national', it is worth mentioning that all three of them had previously worked in

the Greek film industry, and particularly during its Golden Era in the 1960s. In an article on modern Greek film studies, Stratos Constantinidis argues that

> Research on Greek film is propelled by the number and kind of questions asked, as well as by the personal and institutional interests that fund it. To begin with, how one identifies Greek film depends on how one defines the Greek nation and the Greek nation-state. [...] Ultimately, the issues regarding the infrastructure of the Greek film industry in the twentieth century and the struggle of Greek filmmakers to find economic resources, cinematic languages, and 'genuine' Greek images and voices, were based on their desire to control their own image making.[348]

Unlike Vougiouklaki and Theodorakis, Volanakis has not been characterised a national star. However, he had repeatedly worked for the contemporary Greek cinema which constantly promoted the pseudo-constructed modern Greek identity.

Volanakis (1925 or 1926-1999) was a progressive film and theatre director and translator who studied with Karolos Koun, was self-exiled during the years of the Junta and was later on successful for his innovative staging of ancient Greek plays as well as foreign, mainly European, repertoire.[349] Even though he had previously been concerned with the matter of revival of ancient Greek drama, his intensive work, particularly in open air theatres, was presented after 1975 as a result of a personal maturity, according to his own claims:

> Before, as I was undergoing a period of research and rebellion against tradition, I avoided using ancient Greek theatres because I did not want to be tied to the demands and directorial guidelines that these theatres impose. Now I want to try the ancient theatre using a different directorial approach.[350]

After his death in 1999, theatre critic Eleni Varopoulou published an article on Volanakis' life and work which argues that Volanakis did not belong to the missionaries of strict form. He deeply analysed the texts in a consistent but simultaneously visual way. Spiritual and yet sensual, he pursued the musicality of

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[348] Stratos Constantinidis, Greek Film and the National Interest', Modern Greek Studies, 18:1(2000), 1-12 (pp.3-4).

[349] Michaela Antoniou, 'Acting Tragedy in Twentieth-Century Greece: The Case of *Electra* by Sophocles', (unpublished doctoral thesis, Goldsmiths University of London, 2011), pp.246-247; Romalea Doulou, 'Ο Μίνως Βολανάκης και η Αρχαία Ελληνική Τραγωδία: Το Παράδειγμα της *Ηλέκτρας* (1975), της *Μήδειας* (1976) και του *Οιδίποδα Τυράννου* (1982)', (unpublished masters dissertation, University of Patra, 2012), pp.7-10.

[350] Minos Volanakis, 'Ο Μίνως Βολανάκης για την Ηλέκτρα', *Αυγή*, 06 August 1975.

the text inside his own self, as well as the echoes of the text when it became the voice of the actors.[351] His translation of *Antigone* and his directional lines for the 1990 production confirm so.[352] However, his attempts to modernise the ancient text and to adjust the actors innovatively on the stage did not receive any recognition or success. This was not the result of poor directional guidance but the combination of other unfortunate circumstances, including Aliki Vougiouklaki in the role of Antigone.

Vougiouklaki (1934-1996) is considered a Greek phenomenon. She was a graduate of the National Theatre Drama School with a very successful careen in the theatre, television and cinema. She starred in forty two films and numerous theatrical performances mainly of the romantic comedy[353] and the musical genres. The peak of her film career was during the 1960s. She continued acting in films during the 1970s but she mainly took part in theatrical performances from the 1980s onwards until her death due to rapidly developing pancreatic cancer in 1996.[354] Vougiouklaki's success did not rest on either her acting or singing skills. She was never considered a great actress or singer; however, she was always considered a great performer. Her success rested heavily on her immediacy with the people. Her personal friend, actor, playwright and songwriter Lakis Lazopoulos talked about her innate talent which allowed her to connect with her audience in an article published soon after her death:

> I was impressed by the fact that in her films, even when she played the woman who was hand-washing in wooden tubs, her handkerchief was always perfectly placed on her hair and her lip makeup was carefully applied, an image which resemble nothing of the real women who were actually hand-washing in wooden tubs. But somehow everyone was identifying with her, simply because the woman who was hand-washing

[351] Eleni Varopoulou, 'Αποχαιρετώντας τον Μίνωα Βολανάκη: Μια Αποτίμηση της Σημαντικής Προσφοράς του Σκηνοθέτη που Έφυγε πριν από Λίγες Μέρες', *Το Βήμα*, 21 November 1999.
[352] Minos Volanakis online database by 'Φίλοι του Μίνου Βολανάκη'.
[353] Detailed explanation of the genre of *romantic comedy*: Athena Kartalou, 'Gender, Professional and Class Identities in *Miss Director* and *Modern Cinderella*', *Modern Greek Studies*, 18:1(2000), 105-118 (p.115,n.5).
[354] Biographical details for Aliki Vougiouklaki by renowned Greek journalist and her son, respectively: Malvina Karali, *Γλυκό Κορίτσι* (Athens: Αστάρτη, 1997); Giannis Papamichael, *Έχω Ένα Μυστικό* (Athens: Λιβάνη, 2008).

> in the wooden tub liked to imagine that she is also like her, or that she could become like her.[355]

Apart from Lazopoulos, the phenomenon of Greek film musical and its impact on the contemporary audience was also depicted by Lydia Papademitriou, who has specialised in Greek film studies of this era. Papademitriou suggests an interesting connection between Greek film of that period and the promotional frame of Greek tourism. Greek film musicals of the time paid specific attention to plot lines and imagery related to tourism as they both shared the same goals:

> To provide entertainment and escapism, and to feed the desire to be someone else, somewhere else. As a genre invoking wish-fulfilment, the musical drew on the desires and fantasies of its expected audience.[356]

Vougiouklaki had a star quality which the audience seemed to love and regardless the quality of her acting or singing performance, each of her appearances on the stage, television or cinema was positively received. In her book entitled *The Greek Film Musical*, Papadimitriou describes Vougiouklaki's star persona as a lively, attractive and desirable woman who uses her charm and wits to attain both amorous and social ambitions. One of the most characteristic aspects of Vougiouklaki's image was her long blonde hair, thus she was frequently compared with foreign stars such as Marilyn Monroe or Brigitte Bardot. A seemingly insignificant detail is that Vougiouklaki's hair was dyed rather than natural. However, Papadimitriou stressed the significance of such a detail by claiming that such a detail intentionally signifies the adoption of a modernized and Westernized identity in Vougiouklaki's part.[357] As has been stated at the beginning of this chapter, this period was strongly characterised by a re-evaluation of the modern Greek identity from a European perspective. Therefore, Vougiouklaki serves as an excellent example of this internal conflict between traditional Greek and modernised European identity.

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[355] Lakis Lazopoulos, 'Η Αλίκη και η Βουγιουκλάκη: Η Πρώτη Επαφή, η Δημόσια Διαφωνία, η Επανασύνδεση που Κατέληξε να Γίνει Φιλική Σχέση και οι Τελευταίες Στιγμές της Αλίκης', *Το Βήμα*, 04 August 1996.

[356] Lydia Papadimitriou, 'Travelling on Screen: Tourism and the Greek Film Musical', *Modern Greek Studies*, 18:1(2000), 95-104, p.95.

[357] Lydia Papadimitriou, *The Greek Film Musical: A Critical and Cultural History* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2006), p.124.

Vougiouklaki constantly tried to pass the image of a modern, independent and opinionated European woman. However, she never managed to escape the image of the adorable little girl who never grows up, an image which would later come into sharp contradiction with the more serious and demanding roles she attempted to perform. Her 'childish manners' and her 'naïve sexuality' were partly the reason she was often referred to as a 'kitten'.[358] The characterisation derived from a song in one of her most renowned films, *To Xylo Vgike apo ton Paradiso* (The Cane is Heaven Sent, 1959. The film storyline was based on the teenage love of a high school student, portrayed by Vougiouklaki, for her Greek philologist teacher. Ironically, one of the most characteristic scenes of the film takes place in the classroom where the teacher reads the famous *Antigone* chorus lines '*eros anikate machan*'. The young girl who was previously singing the 'kitten' song was now in a trembling voice citing and translating Sophocles (from ancient to modern Greek) in front of the whole classroom.[359] The Greek audience saw something in Vougiouklaki's ability to transform from a child to a woman, from playful to serious, and from a kitten to Antigone; they saw something and they felt something which led them to give her the characterisation of *Greece's national star*:

> The term *national star* reflects Vougiouklaki's unequalled popularity among postwar Greek audiences, but it also suggests that she was considered in some way to represent the values and characteristics of the nation. This was the result of the fact that she combined the typical and the ideal, the ordinary and the extraordinary, but also modernity and tradition.[360]

Bearing in mind the above characteristics, the Greek audience raised the expectations very high when Vougiouklaki's company announced their *Antigone* production for the Epidaurus Festival in 1990. They expected an *Antigone* which would combine the typical with the ideal, the ordinary with the extraordinary and modernity with tradition. They expected their *national star* to present a worthy *national Antigone*.

