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Deposited in DRO:

29 March 2021

Version of attached file:

Published Version

Peer-review status of attached file:

Peer-reviewed

Citation for published item:

Kirtsoglou, Elisabeth (2021) 'Anticipatory nostalgia and nomadic temporality: a case study of chronocracy in the crypto-colony.', in *The time of anthropology: studies of contemporary chronopolitics.* , pp. 159-186. ASA monographs., 52

Further information on publisher's website:

<https://www.routledge.com/9781350125827>

Publisher's copyright statement:

This is a book chapter published by Routledge in *The time of anthropology: studies of contemporary chronopolitics* on 30 December 2020, available online: <http://www.routledge.com/9781350125827>

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The Time of Anthropology

Studies of Contemporary Chronopolitics

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First published 2020

ISBN: 978-1-350-12582-7 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-08719-9 (ebk)

Chapter 8

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A case study of chronocracy in the
crypto-colony

Elisabeth Kirtsoglou

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This OA chapter is funded by Durham University.

8 Anticipatory nostalgia and nomadic temporality

A case study of chronocracy in the crypto-colony

Elisabeth Kirtsoglou

This paper expands on the view of Modern Greece as a ‘crypto-colonial’ space (cf. Herzfeld 2002). It offers an alternative reading of the so-called ‘Greek-crisis’, using the lens of chronocracy as developed in the introduction to this volume. An ethnographic engagement with the years of austerity, faced by Greek people since 2010, reveals chronocracy to be a colonial technology with political, moral and epistemic dimensions. Here I argue that chronocracy produces an anticipatory nostalgia: namely, a future-oriented affective state of longing for what has already been accomplished and at once yet to be achieved. I show how anticipatory nostalgia is distributed between relational, material and temporal ecologies. The Greek people, I argue, sustain a nomadic sense of temporality (cf. Deleuze and Guattari 2010), manifested in eclectic connections between time fragments that form provisional temporal assemblages. These are evident in my ethnography in the form of visualities, materialities, discourses and narratives. Nomadic temporality emerges as an expression of temporal agency that both resists and reifies chronocracy and anticipatory nostalgia.

My present analysis is intellectually indebted to several strands of scholarship. The writings of Michael Herzfeld (especially 2002, 2005, 2015, 2016a, 2016b) on crypto-colonialism, structural nostalgia and European moralism are central. However, I also draw on his earlier works on the making of the Modern Greek state and the marginalization of the anthropology of Greece (1986, 1987), as the impetus for this paper. I build on these works not only to support my claim that Greece ought to be analysed as a colonial space but also in my attempt to formulate the concept of anticipatory nostalgia and to connect it to chronocracy as colonial durability. Post-colonial studies’ literature and an enormous body of Greek-studies’ scholarship have provided substantial analytical and historical evidence on the colonization of the Greek past (Bhabha 1984, 1994; Chakrabarty 2000; Hamilakis 2009; Lalaki 2012; Mignolo 2011; Panourgia 2004; Plantzos 2016; Said 1978; Stewart 2014; Stoler 2006, 2016; Tziouvas 2014). Interrogating this evidence enables me to draw connections between Greek antiquity, European modernity,¹ and the emergence of the colonized self. Recent anthropological studies of the Greek crisis form a framework that allows my ethnography to contextualize

the claim that Greek people are orientalized, moralized and pathologized as inadequate subjects of modernity (Athanasidou 2014, 2018; Dalakoglou and Agelopoulos 2018; Papataxiarhis 2018; Rakopoulos 2019; Thedossopoulos 2014; Triandayllidou, Gropas and Kouki 2013). Finally, but most importantly, anthropological studies of temporality in general and specifically the pioneering work of Daniel Knight have provided me with the inspiration that has led to the concept of nomadic temporality (Bear 2014, 2016; Bryant and Knight 2019; Guyer 2007; Hodges 2008, 2010; Knight 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016; Knight and Stewart 2016).

I ask that the present work is read not as an apology or as an inter-textual strategy of redemption (cf. Argyrou 2002) but as a specifically de-colonial anthropological effort which demonstrates how chronocracy can be seen as colonial duress (cf. Stoler 2016). On the backdrop of the Greek case, the paper ultimately questions the linear temporality of progress and argues that through repetitive cycles of ruination and substitution (cf. Navaro-Yashin 2009) the time of modernity has cyclical and eschatological properties.

The nomads of time

On a warm, sunny afternoon in late June 2015, I was sitting with several of my friends and interlocutors at a café in the picturesque harbour of my hometown, Volos, a medium-sized city in Magnesia, Thessaly. The negotiations between the newly elected government of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) and the ‘Troika’ (the IMF, the European Commission and the European Central Bank) had reached a stalemate. The German chancellor, Angela Merkel, the president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, and the president of the European Council, Donald Tusk, were yet again threatening Greece with expulsion confirming that the EU was fully prepared for what in recent parlance has come to be called a no-deal scenario. According to the local newspaper, folded on the relevant page on the table in front of us, Juncker had declared that Grexit would be the only way forward if an agreement was not reached by the end of that week. Furthermore, he promised humanitarian assistance to alleviate expected shortages in medicines, food and petrol.