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[358] Papadimitriou, *The Greek Film Musical*..., p.124.
[359] Alekos Sakellarios, *Το Ξύλο Βγήκε απ' τον Παράδεισο* (Athens: Φίνος Φιλμ, 1959), 01:21:06-01:23:30.
[360] Papadimitriou, *The Greek Film Musical*..., p.126.

Apart from Minos Volanakis and Aliki Vougiouklaki, another renowned artist was employed for the purposes of this production. The musical compositions of the performance were assigned to Mikis Theodorakis (1925-present), one of the two most renowned Greek composers alongside Manos Hadjidakis (1925-1994). Born in the same year, the two composers starter their music careers in the 1940s, they reinvented older methods and forms, proposed new views on folk and popular culture and eventually developed and introduced, as Dimitris Papanikolaou describes it, their own 'cultural politics of music'[361]. It is not a coincident that based on the wholly body of their works, critics invented and frequently used the characterisation 'Greece of the two composers'. As Papanikolaou argues, this characterisation

> Was an official representation, reorganisation and conceptualisation of the whole field of popular music in the country, and was inextricably linked to discourses of national identity and high (modernist) culture.[362]

Theodorakis is not only known for his musical compositions; he is also known for his leftist political stands and his active involvement with the politics of the country throughout his entire life until today. In her book on his life and works, Gail Holst accounts that Theodorakis became a symbol of resistance during the dictatorship in Greece (1967-1974) as he had been imprisoned and tortured for his political stances, his music had been banned and his concerts were interrupted by groups of right-wing supporters, he later became a member of the Greek parliament, the leader of political youth movement and thus the most popular composer in the country.[363]

Theodorakis received a classical music education in Conservatoires in both Athens and Paris and his early compositions were based on western classical traditions and forms. Amongst other compositions of this genre, he composed an *Antigone* ballet

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[361] Each of the two created throughout the years his own school of popular Greek music by using what each considered popular Greek elements and traditions. Their image of an idealised Greece reflects on their works and it is now commonly described as the *Greece of Theodorakis* or the *Greece of Hadjidakis*.

[362] Papanikolaou, *Singing Poets...*, p.61.

[363] Gail Holst, *Theodorakis: Myth & Politic in Modern Greek Music* (Amsterdam: Adolf Hakkert, 1981); For Mikis Theodorakis in relation to the Junta and the years of exile see also: Mikis Theodorakis, *Journals of Resistance* (London: Hart-Davis MacGibbon , 1973).

which was presented at the Covent Garden in London in 1959 and music for a theatrical performance of Euripides' *The Phoenician Women* in 1960. As Theodorakis himself argued later on, these two compositions turned out to be the milestones for his future music career:

> It seems that with those two works, I reached my limits. At that point, the European what I was carrying inside me was fulfilled in a way. Of course, this European image offered me intellectual and psychological hedonism but, at the same time, it was a torture because it isolated me from what I considered 'my own Greece'.

In the same text, he also made particular references to his *Antigone* composition:

> When I was composing Antigone, I used mathematical computations so extensively that I felt I was lacking mathematic knowledge. Then I saw two paths opening in front of me. I could either improve in mathematics or attempt a radical return to the roots.[364]

Since 1960, he indeed attempted a radical return to his Greek roots. He composed music to accompany some of the most famous and patriotic works of Greek poets with references to the perpetual fights of the Greeks in order to secure both their national and personal freedom. One of the most significant compositions was the music for the *Axion Esti* by Odysseas Elytis in 1960. To this day, the composition of Theodorakis in combination with the lyrics of Elytis is considered one of the greatest masterpieces and it is commonly delivered with similar respect as that which is paid to the Greek national anthem. Consequently, Theodorakis has been frequently characterised as the *national composer* of Greece.

It is worth noting here that Vougiouklaki had previously performed at the ancient theatre of Epidaurus during the summer Festival of 1986. The play was Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, directed by Alexis Solomos and unsurprisingly Vougiouklaki held the leading role. The musical composition belonged to Manos Hadjidakis, initially composed for a 1957 National Theatre *Lysistrata* production. The *Lysistrata* production did not receive particularly negative criticism, even

[364] Andriana Soulele, 'Η Επιρροή της Ελληνικής Μουσικής Παράδοσης στη Σκηνική Μουσική για Αρχαία Τραγωδία μετά τον Β' Παγκόσμιο Πόλεμο ', in the proceedings of the international conference *Ελληνική Μουσική Δημιουργία του 20ου Αιώνα για το Λυρικό Θέατρο και Άλλες Παραστατικές Τέχνες* (Athens: Μέγαρο Μουσικής Αθηνών, 2009), 133-145, p.142.

though nobody praised Vougiouklaki's acting skills in particular. Indicatory titles of the contemporary press mention 'Aristophanes has just found his Aliki', 'Aliki managed to be national even at the Epidaurus' and 'The justification of our national star'. Of course, there were those who claimed that as part of the 'star system', Vougiouklaki held the protagonist role so that the Epidaurus Festival would 'gain broader public attention and guarantee commercial success'.[365]

With an experienced director in the field of ancient Greek revivals, a national star in the leading role of Antigone and a national composer responsible for the music of the performance, the 1990 production of Antigone was expected to be a great success. In contrast to the trio of Solomos, Vougiouklaki and Hadjidakis, Volanakis, Vougiouklaki and Theodorakis failed to convince as their final product did not meet the expectations of either the audience or the critics. The Greeks seemed to be far more lenient and forgiving as far as the revival of ancient Greek comedy was concerned. On the contrary, the revival of ancient Greek tragedy had always remained a serious, national task which required the respect of the artists involved. The playful and childish image of Vougiouklaki which established her as the national star was unacceptable for an *Antigone* performance. The audience loved their 'national kitten' in movies, romantic comedies and musicals as she represented their national character. This national character came into sharp contrast with the national character they presumably expected to see in *Antigone*. The Greeks saw one side of their identity in their national star and another side of their identity in their national heritage. Paradoxically, they never accepted the fact that their identity in its whole was simply a combination of those two different sides.

An audiovisual recording of the performance survives in black and white in the archives of *Elliniki Radiophoniki Tileorasi* – ERT (Greek National Television). Even though Vougiouklaki attempted a more serious acting style, her voice and posture maintained some elements from her acting in the romantic comedy films: light, almost singing-like with a slight tone of playfulness. Her critics depicted the similarities between her film acting and her stage acting and did not fail to criticise her on her inability to transform from a kitten to Antigone. The bad quality of the

[365] Van Steen, *Venom in Verse*..., p.203.

recording does not allow the observation of details as far as makeup and facial expressions are concerned. These details can be closely examined through the surviving photographic material.

There are two sets of programme notes for the 1990 Antigone production, which survive in the archives of the Theatrical Museum in Athens. The first is the programme notes of the Epidaurus Festival in the summer of 1990 and the second is the programme notes provided during the tour of the company around Greece. In the photographic material, Vougiouklaki appears with heavy eye makeup, another of her image characteristics in all her previous films and theatrical appearances. Apart from the heavy makeup which was strongly criticised, the critics also commented on Vougiouklaki's age. Regardless of her obsession with her image and the fact that she always appeared young, fresh and tireless, at the age of fifty six in 1990 she was considered too old for the role of Antigone. Her heavy makeup in combination with her age became the theme of ironic comments and sketches in the contemporary press who mocked the disastrous marriage between Antigone and the kitten.