George, a public servant in his late forties and a traditional supporter of the Greek communist party, was emphatic in his view that he had been ‘absolutely vindicated’. He reminded the rest of the company how, during the years of affluence (commonly referred to in Greece as the pre-crisis era), he kept warning his friends that the EU was nothing but a ‘wolf-alliance’ (*lykosymmahia*). “People and politicians were calling the EU our ‘partners’ (*etairous*) and our ‘allies’ (*symmahous*)”, George said and continued: “Allies! What sort of alliance can a lamb forge with a wolf?” “Ah”, Stefania sighed,

you started again your communist parlance. If it was up to you guys Greece would have been like Cuba. Get it into your head: Greece

belongs to the West. Europe owes us everything. Greece is the essence of European civilisation (*tou Evropaikou politismou*). Even the term ‘Europe’ for Christ’s sake is Greek!

“Ok”, George replied in a caustic manner, “when we run out of petrol and medicines as a result of a no-deal bankruptcy (*atakti hreokopia*), we can give the petrol and pharmaceutical companies IOUs with the head of some ancient Greek philosopher printed all over them.² They’ll definitely appreciate that!” “I have actually stocked on my mother’s blood-pressure medicines, just to be on the safe side”, Stefania remarked and added “do you think we should be filling our car reservoirs with petrol?”

Before anyone had the chance to reply, Vicky, a 40-year-old single woman who owned her own architectural firm, joined the company. She threw herself on a chair and wiping her forehead she almost broke to tears as she exclaimed:

dudes, I can’t believe it! (*den to pistevo*). Half of my close friends are blocking me on Facebook because I dared post that the government should fold. Some called me a German collaborator (*dosilogo* – a term used for Greeks who collaborated with the Nazis in WWII). Others said that they don’t want anything to do with a ‘Euro-remainer’ like me (*menoumevropaia*), and my own cousin commented on my post that ‘if the Greek fighters of 1821 were like me we would be still under Ottoman rule’. My own cousin won’t talk to me anymore! We have all gone crazy! (*trellathikame teleios*). We are back in the civil war (*eimaste ston emfylio*).

“They are damn right”, Nicholas replied firmly to Vicky, and he added “you are either on the side of your own people, or you are with the troika and yes this is a civil war. There is no middle ground”. Katerina, a night nurse in her thirties, agreed and alluding to a phrase allegedly coined by a Greek independence fighter back in 1821, she told Vicky:

The government shouldn’t fold. They can’t fold. We are Greek! We shouldn’t grovel. Greeks remain upright, even when they talk to their own Gods.³ Greece needs no-one but God. Her God and our ancestors stand by us (*o Theos is Elladas kai oi progonoi mas*). We will fight alone and we will make it.

The conversation continued for hours. Through heated and more casual statements, my friends agreed and disagreed. They agreed that Greece was not where it *deserved* to be at that moment and that it should somehow *return* to ‘normality’ (*na epistrepsoume stin kanonikotita*) and to the ‘good days’ (*stis kales epothes*). They disagreed of course –like many other citizens at the time – on what constituted ‘normality’ and ‘good days’ and on how this

‘return’ was to be accomplished. For Stefania, a now unemployed woman who used to work in retail, and a long-standing supporter of the conservative party, the ‘good days of Greece’ were to be found in its ancient past; in the era when “Greeks produced science and art”, in the “glorious days”, when the country was “the beacon of civilisation” (*o faros tou politismou*). The Europeans should be reminded, she maintained, that “they can’t throw us out” because there “can’t be such a thing as Europe without Greece in it”.

Stefania echoed the sentiments of many Greek people who were astonished by the readiness of the European authorities to oust the country from the euro-currency over a *financial* debt. Scepticism and feelings of suspicion towards Europe have been documented in the country as early as the nineties (cf. Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos 2010a, 2010b), but the complete unwillingness of the Europeans to consider the continent’s *cultural* debt to Greece as part of the equation was certainly not expected. Stefania got out of her pocket a two-euro coin. “Look at that”, she said to George. “Look at it. This is not just money. It is a token of what Greece is to Europe”. The coin (on its national side) depicts a scene from a third-century AD mosaic found in Sparta showing Europa being abducted by Zeus who has assumed the form of a bull. Europa is a figure from Greek mythology after whom Europe was named. George shook his head. “Live your myth in Greece”, he replied to her sarcastically, alluding to a popular local beer advertisement designed for tourists.

Clearly, George did not share Stefania’s vision. For him, ‘the good days’ were the days of WWII, when the nation resisted the Nazi occupation and later on struggled through a civil war to accomplish the communist revolution and to establish ‘*laokratia*’ (rule of the people). A loyal member of the communist party, George “did not trust the government of the Radical Left (SYRIZA)” and regarded it a “non-authentic expression of the Left”. He nevertheless, “almost felt tears rolling down his eyes”, on the night of SYRIZA’s electoral victory earlier that year. George recounted to us the moment when Costas Lapavitsas, a SOAS professor of Economics and newly elected SYRIZA MP, celebrated his party’s success by singing the anthem of EAM (National Liberation Front). Sponsored by the Greek Communist Party, EAM and its military wing ELAS (National Popular Liberation Army) were the main social movements at the heart of Greek resistance against German occupation in WWII. In celebration of SYRIZA’s victory, Costas Lapavitsas started singing on camera EAM’s 1946 anthem, a Greek version of the Russian Katyusha song:

Three letters illuminate our Greek generation and show us the bright path through which we will bring freedom. They are the lights of our struggle and the people faithfully follow; young and old, they all cheer, long-live EAM. EAM saved us from the famine,⁴ it will also save us from enslavement and has a laocracy (rule of the people) programme. Long-live EAM.