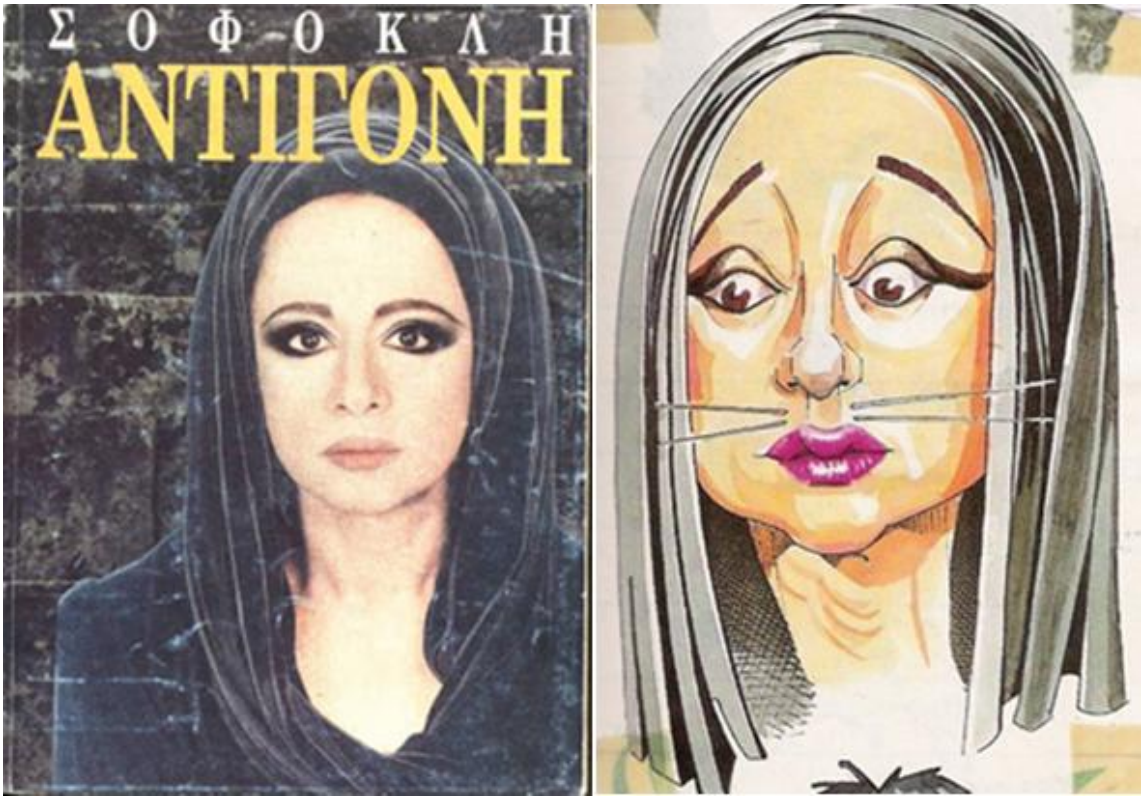

Fig. 3.3. On the left, Aliki Vougiouklaki in Minos Volanakis' *Antigone* in 1990 and on the right, a caricature sketch from the contemporary press portraying Vougiouklaki as a combination of Antigone and a 'kitten'.
Courtesy of Maria Hintiraki

Apart from very few exceptions, the general reception of the performance was negative. The newspaper headlines during the days after the two Epidaurus performances included sarcastic comments. One of the headlines was 'Meow Meow Little Antigone', and the author Theodoros Kritikos commented on Vouviouklaki's inability to transform from a kitten to a proper Antigone. Another headline was 'Antigone in Plastic Wrap' by Christos Chimaras who criticised both the producers and the actors for presenting a fake *Antigone* resting on the popularity of their names and their glamorous social status. An article by Katerina Daskalaki entitled 'Tragic Things' attacked Vougiouklaki by asking why an actress who had been widely accepted and adored by her audience would insist on playing such a demanding role which exceeds her skills. She also argued that by insisting on playing Antigone, Vougiouklaki informed her audience that their love and admiration was not enough; she wanted them to admire her in something different

as well. The reason behind this perseverance, the author says, should be resolved within the field of psychoanalysis rather than the field of arts.[366] Unsupported rumours claim that Vougiouklaki always desired to perform in *Antigone* while her colleagues advised her on the opposite. Regardless their warnings and concerns, Vougiouklaki did not only perform at Epidaurus, but she also accused critics and actors for personal attack after the end of the performance. Vaios Pagkourelis wrote

> If we want to summarise the situation in a few words, we have to say that with this performance, Vougiouklaki won a great battle against her own self, but unfortunately she did not win the battle against ancient tragedy. After all, nobody can win the battle against ancient tragedy. Simply, some defeats are not so painful for the actors and the audience, and some others are.[367]

The 1990 production of *Antigone* was definitely considered one of the most painful defeats. It was not considered a defeat because it was aesthetically or artistically inadequate, but rather because it acted as a reminder of the confused modern Greek identity between traditional and modern, local Greek and broader European.

The poor performance of Vougiouklaki in combination with the unclear directorial lines of Volanakis and the mediocre musical compositions of Theodorakis resulted in an unsuccessful production. This was not the first time that a production at Epidaurus was unsuccessful. The problem with this production was far deeper and more complex than it initially appeared to be. It finds its roots back in the historical research of the nineteenth century when Greek intellectuals tried to find historical continuity between ancient and modern Greece. As it has been extensively argued in the Introduction, the desired historical continuity was particularly sought in folkloric art and tradition. In theory, Greek intellectuals had found all the required evidence to support their views on historical continuity. In practice though, the marriage of ancient Greek elements with folkloric and popular traditions of the nineteenth and twentieth century was a difficult and confusing task, not only for

[366] The headlines of newspaper articles and abstracts from these articles are collected and presented in one single article: Anonymous, 'Χολή για την Αλίκη-Αντιγόνη: Πώς Είδε η Κριτική την Παράσταση της Βουγιουκλάκη στην Επίδαυρο', *Ελευθεροτυπία*, 15 July 1990.
[367] Vaios Pagkourelis, 'Θόρυβος Χωρίς Αντίκρισμα: Η Αντιγόνη του Σοφοκλή με την Αλίκη Βουγιουκλάκη στην Επίδαυρο', *Ελεύθερος Τύπος*, 9 July 1990.

the artists who attempted it but also for the audience which was receiving it. In her article entitled 'The Mortal Jump of Vougiouklaki', theatre critic Eleni Varopoulou argues that

> The 'Aliki package' which was presented at the Epidaurus, turned out to be a tremendous artistic fiasco. The impressive and financially successful chemistry of Vougiouklaki-Volanakis-Theodorakis resulted to a pretentiously serious, empty and deeply indifferent spectacle: a performance which was partly iconographic, melodramatic and sentimental like a family drama of vicious kings and strong-willed princesses, partly modernistic with references to symbolisms and abstract schemes and partly folkloric with pseudo-references to rural elements, accompanied by the music of Theodorakis as a reminder of some kind of undefined Greekness.[368]

Here arises the ongoing contradiction between the different sides of modern Greek identity. Graduate of theatre studies and theatre critic Eva Tsakona, wrote an article about this contradiction and how it is highlighted through the performance.[369] In her article, Tsakona argues that especially in the 1960s, the audience identified with the roles of Vougiouklaki and by extension with Vougiouklaki herself, because she represented the average people and she promoted the image of witty, hard working, family orientated, proud and self-respectful modern Greek. This realistic image came into sharp contradiction with the distant and unfamiliar, yet idealised image of Vougiouklaki in the role of Antigone. The negative reception of the performance was not the result of the audience's disappointment as far as Vougiouklaki's acting skills were concerned. It was rather a disappointment which derived from the audience's realisation that the two sides of their modern Greek identity were contradictory by definition. This contradiction would remain problematic during the years to follow and it is probably unresolved until this day.

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[368] Eleni Varopoulou, 'Θανάσιμο Άλμα της Βουγιουκλάκη', *Το Βήμα*, 8 July 1990.
[369] Eva Tsakona, 'Η Αλίκη-Αντιγόνη μας Έδειξε στην Επίδαυρο μια Αντίφαση', *Απογευματινή*, 09 July 1990.

Part 4: From Dionysian to Christian, *Antigone* in 1992

The foreign *Antigone* performances presented to the Greek audience during the late 1980s[370], in combination with the negatively received performances of the 1984 National Theatre and the 1990 Volanakis productions, revealed that the Greek audience was unprepared on many different levels. Firstly, as critics' comments and analyses have shown above, the audience could not –or, would not- accept the fact that foreigners had the right, the skill or the knowledge to perform the works which belonged to their own Greek national heritage. Secondly, when Greek artists attempted the adoption and adaption of foreign elements, the audience accused them of ignorance or disrespect towards the sacred ancient Greek heritage. And last, the audience seemed confused and opposed openly when confronted with productions with references to folklore, tradition and modern Greek reality, because those productions were a reminder of the double-sided and controversial modern Greek identity. This situation led the National Theatre back to its old traditions, to performances that were kept as close as possible to what the Greeks considered loyal representation of the ancient Greek setting and costumes.

In the meantime, the socialist party PASOK had lost the parliamentary elections in 1989 and the conservative party of ND rose to power again. This change of political dynamics within the parliament also brought a change to the social and artistic dynamics of the country in general, but more evidently within Athens. After the eight years of the socialists in power, as a conservative party ND tried to re-incorporate its ideologies not only within the political circles but mainly and most importantly amongst the people of the country.[371] Musician and widely known right-wing supporter Robert Williams was born and raised in Greece and was

[370] The Alaskan, Indian, Chinese and Polish performances as mentioned and analysed in the second part of this chapter.
[371] Dimitris Sioufas, 'Πολίτες, Πολιτική και Κόμματα', *Οικονομικός Ταχυδρόμος*, 32(1995), 59-62.

actively involved within the ND political circles.[372] In the 1980s' he was appointed for the composition of the official anthem of ND. The content of the anthem is characteristic of the political and social stands of the party[373]. It was an easily digested song, with a characteristic 1980s rhythm and music accompanied by lyrics which promoted the political and social ideological frame of ND. It characteristically includes the following verse:

Σε περιμένω να 'ρθεις και πάλι	I am waiting for you to come again
Μαζί να φτιάξουμε μια Ελλάδα μεγάλη	To create a great Greece together
Μαζί να γράψουμε λαμπρή ιστορία	To write a glorious history together
Ζήτω η Ελλάδα	Long live Greece
Ζήτω η Θρησκεία	Long live the Religion
Ζήτω η Νέα Δημοκρατία	Long live Nea Demokratia

Beyond the lightly themed lyrics of the anthem, there lies an interesting and intriguing message, a message which calls for the people of Greece to unite in order to create a new Greece based on *fatherland* in one occasion and *Greece* and *religion* in another occasion. The choice of these particular words is of great significance based on the fact that they reveal an obvious similarity to the words of the main Greek military junta slogans in 1967 until 1974: *Ellas Ellenon Christianon* (Greece of Christian Greeks) and *Patris-Thriskia-Ekogenia* (Fatherland-Religion-Family)[374]. Both slogans have their roots back in history from the late nineteenth century, variations of which have also been used by the Metaxas Dictatorship in the late 1930s. The double paradox of this choice of words lies in two reasons. Firstly and most evidently, the events of the military regime were far too recent and

[372] Nikos Hidiroglou, 'Ρόμπερτ Ουίλιαμς: Σαφώς και Υπάρχει Δεξιά Διανόηση στη Χώρα, *Ελεύθερη Ώρα*, 16 July 2012.