The SYRIZA party supporters gathered around Lapavistas that night also sang the anthem in unison. My own mother, from our living room in Durham, sang alongside them in front of the satellite TV with her fist up, in a stentorian voice, surprisingly remembering every single verse of the song despite her 80 years of age. George also sang the anthem again the day of our meeting, and his voice trembled and his hands shook as he recalled the scene. Nicholas and Lia, the fervent SYRIZA supporters in our table, joined him, temporarily casting aside differences between the communist party and the Radical Left. For them too, the good days were the days when “people rose-up against the Germans”, and also later, when they “struggled against the US-sponsored military junta (*Amerikanokiniti hounta*)” of 1967–1974.

Nicholas, a civil servant in his mid-forties, and Lia, an English teacher in her late thirties, frequently joined the anti-austerity demonstrations of 2011 and the occupation of Syntagma Square in Athens, having to travel some five hours on the bus from Volos. “Those demonstrations were ‘full of the souls of 1944’ (*gemates apo tis psyches tou 44*)”, Lia explained to me. In November 1944, after the withdrawal of the German army from Greece, the British forces present in the country demanded the immediate disarmament of ELAS. The EAM representatives in the transitional government at the time were opposed and resigned. EAM organized a massive demonstration on December 3, 1944 that turned into a bloodbath, with over 30 people dead and approximately 150 wounded, when the police opened fire against civilians. A characteristic photo of that day, which went viral between 2011 and 2015, shows a row of young women dressed in black, kneeling down on the pavement of Syntagma Square, holding a big placate that reads “*when the people face the danger of tyranny, they choose either their chains or the guns – EAM*”. “Yes”, Lia stated,

we were [as] once (*imastan ena*) with the souls of those EAM women and men (*Eamitisses kai Eamites*) when the police threw their tear-gas and their stun grenades (*chimika kai krotou-lampsis*) to the marching crowds [in 2011]. We returned to those glorious days of fearless resistance, and from there we fought the austerity regime, not only the Germans and their economic occupation but also their local collaborators and their cheerleaders.

For Lia and Nicholas, ‘normality’ was about not being tied down by austerity memoranda (*mnimonia*). They heavily criticized both the conservatives and the socialists for “abandoning the country to the hands of her lenders” and for accepting so easily the “transference of European banks’ losses onto the shoulders of the Greek people”. Lia had always been a SYRIZA supporter, since the party had a mere 3% electoral representation, chiefly because of SYRIZA’s social rights’ agenda and the party’s emphasis on issues of gender equality. Nicholas, on the other hand, had been swinging between the socialist party (PASOK) and the Radical Left (SYRIZA). He

grew up – as he stated – with the legacy of Andreas Papandreou (the founder of PASOK and an ex-prime-minister between 1981 and the early nineties). Nicholas “had Andreas in his soul (*stin psyhi tou*)” and he strongly believed that “if Andreas was alive, Greece would have never come under the control of the Troika”.

Nicholas’s grandfather was an ELAS fighter and his family had suffered persecution and discrimination throughout the cold war years, by the “state of the Right” (*to kratos tis deksias*). Andreas Papandreou was elected with a stunning 48% majority in 1981, just seven years after the fall of the military junta in Greece. Papandreou clearly “laid claim to the ideological heritage of EAM” (Karakatsanis 2001: 127; cf. also Veremis 2008: 138). His socialist government officially recognized the contribution of the WWII EAM/ELAS resistance movement and fostered a political culture of opposition to the traditional Right that prevailed in Greece until 1974 (cf. also Kostis 2013: 815). Nicholas had somewhat distanced himself from the socialist party however, when that “turned the same with the conservatives”, under new leadership in the nineties. For him, SYRIZA was “the country’s new hope” (cf. Bryant and Knight 2019: 132–133).

Like Nicholas and Lia, Vicky also felt like she was back in December 1944 when she recounted almost tearfully the breaking down of long-standing relationships with friends and family over a Facebook post. Only for Vicky, December 1944 marked the beginning of a bitter civil war that cost the lives of many and caused “unrepairable damages to families, neighbourhoods, and the country as a whole for years to come”. The fate of many Greek people (like Nicholas’s family) who had joined the resistance movement against the German occupation in WWII through the National Liberation Front (EAM) and the National Popular Liberation Army (ELAS) was sealed in the cold war years. They suffered outright persecution, imprisonment and exile as political dissidents (cf. Panourgia 2008). Their families, and even other ex-EAM/ELAS supporters who ceased to be politically active, found it difficult to secure employment, or pursue university degrees, as they were considered ‘guilty by association’ and were ‘filed’ by the police as ‘beta’ (crypto-communist) citizens.⁵ Historical research clearly indicates that many Greeks who collaborated with the Nazi occupation regime between 1941 and 1944, survived – physically, politically and economically – after the retreat of the German forces and throughout the cold war precisely because they made themselves pivotal in the persecution of communists (cf. Chaidia 2004; Mazower 2004). The Greek military that managed eventually to stage the coup of 1967 derived much of its power from the fact that it was seen as the ‘guarantor of post-civil war order’ by the US, whose interference in cold war Greek politics was blatant and almost institutionalized (cf. Stefanides 2005: 322–328).

Despite acknowledging the “struggles of the Left” (*tous agones tis aristeras*), the civil war was for Vicky one of the darkest places she could be. She found nothing glorious in this era which pre-figured the kind of divisive

political tension that led in present time her own cousin to stop talking to her. For Vicky, becoming a ‘normal country’ meant going back to the nineties, “the years of development (*anaptyksi*) and modernization” (*eksyhronismos*). It meant accepting the country’s debt and the “moral duty” to repay it “as every other European country would have done”. Normality for Vicky was synonymous with the alignment of Greece with European modernity encapsulated in a mixture of “liberal social values, a moderately socialist approach to welfare and social support and a secular state”. Vicky paid homage to the ‘Modern Greek Enlightenment’ (*Neoellinikos Diafotismos*), an intellectual movement that supported the dissemination (*metakenosi*) of European Enlightenment ideals to the Greek-speaking Orthodox populations of the then Ottoman Empire after 1700. This movement paved the way for the 1821 uprising and the foundation of the Modern Greek state. By liberal social values, Vicky meant an emphasis on “the individual and her rights as a citizen”. From within European modernity, Vicky dreamt of a “smaller state”, enhanced entrepreneurial opportunities, which she termed as “laissez faire”, the eradication of the Greek “clientalist ethos” that supposedly led to corruption and subsequent fiscal derailment and, above all, the “enforcement of the rule of law and the strengthening of institutions”. A basic welfare system was important to her, but on the basis of the liberal value of “equal opportunities” and not necessarily as a system for the redistribution of wealth from the richer to the poorer. The desire for a secular state where “logic triumphs over superstition” was for Vicky what made her “quintessentially Greek and *thus* European”. “The heirs of Aristotle”, she claimed, “cannot in the 21st century continue believing in the miracle of the holy fire and transport the fire from Jerusalem to Greece in a special flight”. Indeed, according to the Orthodox tradition adhered to by Greeks, and also by other Eastern Orthodox people, the holy fire emanates miraculously from Jesus Christ’s tomb every Easter. It is transported from Jerusalem to Athens on the presidential aircraft and it is received as a state leader following VVIP protocol. “The Greek people”, Vicky maintained, “ought to stop living in the Middle-Ages, and finally catch up with the rest of Europe. *We* invented logic and science. I do not understand how we live in this state of self-exile from it”.

Vicky belonged to that segment of the Greek public who found themselves a few days before our meeting, on the June 22, in Syntagma Square demonstrating this time against the looming Grexit. Their central motto was ‘we remain in Europe’ (*menoume Evropi*) and they supported either the conservative party (New Democracy) or a particular wing of the socialist party (PASOK) known as ‘the modernizers’ (*eksynchronistes*). The ‘modernizers’, chiefly represented by ex-prime-ministers Costas Simitis and George Papandreou were “liberal academics and technocrats, educated in the West” who “despised the ‘oriental’ and ‘religious’ aspects of Greek culture, which they blamed on Ottoman rule and backward Orthodoxy” (Douzinas 2013: 35).

The seeds of the liberalization of the Greek economy were planted in the late eighties, by the conservatives, but the project of ‘modernization’ was

launched full-scale in the mid-nineties by the socialist government that followed the death of Andreas Papandreou. Its chief aims were privatization, the reformation of social security, and the restriction of the influence of the church on public and political affairs. As Douzinas notes, “modernization was neo-liberalism with a human face”, which attempted to “bring Greece closer to its European partners” (2013: 35). Despite the fact that it was primarily engineered by a socialist government, many of its constituent aims were also shared by the conservative party that alternated the socialist one in power from the mid-nineties until 2009. Most of the central aims of the modernization project, however, were never fulfilled under either socialist or conservative leadership. The Greek public demonstrated a persistent resistance to the privatization of the public sector, which was thus only partially achieved. The attempted introduction of private universities was averted by massive student demonstrations and occupations of school buildings (*katalipseis*), while the initiative to reform the social security system caused general strikes that brought the entire country to a standstill. Finally, the radical separation of church and state caused a different but equally large segment of Greek society to take the streets in protest, responding to the call of the late archbishop Christodoulos who coined the term ‘people’s gatherings’ (*laosynaksi*) for those particular demonstrations.

Some of the chief goals of modernization were reintroduced to Greece by the troika as a series of structural adjustments that accompanied the austerity measures. Compliance with these appeared equally central to the attainment of fiscal targets in the various negotiations between Greek governments and the EU/IMF. Crisis as a state of emergency did not only produce fiscal austerity but also highlighted the urgency of catching up with Europe in all matters political, cultural and institutional (cf. Douzinas 2013; Gropas et al., 2013). In this framework, the allegedly ‘enlarged’ and ‘expensive’ public sector was presented as a by-product of ‘clientalism’, which was, in turn, explained in terms of a backward ethos of ‘amoral familism’⁶ and Greek ‘collectivism’. Even Douzinas, a professor of Law at Birkbeck and later an MP of the SYRIZA government, who – alongside all other SYRIZA party members and supporters – defied the theory of ‘Greek exceptionalism’ as a cause of the Greek crisis, wrote in 2013:

Modernization was a mechanistic importation of Western models without consideration of anthropological [*sic*] differences. *The habits, conventions and values* that support the Greek economy *differ from those of the West*. Identities and social bonds are based on family, friends and the community... the attempt to introduce the *European model of socialized individualism* failed... *The Greek ethos, with its mild nationalism, secular religiosity and familial base, remains one of the strongest in Europe. In its corrupted version it promotes neoliberalism; it is also the most powerful force for resisting it.* It became the first target of austerity measures.