[373] The anthem of the party was been officially used from the late 1980s until today. Apart from scarce and unreferenced fragmented pieces of information, there is no available material to the public as far as the composition of the anthem is concerned. Therefore, I have personally contacted a representative of the party for further information on the matter, but never received an official reply from them.

[374] Efi Gazi, *Πατρίς, Θρησκεία, Οικογένεια: Ιστορία ενός Συνθήματος 1880-1930* (Athens: Πόλις, 2011); Paraskevi Gkolia, *Υμνώντας το Έθνος: Ο Ρόλος των Εθνικών Γιορτών στην Εθνική Διαπαιδαγώγηση* (Athens: Επίκεντρο, 2011), pp.157-158.

therefore making use of the exacts words of the junta slogans was, in the least, an awkward coincidence. The notion of building a new country by promoting the ideals of fatherland and religion would not have been such an unexpected and disturbing decision under other circumstances, especially when it came from a conservative party. However, it can only be interpreted as, to say the least, a poorly thought decision of ND considering the fact that the exact same ideals expressed through the exact same vocabulary were used by the Junta as recently as two decades ago. This is not to suggest that ND is, or has ever been, a party which supported far-right ideologies. Right, far-right and even fascist ideologies though have occasionally been discussed in relation to Christianity in specific or religiosity in general.[375] The second paradox has its roots in a deeper and more complex problem of the definition of modern Greek identity, the combining of Hellenism with Christianity. As it has been extensively argued in the previous parts of this thesis, the construction of the modern Greek identity from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards was heavily rested on this commonly discussed problematic continuity between Hellenism and Christianity.[376] By using the combined ideals of fatherland and religion in their anthem, ND subtly re-raised and re-imposed the matter of this problematic double-sided of Greek historical continuity.

The change of political power in the parliament was followed by the replacement of the National Theatre General Director and the committee, which also brought a change in the artistic choices of the National Theatre. Artists who had previously worked with the National Theatre returned to their old positions. One of these was director Alexis Solomos, responsible for the 1992 production of Antigone which

[375] Aristotle Kallis, 'Fascism and Religion: The Metaxas Regime in Greece and the Third Hellenic Civilisation. Some Theoretical Observations on Fascism, Political Religion and Clerical Fascism', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 8:2(2007), 229-246.

[376] From the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards, the connection between Hellenism and Christianity has been widely discussed amongst Greek scholars and intellectuals who often rest their arguments about Greek historical continuity from the Hellenic to the Christian world on foreign scholarship related to the matter such as: Edwyn Bevan, *Hellenism and Christianity* (Oxon: Routledge Revivals, 2014); Werner Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1961); Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought: From its Judaic and Hellenistic Origins to Existentialism,* ed. Carl Braaten (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1967); Jaroslav Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture: The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism* (New York: Yale University Press, 1993); Frank Byron Jevons, 'Hellenism and Christianity', *Harvard Theological Review*, 1:2(1908), 169-188.

premiered at the summer Epidaurus Festival in July 1992. The production was a flashback of many previous National Theatre productions of not only *Antigone*, but also of other ancient Greek tragedies staged by the company. Solomos worked on the same old-fashioned directorial lines he had already used in the past. The performance was given in the commonly and widely accepted translation of Gryparis accompanied by the music of Vasilis Tenides, firstly composed for the purposes of the 1974 National Theatre productions, directed again by Solomos. The composition might had remained the same, however the use of Gregorian chant[377], as well as other elements influenced by Byzantine music, were received more negatively in this case, as far as the discussions concerning the relationship between Hellenistic and Christian traditions. The setting was designed by Nikos Nikolaou, who also designed the setting for the 1974 performance. The costumes were not designed by the same costume designer, but they did not significantly differ in style from those of the 1974 production. Lambrini Stefanatou's new costume designs were kept as close to the original ancient Greek garments as possible and very similar to the 1974 production costumes, apart from the chorus which in this case strongly resembled traditional western Christian monk garments. As with the musical compositions of the production, the costume designs also received negative criticism compared to that of the 1974 production, especially as far as the chorus's costumes were concerned, which eventually evoked the intense discussions over the relationship between ancient Greece and Christianity. The leading role of Antigone was assigned to the actress Maria Skountzou, who previously held the same role for the National Theatre's negatively received *Antigone* production in 1984, directed by Remoundos. The choice of Skountzou could also be considered a statement of the National Theatre that the success or failure of a performance does not rest merely on the capabilities of the actors employed by the company but rather on the directional lines of each director.

According to the performance archives of the National Theatre and the programme notes of the 1992 Epidaurus Festival, only two ancient Greek plays were performed at the ancient theatre that year. The first was Aristophanes' *Knights* and the second

[377] Church chant based on one single vocal line and derives from Latin liturgy.

was *Antigone*. The 1992 programme notes also share many common elements with the programme notes of previous Festivals, in both structure and content. They were provided only in two languages, Greek and English, and they included the same short note on the ancient theatre of Epidaurus with all previous Epidaurus Festival programme notes The introductory note was identical to that of the 1984 Festival programme notes, a generic text on ancient Greek theatre by Fanis Kakridis. The new additions to the programme notes were the theoretical texts which provided a brief summary as well as a theoretical analysis of each play, including *Antigone*. Interestingly and in accordance with the above discussion on the relationship between Hellenism and Christianity promoted by ND, the newly added play discussions in the programme notes were now strongly concerned with the religious dimension of the play. The introduction of such discussions was subtle, but the shift of interest and the attempt to draw the audience's attention to a religious analysis of the ancient play is obvious and should not be overlooked. There might not be direct references to the connection between the ancient Greek play and Christianity within this particular text, but its discussions over the religiosity of *Antigone* did initiate the subsequent discussions regarding the performance in combination with this problematic relationship between Hellenism and Christianity.

Fig. 3.4. Scenes from the National Theatre *Antigone* performance in 1992 at the Epidaurus Festival, with the chorus wearing costumes which resemble Christian Orthodox monks.
Performance archive of the Greek National Theatre

The programme notes do not give an author name for the analysis text, a text which for the first time in the history of the National Theatre *Antigone* productions engages with the European analyses of the play. The most prominent argument, though, is that regarding the religious dimension of the play. The anonymous author makes references to the Hegelian perspective and the tragedy of the two, with Creon being the ultimate tragic figure, instead of Antigone:

> The conflict between Antigone and Creon is indeed vivid and poignant, but there underlies it a deeper one: that between Creon and the gods, between the tyrant and the ultimate realities. These the tyrant can defy, but they will recoil upon and crush him.[378]

The analysis repeatedly returns to the matter of the gods and their presence in the plot. The gods may never present themselves in the whole play of *Antigone*, but the

[378] Anonymous, Epidaurus Festival Programme Notes (1992).

author argues that the play does not lack divine intervention. To the contrary, the gods are constantly in the events, they are guiding the events, the characters and their actions. The gods are not directing events as if from the outside; they work *in* the events. The anonymous author insists on this *presence through absence* of the gods in the *Antigone* play, by arguing that no Greek audience, believing in the reality of these gods, could fail to see the power of Aphrodite working against Creon at the tomb, when Haemon tries to kill him and then kills himself. He stressed the fact that a contemporary audience familiar with these gods of the Olympus could not have failed to see the constant divine interference throughout the whole play. However, the unknown author's contemporary audience was not one that would be familiar with those gods. It was a contemporary modern Greek audience only familiar with Christianity, a religion which had been imposed on this contemporary audience's national identity as an integral part of their *Greekness*. And as the subsequent analysis of the criticism of this production reveals, the contemporary audience did not interpret this turn to religiosity through the spectrum of the ancient Greek religion, but rather through the spectrum of their own Christian Orthodox religion.