(36–38 emphasis mine)

The stereotypical narrative of presenting Greek cultural exceptionalism as incompatible with Western values and models is, I argue, a deeply orientalist idea (cf. Said 1978). This is not to say that modern Greeks do not have their own cultural specificities, similarly to other communities and regions in Europe and beyond. Greek cultural difference however has been persistently presented as an irreconcilable eccentricity that underpins the Greek inability to follow ‘European’ political projects. The ensuing ‘urgency’ to *become European* or to *catch up with Europe* saturates public, political and intellectual spheres in Greece since time immemorial (cf. Gropas et al., 2013).⁷ It encapsulates the perceived incongruence between the country and Europe, which is itself a variation of the theme of discrepancy between Modern and Classical Greece.

Classical Greece has operated in the collective imagery of both Greeks and other Europeans as an ‘absent presence’ that paradoxically constitutes Modern Greece “at once as the collective spiritual ancestor and a political pariah in today’s ‘fast-capitalist’ Europe” (Herzfeld 2002: 903, 2005: 18). Portrayed as having a collectivist ethos and a perplexing religiosity combined with nationalist tendencies, the Greek People are consistently orientalized. Their relational patterns are reduced to amoral familism that allegedly promotes and sustains networks of patronage, clientalism and corruption. Their cultural specificities are caricatured as unmodern beyond redemption. Ultimately, the Greek people are produced in local and international imagination as a degenerate mutation of their glorious ancestors, or, in the best case scenario, as the exotically unruly anti-heroes of European modernity.

My informants’ narratives need to be understood against this backdrop of orientaling stereotypes. What then emerges are a series of provisional timescapes, or ‘chronotopes’, where various knots of narrative become temporarily entangled and disentangled (cf. Bakhtin 1981: 84; Bear 2014: 7; Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos 2010a). These chronotopes do not strictly belong to the past, the present, or the future. They are poly-temporal enactments (cf. Bryant and Knight 2019) that, in effect, *produce* the past, the present and the future. This is not only accomplished through periodization and the ordering of history in a before and after manner (cf. Kosellek 1985) but also through a collapse of historical temporalities.

Similarly, to many of their fellow citizens, my friends and interlocutors inhabit these polytemporal chronotopes in a nomadic fashion. The notion of nomadism here serves to indicate the manner in which subjectivities emerge as assemblages of events, of discursive, visual, sensorial and material fragments of time that form provisional and eclectic connections (cf. Deleuze and Guattari 2010; Hamilakis 2017). The classical past and all its ruins are scattered around the country. They figure prominently in art and everyday contexts, reminding Greek people of their glorious patrimonial heritage, while also acting as powerful representations that attract visitors to the country (cf. Batea 2015; Herzfeld 2002: 902). These representations contrast starkly with visions of the ‘oriental’ Ottoman era and form

continuities in hegemonic versions of national history between the classical past, Byzantium and a glorified 1821 war of Greek independence (cf. Lalaki 2012). They circulate alongside counter-histories told at family dinners, the legacy of communist-sponsored resistance to the Nazi occupation and other historical instances that make their way into songs, books, stories, urban landmarks, material culture, symbols and linguistic idioms. They are tied together in various and sometimes unforeseen combinations producing patterns of inclusion and exclusion, solidarity and conflict.⁸ Greek people might thus find themselves all in the same space but they remain nomads of time, situating a variety of pasts in the present and the futures it contains.

Nomadic temporal subjectivities in Greece emerge as heterogeneous ensembles of events, variable intensive affects and durable colonial debris (cf. Deleuze and Guattary 2010: 82–83; Stoler 2016). Experiences of economic, political and cultural dependence and a persistent, unremitting orientalism that folds itself into the fabric of time produce the Greek subject as an exceptionality. Orientalism as colonial sedimentation is first and foremost enacted in national history. The history of the nation is aggressively promoted through education and an institutionalized emphasis on the country's classical past. This emphasis is intimately connected to how European powers imagined the Modern Greek state at its inception (cf. Hamilakis 2009; Herzfeld 1986, 2002; Panourgia 2004; Stewart 2014; Tziouvas 2014).

During the years of austerity, Greek people were further orientalized and construed as radically different to other Europeans by the hegemonic gaze of officials, local and international newspapers, academics, elites and publics (cf. Antoniadis 2012; Dalakoglou and Angelopoulos 2018; Knight 2013, 2015; Leontidou 2014; Papataxiarchis 2018; Triandafyllidou, Gropas and Kouki 2013). The austerity measures and the so-called structural adjustments did not have purely fiscal targets and effects. As Douzinas (2013) has argued, they also attempted to address the alleged Greek eccentricity in its various manifestations. Patterns of inheritance, for example, are a case in point. As tangible expressions of kinship relations they were disproportionately affected by the heavy taxation imposed on property (cf. Knight 2018). The public sector was demonized as the embodiment of clientalism, supposedly underpinned by Greek familism. The opening of 'closed' professions (like taxi driving or pharmacy store owning, often passed down from parents to children) became a matter of paramount importance to the Troika. Further separation between church and state was promoted as a matter of supposedly fiscal obedience since, *strictu-sensu*, priests in Greece belonged to the public sector.

Perhaps, the most blatant example of orientalism as a criminalizing colonial technology of governance is the stereotype of the 'Greek habit of tax-evasion', a narrative that was circulating widely in 2010–2016 in public and official discourses. In September 2011, the senior IMF resident representative in Athens, Bob Traa, gave a speech at the Economist conference, stating that the fiscal programme imposed by the Troika was not delivering the expected results because of the Greek habit of tax-evasion.⁹ Tax-evasion

was presented at the time as a symptom of the Greek lack of trust in the state, a sad remnant of the years of Ottoman rule when Greek-speaking, Christian Orthodox subjects resisted the Ottoman regime through practicing fiscal disobedience.¹⁰ In February of the same year, Traa had publicly reprimanded the Greek people (on camera) urging them to ‘cut down on bribery’, using the Greek term ‘*fakelaki*’ (literally a little envelope, the term is always understood to mean a bribe). Allegedly, Greeks habitually escaped taxation through bribing government officials (just like in the Ottoman period). As it transpired later, the EU/IMF programme failed to deliver the expected results, not because the so-portrayed post-Ottoman subjects were cheating the state but owing to technocratic miscalculations incorporated in its original design. Despite overwhelming research-based evidence to the contrary, coming from the IMF’s own chief economist Olivier Blanchard, a strategy of tight and sudden austerity was adopted, slowing down the economy and deteriorating the country’s economic indexes (cf. Blanchard and Leigh 2013).¹¹

To return to Vicky, Stefania, Nicholas, Lia, George and Katerina whose ongoing debates represented those of ever-widening segments of Greek society at the time, it was evident that they were not just disagreeing over ideology. They were all speaking as different chronopolitical exiles. The orientalized stereotypes evoked to justify austerity measures denied coevalness to Greek subjects, thus expelling them from a common present and forcing them to inhabit chronotopes of ‘radical alterity’ (cf. Kirtsoglou and Simpson this volume, Fabian 1983; Kirtsoglou and Tsimouris 2016, 2018). These exiles were not only hegemonically forced upon them by elites, officials and the media (as I have tried to explain in the previous paragraphs) but were also, in important ways, self-imposed. My interlocutors embodied the continuous, historic struggle of large parts of Greek society to *become what they once were*. In other words, they became victims of the tyranny of their own past, experienced as future potentiality.

Vicky and Stefania – representing the Greek people who remain loyal to the project of ‘modernization’ – spoke from the chronotope of ancient Greece as a constituent element of European and Modern Greek Enlightenment. Modernity provided them with their vision of ‘normality’, which was for them both an already accomplished achievement and simultaneously the ‘not-yet’ (cf. Bryant and Knight 2019: 197–199; Plantzos 2016). Katerina, the 32 year old martial arts instructor, who used the words of the 1821 fighter to claim that Greeks should ‘stand up’ to EU/IMF, was speaking from the chronotope of Modern Greek ethnogenesis. According to this narrative, the establishment of the modern state was supposedly achieved by the persona of the unruly Greek/Balkan, Christian Orthodox anti-hero who fought allegedly ‘alone’, outgunned and outnumbered by the mighty Ottoman Empire and who attracted the admiration of the European Great Powers of the time turning them into supportive philhellenes. In reality of course, the modern Greek state was established as a crypto-colony, a “buffer zone between the colonized lands and those as yet untamed... compelled to acquire

[its] political independence at the expense of massive economic dependence” (Herzfeld 2002: 900). Local elites sought to redeem Greek social atomism through presenting it as a variety of ‘European individualism’ (ibid.: 904).

Nicholas, Lia and George, despite the differences between communists and the Radical Left, spoke from the chronotope of revolutionary struggle as an achievement, and simultaneously as a goal, of many leftists in Greece. Their expectations of economic and political ‘liberation’ from the EU/IMF officials, who had practically run the country since 2010, would be shattered in less than two months. The Troika managed to force the SYRIZA government into what many in Greece saw as a historic compromise. In the week that followed the conversation recounted here, capital controls were imposed on Greek banks. In spite of this extreme measure, Greek citizens voted against the continuation of austerity in a referendum that followed. Threatened with an imminent no-deal Grexit, the SYRIZA government conceded to the demands of the Troika, and by August, they signed a new memorandum that brought more debt, further austerity measures and a new package of structural adjustments. The government’s compromise caused a split within the party and between SYRIZA voters.

On the morning after the ratification of the new loan agreement in the Greek parliament, Lia told me that ‘General Scobie was again in Greece’. ‘There is no future’, she said, “at least not for us. Another 60 or more years of domination lie ahead. We are finished (*teleiosame*)”. Lia was alluding once again to December 1944 when the British forces under Lieutenant General Scobie (with the help of the newly created Greek National Guard that incorporated many former German collaborators) overpowered EAM/ELAS in Athens, forcing the Greek Communist Party to accept an armistice. The civil war that followed ended with the defeat of the Left. The subsequent establishment of a particular cold-war regime of foreign intervention and persecution of communists and their ‘sympathizers’ meant that the country “possessed nothing comparable to the social compromise forged elsewhere in Europe in the fifties and sixties... no welfare state, no democratic party... Wage levels continued to be miserably low and work-place regimes were very repressive” (Laskos and Tsakalotos 2013: 24). Lia’s anticipation of the ‘normality’ of ‘people’s rule’ remained locked in the chronotope of hope as refuge from reality; a timescape filled with postponed dreams that accommodate what cannot exist in the present or in the foreseeable future.