It is interesting to observe how the ideals of *Antigone*, the ideals of a religion based on the deities of the ancient Greeks, were translated and interpreted through a Christian perspective. As a matter of fact, the ideals which are brought to the surface by the anonymous author in the same text could easily be adopted and interpreted by any religion:

> By far the biggest part of happiness, says the Chorus, is Wisdom. And what is this? The reverence to gods, to respect, in all humility, those deep human instincts: respect for the dead, loyalty to one's kin, the love that joins a man to a woman - in a word, the laws established, for a god is in them, and he grows not old.

To respect the gods, the human instincts, the dead, to be loyal to the family and to cherish the holy bonds between a man and a woman is the foundation on which the majority of the religions are based. The fact that the contemporary Greek audience of the 1992 production interpreted these ideals and values through the spectrum of Christianity is only logical and expected, regardless the paradox of

Hellenistic religion and Christianity. Bearing in mind not only the two centuries of efforts to construct the modern Greek identity based on, amongst others, the Christian Orthodox religion, but also the conservative government in power and its spreading of the notions of fatherland and religion, the Greek 1992 contemporary audience inevitably received and interpreted the discussions over religiosity through the most familiar medium of Christianity, their own religion. A characteristic example of this misinterpretation of the religiousness of the play was discussed by theatre critic Giangos Andreadis:

> If we accept that the highest of arts can be prophetic, then we can also assume that through the text of *Antigone* we can feel the quivering of sacred passion and of the Resurrection, not only of Dionysus but also of the Christian Holy Week.[379]

This example does not only reveal a simple paradox of combining the religious elements of Antigone with religious elements from Christianity; it reveals the ultimate paradox of a comparison between the resurrection of, amongst all the ancient Greek gods, Dionysus and the resurrection of the Christian god, Jesus. The two figures which are by definition oppositional, were now brought together and compared based on their resemblances.

The decision of the National Theatre to employ Alexis Solomos during that particular period of time was not coincidental. As he had worked for the National Theatre in the past, his socio-political views, as well as his views on the revival of ancient Greek drama were already well known amongst the representatives of the committee, the artistic circles of the time and the press critics. Through his work, Solomos combined this double sided of the modern Greek identity that the leaders of ND were trying to impose: the Hellenistic and the Christian. He realised the greatness of the ancient Greek heritage but feared that without the missing link of Christianity, the desired continuity would be in danger. Therefore, by combining these two elements, he was achieving the unachievable: to bring together two worlds, two religions, two audiences that shared almost nothing in common in a

[379] Giangos Andreadis, 'Η Αναμέτρηση με το Ανείπωτο: Για την Αντιγόνη του Εθνικού', *Μεσημβρινή*, 18 August 1992.

way that would secure the linear historical continuity between ancient and modern Greece. Theatre critic Minas Christides mentions

> I have always had this impression that Alexis Solomos was directing ancient tragedy and comedy like a *Philhellene*. That is, like a stranger, an admirer of ancient drama who was, however, carrying inside him a post-Christian Europe. He directs his performances with the respectability and the seriousness of post-Christian Europe, in combination with the clarity of the linear images on black-figure pottery. He portrays an ancient Greece of the outline, of only one dimension, with straight and neat creases, bodies of statues and a notion of temples with pillars, colonnades and capitals. A Greece looked with love and admiration - but from the outside. And particularly, from the north.[380]

Solomos' attempts to combine the ancient Greek with the Christian elements did not seem to impress either the audience or the critics. On the contrary, the performance only portrayed an image of an old and austere Greece, a Greece of an untouchable and glorious past and of an uncertain and ambiguous Christian European present. Prominent theatre critic Vaios Pangourelis was a supporter of this view as he argued that in his efforts to respect and follow the 'classic' path of direction according to his previous production of *Antigone* in 1974, Alexis Solomos only managed to create an 'example to be avoided, as it only refers to something obsolete'.[381] Another prominent critic, Giannis Varveris, seems to agree with Pangourelis' views on the oldness of Solomos' production. Varveris did not fail to comment on the new approach attempted by Solomos, which adopted a Creon-centred perspective. According to his claims though, the general notion of the performance did not adapt to this perspective, as it was identical to the 1974 production and it did not revive anything apart from its initial oldness.[382] Apart from the obsolete character of the performance, Varveris made specific references to this paradoxical connection between ancient Greece and Christianity:

> Every ritual is typically inspired and executed based on its own understanding of the sacred. But, really, what is this connection between

[380] Minas Christides, 'Μία από τα Ίδια και Χειρότερα: Αντιγόνη του Σοφοκλή από το Εθνικό Θέατρο στο Ηρώδειο', *Τηλέραμα*, 25 September 1992.
[381] Vaios Pangourelis, 'Βέκιο Θέατρο...: Αντιγόνη από το Εθνικό στην Επίδαυρο', *Ελεύθερος Τύπος*, 03 August 1992.
[382] Giannis Varveris, 'Η Κόρη του Συμφιλείν: Η Αντιγόνη του Σοφοκλή από το Εθνικό Θέατρο σε Σκηνοθεσία Αλέξη Σολομού', *Καθημερινή*, 09 August 1992.

> the ancient world and Christianity which allows the borrowing of themes and motifs from the one to the other?[383]

However, the critics' concerns extended further than the relationship between the ancient Greek world and Christianity. In addition to the concerns of other critics of his time, an anonymous author of a prominent contemporary Athenian newspaper questioned the new fixation on the religiosity of *Antigone* in general, by arguing that Sophocles' position should have never been interpreted as one which encourages or proposes respect towards the gods, but rather as one which encourages and proposes respect towards everything that is fair:

> Regardless of the numerous prayers or references to gods in this [*Antigone*] tragedy, Sophocles' position is more on the socio-political side rather than the religious side. He does not want to teach us to be religious or respectful to gods, he teaches us to be fair. And the gods of the house of Labdacus, as well as the god of Abraham or Job, often seem to be unfair.[384]

It is worth noting here that during the early 1980s, we see a revival of Orthodoxy among intellectuals, and as we will see shortly, this grew with Greek sympathies with the Serbs in the Yugoslav conflicts. It is evident by now that the modern Greeks have always had the tendency to interpret performances of ancient Greek drama in general and *Antigone* in particular through a socio-political perspective according to their own contemporary history. When the opportunity was presented to them though, they did not fail to make connections between the play and the political events of foreign countries. Such an opportunity was presented at one of the performances of the 1992 production at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus. Amongst other recognisable political and artistic presences in the audience, the performance was also attended by the famous Serbian playwright Dušan Kovačević (1948-). The ongoing turmoil and war events in the Yugoslavian world at the time, could not leave the critics of the 1992 production unaffected. The presence of Kovačević at the ancient theatre provided them with an excellent opportunity to stress the universality of *Antigone* by making references and connections between

[383] Varveris, 'Η Κόρη του Συμφιλείν...'
[384] Anonymous, 'Παιάνας για τα Δικαιώματα του Ανθρώπου', *Μεσημβρινή*, 25 July 1992.

the brotherly war in Yugoslavia and the ancient Greek play. An unknown author of an Athenian newspaper commented that

> While the Serbian and Bosnian machine guns were firing in the city of Sarajevo, Serbian playwright and director Dušan Kovačević was at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus. We cannot know whether he understood the tragic logos of Sophocles, but what we can definitely say with certainty is that Antigone, who was portrayed by Maria Skountzou on Saturday, would have a lot to say to him about the dreadful fraterly war.[385]

Kovačević not only attended the ancient theatre, but he also was allegedly in tears throughout the performance, according to an article by theatre critic Sissy Menegatou who commented that in the faces of Maria Skountzou, who portrayed the tragic heroine, and of Nikos Tzogias, who portrayed Creon, Kovačević recognised all the Antigones all the Creons who live today in that place which once used to be a happy country, his fatherland.[386] Menegatou also conducted an interview with Kovačević throughout which they discussed matters of theatre in general and the *Antigone* performance in particular in accordance with the political events in his country. Excerpts of this interview were presented in the same article, where the Serbian playwright mentioned amongst other that 'Right now there are too many Antigones in our country, but at the same time, I am afraid, our own Creons will not experience their catharsis.'[387]

The examination of *Antigone* performances during the *Metapolitefsi* in Chapter Three, aimed to show that the matters which had concerned the early revivals had not yet been resolved. The translation and the treatment of the original text and the modernisation of the revivals in accordance with the relationship between the past and the present had remained problematic until the end of the millennium. Through the complex relationship between artistic choices and political stances, the 1984 *Antigone* by Remoundos has ultimately shown that each of the opposing sides was still struggling to identify and determine the modern Greek national identity in

[385] Anonymous, 'Ντούσαν Κοβάσεβιτς: Το Μήνυμα της Αντιγόνης', *Ελευθεροτυπία*, 23 August 1992.
[386] Sissy Menegatou, 'Δάκρυσε ο Ντούσαν με την Αντιγόνη: Η Παράσταση του Εθνικού τον Ταξίδεψε στην Πονεμένη του Πατρίδα, *Απογευματινή*, 23 August 1992.
[387] Menegatou, 'Δάκρυσε ο Ντούσαν...'

its own terms. At the same time, the examination of *Antigone* performances produced by non-Greek companies and presented on the Greek stage during this period, has shown the unpreparedness of the Greek society to receive foreign elements, methods, styles and traditions. The high expectations for the 1992 production of the play which involved three national figures, a director, a composer and a protagonist actress, revealed that the Greek audience was still considering the revivals a national matter. However, the result did not meet the expectations as it failed to comply with the constructed idealised conception of what a *national* revival should be like. And last, the 1992 National Theatre production while the conservative party was in power, re-raised the matter of continuity, this time through religion as an uninterrupted concept between antiquity, the Byzantine era and modern times. The matter extended further and beyond religion as the main aim was to address the matter of Greek historical continuity and, as I would suggest, the matter of supremacy of the Greek spirit. This was yet another awkward moment as similar concepts had been previously used by both the Dictatorship of Metaxas in the late 1930s and the Dictatorship of the Colonels in 1967. Of course the 1992 production reintroduced religious and historical continuity, maybe in a different way than how it used to be presented in the past, however the matter remained the same in its essence.