The nomadic temporalities evident in the arguments of my friends, and among Greeks more widely, are in many ways paradoxical. They are bursting with narratives of political causality and accountability inspired by retrocausal readings of the past and the future-as past (cf. Kirtsoglou 2010: 86–87; Plantzos 2016), but they also carry orientalist visions of the colonized self. The latter manifest themselves as perpetual re-turns to a future that has been allegedly already accomplished. These re-turns to the future-past produce paradoxical feelings of what I have termed *anticipatory nostalgia*. This kind of nostalgia is different from Herzfeld’s structural type (2005).

Whereas Herzfeld's structural nostalgia refers to a 'longing for the primordial self and for an age beyond the state' (ibid.: 22), anticipatory nostalgia is a future oriented, affective condition. I also argue that it is an explicitly colonial predicament. In the following section, I will attempt to substantiate my claim and demonstrate the connections between chronocracy, the central concept of this volume, nomadic temporality and anticipatory nostalgia as a colonial condition.

Chronocracy, nostalgia and nomadic temporality in the crypto-colony

The claim that Greece needs to be analysed as a colonial space caught between an idealized classical Hellenism and perceptions of what constitutes European modernity is thoroughly supported by previous research in the field of Greek studies (cf. De L' Estoile 2008; Herzfeld 1986, 1987, 2002; Lalaki 2012; Leontis 1995; Stewart 2014; also Tziouvas 2014). Hellenism (as a political and aesthetic representation of the Greek classical past) is a Western model cultivated in Europe and disseminated through Greek speaking elites and philhellenes to the Ottoman world where it became one of the ideological platforms of the 1821 war of independence (cf. Stewart 2014: 10). Classical Greece was an already colonized timescape appropriated by European classicists, architects, historians, artists and politicians. It was hegemonically enacted on the newly established Modern Greek state in a variety of discursive but also material ways, and it was inscribed onto Greek and European urban spaces through the neoclassical architectural rhythm (ibid.; see also Gourgouris 1996; Leontis 1995). As Panourgia explains, neoclassicism (in art, architecture, literature) became an integral part of the European project of modernity (2004: 166). The appropriation of the classical Greek past reminds us of Mignolo's argument that "there is no modernity without coloniality" (2011: 3) and evidences modernity's 'plural genealogy and ecology' (Mitchell 2000: 12–13).

European colonization of ancient Greece as a constituent principle of the Enlightenment project (cf. Stewart 2014: 10) posed for Modern Greek people a chronopolitical conundrum right from the very first years of the foundation of the new state. Their 'gaze towards the future' had to pass through "a re-articulation, a reformation and repossession of an antique ideality" (Panourgia 2004: 167). As the German Minister of Justice of the first (also German) King of Greece stated in 1834, Greek antiquities constituted: the "contact point between the actual Greece and the European civilization" and therefore had for the Kingdom of Greece "an enormous political significance" (ibid.). In order to connect with Greek antiquity and join *through* it 'European civilisation', the Minister advised in 1836 that "all the Greeks had to do was to mimic the Germans" (Panourgia 2004: 176).

It becomes evident that Modern Greek people were seen right from the start as inadequate members of European modernity. Their modernization

as progress and as a process of becoming full members of a hegemonic Western cultural timescape plays out as a vicious circle. It passes through their identification with the past, which in its turn depends upon successful incorporation of European modernity through mimicry. This demand for identification, or what Bhaba called “to be *for* an Other” happens through an entanglement of presence and absence (1994: 45, 47; cf. also Herzfeld 2002: 916). The colonial subject can only exist through resemblance either to the colonizer or to the orientalist stereotypes of her that emerge as a result of the colonial situation (cf. Bhaba 1994: 48; 1984).

The multiple orientalist visions of the self form predictable and unpredictable connections with various fragments of time – as I have argued – in a nomadic fashion. A nomadic sense of temporality destabilizes the process of cultural signification and constitutes national culture as a series of provisional dialectics of diverse temporal events (Bhaba 1994: 216). The appropriation of classical Greece by right-wing and fascist regimes in the twentieth century for instance (cf. Hamilakis 2002, 2009; Tziouvas 2014) causes this aspect of the past to be downplayed, frowned upon or ridiculed as ‘kitsch’ by communists and leftists like George, Nicholas and Lia. Nevertheless, the ancient Greek past may come to be defended on a different occasion by the same actors who usually refuse to identify with it, as it comes to form conditional entanglements with other events, affects and materialities in a new temporal assemblage.

To substantiate my claim, I will offer the example of George; my communist friend who made fun of Stefania by remarking ‘live your myth in Greece’ when she was showing him the euro-coin’s depiction of the Greek classical past as a proof of the unbreakable connection between Greece and Europe. Despite being entirely aware of the relationship between Hellenism and right-wing discourses, George was among the first to join demonstrations against the treaty signed between Greece and North Macedonia in 2018 ending decades of dispute over the name of the neighbouring country. Given his communist loyalties, I asked him why he was joining the protests. I reminded him that the Greek communist party was the first political alliance in the history of Greece to recognize the right of Macedonians to self-identification, towards the end of the civil war in 1949. “This has nothing to do with self-identification”, George replied to me and explained:

This is a mixture of FYROM (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) extreme nationalism and NATO’s imperialist programme to control the Balkans. The fact that I loathe (*sihainomai*) Greek nationalists does not mean that I applaud the FYROM ones. Do you know that FYROM is full of kitsch cast statues of Alexander the Great whom these people are taught to claim as their ancestor? This is all about what NATO wants to establish in the area: a series of satellite states existing for its own purposes.