Conclusions

Antigones Performances in the Absence of *Antigone*

It is a fact that the revival of ancient Greek drama in modern times has always been a multidimensional matter. In the Introduction of this thesis I have attempted to show how it has been approached by different scholars and from different perspectives, both in Greece and outside. Many issues have been raised as far as this complex matter is concerned and scholars from various disciplines have attempted to provide suggestions, solutions or answers. The complexity of the revivals of ancient Greek drama in modern times finds its roots in the complicated relationship between the past and the present. The obvious problem which arises from the fact that the plays in question were originally written and staged for an audience completely different to the modern audience, is only the beginning of a long journey towards finding the purpose of modern revivals and their impact on modern audiences. Far beyond this, the revivals have frequently addressed questions which are concerned with the cultural, social and political contexts into which they are produced in modern times. The problem with the modern Greek revivals though extents further and deeper. Anna Mavroleon claims that

> The history of revivals of ancient Greek drama in modern Greece reflects the whole history of modern Greek theatre, but, most importantly, it reflects the history of the modern Greek society as a whole.[388]

The cultural, social and political contexts into which modern revivals have been re-interpreted, re-invented, re-produced and re-presented is only one side of the problem as far as the revivals on the modern Greek stage are concerned, as they came to be connected with the broader issue of a whole society which was in search of a national identity. Thus, it would not be a far-fetched claim to say that the history of modern Greek revivals is ultimately the reflection of a whole nation in pursuit of defining and establishing itself in the modern world.

The description of the social and political situation in Greece during the nineteenth century as well as the beginning of the twentieth century, as presented in the Introduction, has attempted to provide the reader with a chronological historical frame into which the discussions of the rest of the chapters can be justified.

[388] Mavroleon, *Η Διαχείριση του Αρχαίου...*, p.308.

Matters such as the War of Independence, the Philhellenism, the construction of the modern Greek nation, the language, the acclaimed Greek historical continuity and the pursuit of a distinct modern Greek identity have been frequently raised, sometimes in combination with each other and other times separately. In this case, I have attempted to bring together all those significant arguments which have been closely related to the revivals of ancient Greek drama in modern Greece. One cannot say with certainty how this relationship has come to be; neither can one say whose benefit this relationship has served. However, it could definitely be suggested that in their efforts to define and establish their nation and national identity, the modern Greeks found refugee in what they considered a landmark for the civilisation of their ancestors. Hence after, the revivals have become a battlefield for opposing sides, all of which were attempting to establish their own definition of the *national*. What I have attempted to show through the discussions of this thesis is that in this process, the modern Greek productions of *Antigone* have been repeatedly politicised in many different ways, directly or indirecly, when at the same time overlooked *Antigone* itself, the thematics of the play, the aesthetics of the performances and the linguistics of the translations.

The Introduction has fore-grounded different aspects of the historical and political issues of modern Greek history, the nation and the national identity in relation to or in accordance with the revival of ancient Greek drama on the modern Greek stage. Such issues are particularly and directly related to the performances which have been extensively discussed in Chapter One, which concentrates on the early revivals of Antigone between 1863 and 1940. Chapter One showed the intensity of those first revivals during a period when Greece was still covering its initial phase in the process of finding and defining its modern Greek identity. The revivals of the nineteenth century which have been analysed in the first two parts of this chapter, including the *Antigone* in Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1863, the first *Antigone* in Athens in 1867 and other *Antigone* performances until the end of the nineteenth century have shown that the revival of ancient Greek drama initially had an educational character. By educational character, I do not only refer to the fact that these early revivals were usually the product of the work of academics. Academics

indeed carried the weight of revivals during this period, but the educational character of these revivals extends beyond the modern Greek academic world. It was not merely the students at universities who needed to be informed about the rich materials of the ancient Greek world. The first revivals aimed at educating the Greek masses as far as their ancestral heritage was concerned. The people of modern Greece were taking their first steps in the process of getting familiar with what was considered their rightful heritage. As a result, the early revivals can now be held responsible for the spreading of nationalistic sentiments which lead back to the acclaimed ancient Greek roots of the modern Greeks.

The first *Antigone* revivals discussed in the first two parts of Chapter One do not make direct references to explicit political events or political conflicts. It is in a different manner that those early productions have been politicised. In the process of finding and defining the particular characteristics of a whole nation and a newly constructed national identity, the use of *Antigone* can only be seen through a political lens. And the political dimension of these early production does not lie in the specific characteristics of the performances as such, but rather in the specific characteristics which were somehow linked to the promotion of the ancestral heritage as an integral element in the construction of the modern Greek nation and national identity. It is not a coincidence that the matter of staging the *Antigone* performances in open-air ancient theatres dates as back as those early performances. In the Introduction, I mentioned Hamilakis' *The Nation and its Ruins* with regards to the use of ancient sites as emblems of modern nations. After the discussions of Chapter One, it becomes clearer why producers and directors of these early revivals were so concerned with the staging in such theatres: the cultivation of the notion that the archaeological findings of the glorious past would be the basis onto which the present should be built.

The examination of the productions discussed in Chapter One has also shown a double conflict regarding the appropriate language for the revivals, firstly between the original ancient Greek language and the *katharevousa* and, later on, between the *katharevousa* and the demotic. This is, again, not a direct political situation, but the discussions regarding the appropriate language have been politicised in many

ways. The preference towards any of the above forms of Greek language has often been justified through political stands in relation to the Greek national identity. As we have seen in this chapter, the language of *Antigone* translations was very often the matter at stake. As to Maronitis in the Introduction, intralingual translation is a complex, multileveled matter. In a translation from one language to another, there might be linguistic challenges and difficulties. But in the case of translation between ancient and modern Greek, the matter is even more challenging and difficult for two reason. First, the Greeks of the nineteenth century invested great efforts in proving continuity between the ancient and the modern Greek world (and by extension, ancient and modern Greek language). This elevates the matter of translation to a national matter, and inevitably a political matter. Second, to translate *Antigone* from ancient to modern Greek, meant to choose between different forms of Modern Greek, the *katharevousa* or the demotic (as well as a variation of their idioms). It is not the mere linguistic comparison between the two which is political; the decision behind each translators, director or producer's choice, however, is.

Since the beginning of the history of modern Greek revivals, the performances of *Antigone* had always received great attention. On very rare occasions though have these performances been interpreted within an artistic, aesthetic or even linguistic context, even when we refer to those performances staged during the period when the Language Question had been at its peak. Does this suggest the translations of *Antigone* were not of great significance for the Greek revivals? I would say definitely not. To the contrary, the discussions of Chapter One have shown that the translation was far too important to the Greeks in ways which exceed mere linguistic matters; it was also far too important in ways which exceed broader issues of cultural and political interpretations that non-Greek revivals and reception have been concerned with. The concept of the original language of tragedy was vital for the modern Greek revivals. It was not merely a proof that ancient Greek plays belonged to the Greeks more than they belonged to the rest of the world, it was also a means to sustain the links between antiquity and modernity, to prove the

much desired historical continuity and to promote a national identity which was strictly related to the ancient Greek roots and the ancestral heritage.

In addition to the above, Chapter One also showed how the matter of language in the modern Greek revivals has been characterised by political interests in another significant way. The Royal Family of Greece during that period of time has always had a clear tendency towards the translation of the ancient Greek texts into more recent forms of the Greek language. Bearing in mind the European-orientated background of the Royals, it becomes clearer why the Palace would have preferred the Greeks to distant themselves from the idea that they are of ancient Greek descent. The use of the original ancient Greek language would have been a constant reminder to the Greeks of their acclaimed historical continuity, something which would come into conflict with the interests of the Royal Palace. Even though it is not, again, a direct political conflict, the Palace's linguistic preference makes each translator's linguistic preference a political choice to some extent.

The third part of Chapter One, where *Antigone* performances from the beginning of the twentieth century until the end of the 1930s are discussed, showed that the matter of national identity had not yet been resolved. The political issues raised through the interpretation of the revivals of *Antigone* at the time were now not concerned with the matter of language as the demotic was gradually established, at least as far as the language of Antigone productions were concerned, but the revivals would remain a battlefield for political issues of other sorts, almost all of which related back to the matter of the definition of the modern Greek national identity in relation to the ancestral ancient Greek roots. The specific discussions of *Antigone* performances staged during this period reveal that the Greek sentiment at the time was reassured by a granted belief that the ancient and the modern Greeks were linearly connected through history, through language and through the masterpieces of the ancient Greek civilisation which the modern Greeks considered rightfully theirs.

Another matter which was brought to the surface through the discussions of Chapter One is the complicated relationship between European Modernism and

Greek Modernism, its representatives widely known as the Generation of the 1930s and the introduction of modernist elements into the field of the revivals. Similarly to European modernists, many of the representatives from the Generation of the 1930s had tried to resolve the complex problem between the past and the present. Inevitably, a part of the people involved in the theatre of the time, including directors, music composers, translators and many more, were influenced by such trends and attempted the adoption and adaption of such modernist elements into their Greek traditions. However, the more conservative and traditional side reacted to these European modernist influences as the preservation of an idealised past seemed to be crucial for the definition of the Greek national identity in the present.

The final part of Chapter One which discussed the first revival of *Antigone* by the National Theatre in 1940, coined one of the most important aspects in the history of modern Greek revivals. Since 1930 when the National Theatre reopened by the state, the company has produced some of the most influential as well as controversial performances of ancient Greek drama in general and *Antigone* in particular. The significance of these performances lies in the fact that the National Theatre was, and still remains, the official *national* stage of the country. As the previous discussions have shown, the revival of ancient Greek drama had been elevated to a national matter, thus the national theatre assigned itself the great responsibility of preserving the national heritage. The discussions of materials from the contemporary press presented at large in Chapter Two and Chapter Three showed that the National Theatre had set the benchmark of the appropriate ways to revive ancient Greek drama, something which resulted to a double burden for modern Greek revivals in their whole. Firstly, it was the expectation of the audience as far as the National Theatre productions were concerned: the national stage of the country was always expected to respect and present ancient Greek plays as closely to their original context as possible. As the discussions of the 1984 National Theatre *Antigone* production in Chapter Three showed, when the National Theatre failed to meet these expectations, it was attacked from both inside and out. Secondly, it was the comparison with all other independent companies, which were not considered appropriately equipped to carry such a responsibility. This notion

was confirmed by the fact that the state allowed only the National Theatre to stage ancient Greek plays at the ancient open-air theatres until as late as 1975.

The *Antigone* performances discussed in Chapter Two covered the *Metapolemiki Periodos* (Post-war Period) between 1945 and 1974, which was marked by the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) and the coup d'état in 1967 which resulted in seven years of dictatorship. As the chapter discussed, the years before the World War II and during the dictatorship of Metaxas, Greece saw an intense use of the distinct political terms of the Right and the Left. These terms had not only entered the social and political circles of Greek life but they had also been incorporated into the artistic circles. Especially after the end of the Civil War, the defeat of the Leftists, the marginalisation of the Greek Left and the rise of the Conservative party to the power, the conflicts of the revivals were resolved in an immediate political context between the saviours of the nation and the traitors of the nation. The urgent relevance of the Theban cycle to a modern society that has experienced a civil war cannot go unnoticed here. In his *States of Ireland* mentioned in the Introduction, O'Brien characteristically mentions that the tragedy unfolds, since Creon and Antigone are both part of our nature, inaccessible to advice, and incapable of living at peace in the city. Likewise, in the case of the aftermath of the Greek Civil War, the Creons and the Antigones of modern Greece came into an open and direct intense political conflict: each claiming their own political right, the opposing sides proved incapable of living at peace, neither in the city and the country in general, nor in the field of theatre.

Artists involved in the *Antigone* productions of the National Theatre and beyond, were directly involved with the political scene of the country during the period which followed the end of the Civil War. Grand gestures within the field of theatre, carried direct political messages. The incident with the famous belt as part of the Antigone costume in the 1956 production discussed in the first part of Chapter Two revealed so. The belt which initially belonged to Eleni Papadaki, right wing supporter and partner of the Conservative prime minister Rallis, killed as a traitor in execution style by the Leftists during the Civil War, was then given by the family of the deceased to Anna Synodinou who was openly a supporter of the Conservative

party and the new protagonist in the National Theatre *Antigone* production. The significance of this gesture was immense as it carried a clear message of the restoration of the Right over the Greek Left.

The second and third parts of Chapter Two discussed exclusively the National Theatre *Antigone* productions, the first in 1969 during the Dictatorship in Greece and the second in 1974 right after the fall of the Dictatorship. Even though five years separate the two productions, the first could not have be examined without the second and vice versa. The reasons behind the decision of the Colonels to allow the staging of a political play which questions authority such as *Antigone* remain unknown until today. However, the fact that the programme notes of the performance were presented in *katharevousa* which had been officially replaced by demotic decades ago, has in itself a lot to say, not only for the definition of the national during that specific period of time, but also for the years to follow and particularly for the rise of the far-Right in Greece during the beginning of the new millennium which I will discuss later on. Since the first revival of *Antigone* in 1940, the National Theatre was giving its performances in demotic translations. I could not retrieve any evidence from the archives of the National Theatre, or from anywhere else, which would suggest that the Colonels demanded the presentation of the programme notes in *katharevousa*. However, bearing in mind that the Colonels were far-right wing patriots and conservative nationalists, it does not seem strange that they would have a preference towards *katharevousa* which was considered by many a language closer to the original ancient Greek, especially compared to demotic. Gonda Van Steen refers to 'the Colonels' propagandistic use of performance at festivals "proving" that the Greek military had repeatedly saved the nation'.[389] Thus, the use of *katharevousa* could be considered another attempt of the Colonels to save the nation from everything that they feared as threatening to the authenticity and originality of the ancestral heritage. Even though the reception of the 1969 *Antigone* was kept outside the political context, most likely due to the censorship imposed by the Colonels, the subtle criticism of the production revealed a lot. The criticism which had constantly been concerned with

[389] Van Steen, *Stage of Emergency...*, p.1.

matters of Greek historical continuity, the bonds with the past and the safekeeping of the ancestral heritage was now showing a shift of interest to more aesthetic interpretations. This can be seen as a political statement in itself, as the critics showed a clear opposition to and differentiation from the ideological agendas of the Colonels.

The reception of the 1974 production, which is discussed in the third and last part of Chapter Two, came as a response to the previous 'apolitical' reviews of the 1969 production. As this final part aimed to show, the Greek audience of the 1974 performance now liberated from the Dictatorship and the imposed censorship, defended their ancestral values with greater passion than ever before. They reclaimed democracy which was invented by their ancestors, as they have frequently suggested, and they found in *Antigone* their previously suppressed by the Colonels voice.

In Chapter Three*,* the performances of *Antigone* in the years after the fall of the dictatorship until the end of the millennium were discussed. The new era which emerged after the fall of the Dictatorship was the *Metapolitefsi* (Change of Regime). The discussions of the performances of this period revealed the rise of another polarisation between the two dominant political parties in the history of modern Greece, the Socialist party and the Conservative party. If we take into consideration the discussions of Chapter Two, the conflict between the Socialists and the Conservatives was the result of an ongoing conflict of the past decades between the Right and the Left, only now it was more clearly shaped into a conflict between two distinct opposing political parties which inevitably resulted to a conflict which needed to be resolved within the revivals of *Antigone.* The analysis of the 1984 *Antigone* production by the National Theatre in the first part of Chapter Three revealed the unpreparedness and the negative attitude of the Conservative party and its representatives towards interpreting a production which was heavily accused of its innovative elements and methods borrowed by European traditions. Even though the Conservative party was responsible for the accession of Greece as the tenth member of the European Community (now European Union), its representatives seemed to be those who expressed the strongest opposition

against the influences from the members of their new 'family'. Greek Conservatives might had played a crucial role in the eagerness of the Right to become a member of the European Community; however, it turned out that it was the same Conservatives who most feared the 'impurification' of what they considered authentically Greek and fought against this with passion.

The second part of Chapter Three revisited the matter of modern Greek national identity confusion by examining a series of *Antigone* performances by non-Greek theatrical companies, presented in Greece during the second half of the 1980s. The discussions of this part showed that at least a part of the Greek intellectuals and artists of the time had idealised the Hellenistic past and treated non-Greek influences in an anti-modern and xenophobic way. The roots of this notion find their way far back in time, as the discussions of the Introduction showed. This was not a notion that was merely cultivated in the theatrical circles of Greece. It now becomes cleared why it was important to look briefly into the early history of the formation of the modern Greek nation based on nationalistic sentiments which found justification in early Greek folklore studies. The idea that the foreigners were neither capable nor allowed to deal with anything considered originally Greek, would be carried through time from the nineteenth century until the end of the twentieth century. Therefore, the modern Greek attitude towards the foreigners was never based on the notion of artistic or intellectual incapability; it was rather based on a nationalistic notion that the foreigners do not have the capacity to fully understand anything that was originally Greek.

The 1990 *Antigone* production presented at the Epidaurus Festival and discussed in detail in the third part of Chapter Three, revealed that the identity confusion was a much more complicated matter than it initially appeared to be. The involvement of three national figures, a national director, a national composer and a national star-actress, raised the expectations for this performance very high. The result of the work of the three national figures though did not meet the idealised concept of the national. To link the unapproachable idealised past with the approachable and realistic present, had proved to be yet another difficult task for the modern Greeks

In the fourth and final part of Chapter Three, I discussed performances of the 1990s with a particular focus on the 1992 National Theatre *Antigone* production. As the chapter showed, during that period the conservative party which had risen in power again between 1990 and 1993, was investing efforts in promoting sentiments of religiosity, and particularly Christianity. As this thesis in its whole has observed, the paradox of the relationship between the Hellenic and the Christian find its roots in the nationalistic awakenings of the nineteenth century, and it was particularly cultivated by conservative, right wing and, occasionally, far-right wing ideologies such as the Dictatorship of Metaxas between 1936 and 1941 as well as the Dictatorship of the Colonels between 1967 and 1974. The triptych of fatherland-religion-family which dates back to the Metaxas era was later strongly associated with the Dictatorship of the Colonels and then, astonishingly, and surprisingly uncommented by scholarship, in the mottos and the anthem of the Conservative party during the 1980s until recently. Particular attention should be paid at this point. The normalisation of the far-right, usually concealed as right-wing, conservative, was a repeated phenomenon in Greece during the twentieth century, as it was elsewhere in Europe and beyond. It could be suggested that this normalisation, in combination of course with other factors, allowed the rise of far-right ideologies, and consequently far-right parties in recent times. If we accept this as true, we should also accept that practices of modern Greek theatre in general and the revivals of *Antigone* on the modern Greek stage in particular, have played their own role in this situation.

The new millennium marked the beginning of a rather interesting era for modern Greece. During the first few years of the millennium, Greece was still going through seemingly glorious days, even though there were indications that a decline was approaching. The revival of ancient Greek drama did indeed take a turn towards an artistic instead of a purely politically driven orientation and the contemporary discussions of the performances were now considering aesthetic perspectives more frequently than they ever did in the long history of revivals over the past one and a half centuries. This is not to suggest that political issues were not raised; it is neither to suggest that the Greeks neglected the idea of ancestral heritage.

However, it now happened in a more modern-friendly and non-xenophobic way. A characteristic example is found in the programme notes of the latest to date National Theatre *Antigone* production staged in 2002, which include an introductory note by the Artistic Director, Nikos Kourkoulos (1934-2007) entitled 'Exchange of Light' that mentions

> I am very happy that we have the chance to present our work and bring from our country the message that modern Greece, Greece of Europe and Civilization exists and works creatively in our days, relies on the great historical and cultural past and seeks the contact with other people aiming at a peaceful and civilized Future.[390]

The contemporary press also showed a shift from earlier traditions of interpretation and many critics attempted to distant themselves from the previous phenomenon of using the *Antigone* performances as a platform for political conflicts. Theatre critic Andrianos Georgiou wrote

> The public opinion for Sophocles' *Antigone* changes every time according to the spirit of the epoch [in Greece]. The most common, which has prevailed amongst the rest for the longest time, is the political one. The different phases of politicisation have used *Antigone* as a flag of resistance and revolutionary spirit. This interpretation is not wrong, but it is definitely neither the only nor the main.[391]

Of course, the nationalistic sentiments which made references to the modern Greek ownership of the ancient Greek heritage did not decline even at the beginning of the new millennium. They were fewer and maybe less intense compared to those of the past two centuries but they still formed the opinion of at least a part of the modern Greek contemporary audience. Apart from the performances at the Epidaurus Festival, the 1992 National Theatre *Antigone* toured across the country as well as abroad, including New York. Greek corresponded for the prominent Athenian newspaper *To Vima* in New York, P. Panagiotou, reported:

> The reception criteria of the American audience as far as ancient tragedy is concerned are probably different, as most of them are not familiar with the ancient myth, at least not at the degree that the Greek audience is. Regardless, the audience was so enthusiastic that Archbishop

[390] Nikos Kourkoulos, 'Exchange of Light', National Theatre *Antigone* Programme Notes (2002).
[391] Andrianos Georgiou, Πέραν της Φόρμας Ουδέν', *Ραδιοτηλεόραση*, 14 September 2002.

> Demetrios mentioned: 'This is our beauty, this is the power of Greece, this is our presence in the contemporary world'.[392]

Even though there were hopes that the new millennium would see different, and perhaps less nationalistic approaches of the modern Greek revivals of *Antigone*, the seed of nationalism based on ancient Greek roots, which was planted into modern Greek consciousness for over two centuries, did not allow such progress. During the last almost two decades, several *Antigone* productions have been staged, some of which would reflect significant aspects of a modern Greek nation, as well as a modern Greek national identity, under crisis. However, I choose to end the discussions of this thesis without further analysing any *Antigone* productions during the twenty first century, even though a study of such would be of great academic interest, and possibly the topic of future research.

Despite the discussions of this thesis, there is still much to be observed, analysed and discussed as far as the revival of ancient Greek drama on the modern Greek stage is concerned. For example, much work need to be devoted specifically on the translations of *Antigone*. A closer examination of intralingual translations would inform our understanding of a nation which reflects itself through the art of theatre. It would also be of great significance to study these modern Greek translation in comparison with translations in other languages, which there are plenty, in order to draw lines between the ways in which the translations of *Antigone* contributed to the politicisation of performances in modern Greece compared to elsewhere. In addition, more detailed work could be devoted on the aesthetic or artistic aspects of modern Greek *Antigone* productions. As we have repeatedly seen in productions of *Antigone* outside Greece, artistic choices have frequently signified political statements of many sorts. Discussions of this kind have very rarely been carried out as far as the Greek revivals are concerned, as the Greek audiences received 'political' in a different, more literal, may I suggest, way.

I choose to end the discussions of this thesis with what I consider a crucial moment of self-realisation for modern Greece. In Chapter One, I briefly referred to the first

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[392] P. Panagiotou, 'Η Αντιγόνη του Εθνικού Συγκίνησε το Κοινό στη Νέα Υόρκη', Το Βήμα, 09 November 2002.

revival of the modern Olympics in Athens in 1896. Over a century later, the Olympics returned to Athens with an opening ceremony which was the epitome of the celebration of the much desired and long fought for Greek historical continuity. The ceremony was the product of Demetris Papaioannou (1964-), internationally renowned Greek experimental theatre director and choreographer. Demetris Plantzos described the ceremony:

> Papaioannou's scheme was brilliant, striking just the right notes for the occasion: emphasis on continuity (though with a certain antique bias), a celebration of the all-time-classic Greek ideal (albeit in its consummation through art), an illusion to some of the eternal Greek values -such as democracy, the theatre, or Christian faith- all suitably packaged for worldwide broadcast and PG audiences throughout (with the exception of nudity, certainly, which seems mandatory when it comes to things Greek). A confirmation of Hellenic identity overall, through a rehearsal of Greek history based on archaeological evidence and its aesthetic appeal, and moreover a reaffirmation of this culture's connection -past, present, eternal- with the land (and the sea, needless to add) that gave birth to the priceless Hellenic spirit.[393]

In a single paragraph, Plantzos does not only describe the whole opening ceremony of the 2004 Olympic games, but he also gives a very sharp account of how the Greeks see themselves: a reflection of the glorious past of who they considered their rightful ancestors, which is carried through time from antiquity to modernity in a linear chronological manner. What would otherwise be characterised a romantic perception of the self, the nation and the national identity, has become an almost dangerous claim in the case of modern Greece. In a similar way, the *Antigone* production discussed in this thesis, might initially seem as romantic approaches of an idealised past, but after thorough examination, discussion and analysis, we can in many ways see how they carry and reflect the struggles, battles and conflicts of a whole nation which has been in pursuit of a concrete definition of its national identity for far too long.

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[393] Dimitris Plantzos, 'Archaeology and Hellenic Identity, 1896-2004: The Frustrated Vision', in *A Singular Antiquity: Archaeology and Hellenic Identity in Twentieth Century Greece*, ed. Dimitris Damaskos and Dimitris Plantzos (Athens: Mouseio Benaki, 2008), 11-30, p.11. See also: Alexander Kitroeff, *Wrestling with the Ancients: Modern Greek Identity and the Olympics* (New York: Greekworks, 2004).

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