Since 2017 (when Greek negotiations with North Macedonia were officially announced), George incorporated the motto ‘Macedonia is Greek’ (*i Makedonia einai Elliniki*) into his social media profile, in a sticker on his car and on his keyring. He was not the only non-right wing to feel that way. Mikis Theodorakis, composer of *Zorba’s Dance* and of many famous songs, and an unconventional leftist who eventually entered the Greek national parliament as a conservative, spoke publicly in one of the major demonstrations against the treaty, accusing the government of the Radical Left that signed it of ‘leftist fascism’ (*aristerostrofo fasismo*).

The continuous reworking of different time fragments into diverse temporal assemblages in a nomadic fashion produces hybrid understandings of Hellenism and Greekness (cf. Hamilakis 2009). It also allows the colonial gaze to fold and refold into cultural and political life to a point that separating the two becomes impossible. From within these different understandings of Hellenism, modern Greeks suffer from a distinctive version of chronocracy: that is, *the discursive and practical ways in which temporal regimes are used in order to deny coevalness and thereby create deeply asymmetrical relationships of exclusion and domination* (Kirtsoglou and Simpson this volume). As crypto-colonized subjects of chronocracy, Greek people have been, as Herzfeld argues, doubly victimized. They “suffer the political and economic effects of colonialism itself, but they are excluded materially and epistemologically” from processes of formal recognition of their situation (Herzfeld 2002: 919–920).

Being at once products and creators of a European modernity to which they are not fully accepted causes paradoxical feelings of anticipatory nostalgia for a future-past. Nostalgia has been discussed in anthropology in relation to post-Soviet spaces (cf. Boyer 2006, 2012; Todorova and Gille 2012). More widely, the concept has been used to address methodological issues (Berliner 2015), loss and restoration (Boym 2001), moral critique and social change (Parla 2009) and subaltern memory (Atia and Davies 2010). Angé and Berliner’s edited collection on Anthropology and Nostalgia goes beyond Eastern Europe to bring ethnographies of different regions of the world into a fruitful discussion of nostalgia and its relationship to the social production of history, materialities, past, present and future temporalities (2015).

The kind of nostalgia I refer to here is an explicitly colonial condition. It can be understood as a future-oriented, affective state of collapsed hope (cf. Bryant 2015) and postponed perfection. It is embedded not only into the minds and hearts of my Greek interlocutors but also in the minutiae of their material environments, from where it is ‘discharged upon them’ as an experience of ‘ruination’ (cf. Navaro-Yashin 2009: 5). Anticipatory nostalgia expresses an affective dimension of subjectivity that emerges out of the continuous struggle of Greek people to negotiate at once their glorious past as a vested right and their continuously postponed future as a reflection of this past (cf. Plantzos 2016).

Anticipatory nostalgia is a product of chronocracy enacted in everyday experience and in relations to material, visual and discursive environments (cf. Basea 2015; Plantzos 2016). In terms of the classical past, gazing at an ancient site nearby, studying your history lesson for tomorrow, handling a euro-coin, watching an actor cry “this is Sparta” in a blockbuster movie, force people to re-turn to an idiosyncratic affective state of lack and accomplishment. This is true for all hybrid versions of Hellenism: the simplistic one that portrays Hellenism as the glorious ideal and the more complex ‘modern’ articulation that emphasizes reason and secularism. Alternative historical motifs are equally evocative of anticipatory nostalgia. The vision of the unruly Balkan, Christian Orthodox anti-hero, or the subject of frequently romanticized, twentieth century revolutionary resistance may seem to be attractive counter-chronocratic, de-colonial alternatives. In reality, however, they are similarly unattainable positionalities since they also enact *states of freedom achieved and at the same time yet to happen*.

As an affective state, nostalgia for what has been already accomplished and at once for the anticipated condition of being liberated from chronocratic domination causes hands to shake, voices to tremble, tears to roll down the eyes, deep feelings of injustice, pride and inadequacy. It fills the future with the past and the present with future orientations (cf. Bryant and Knight 2019). It encourages understandings of the self as always already defiant and at once defeated (cf. Herzfeld 1987). Anticipatory nostalgia is embedded into and emitted from visual, discursive and material ecologies (cf. Navaro-Yashin 2009). It saturates ‘the street’ (*to dromo, to pezodromio*) as the paramount landscape of resistance (cf. Dalakoglou 2012, 2018) and the Syntagma Square where the Greek anti-austerity indignation movement developed in 2011 in the shadow of past struggles, like the big EAM demonstration of 1944.

The Greek ‘crisis’ as a state of emergency and ‘urgency’ to *catch-up* with European, capitalist modernity accentuated anticipatory nostalgia, as it was nothing more than yet another variation of chronocracy as a colonial political technology. Much like in the 1836 newly established Kingdom of Greece, ‘all the Greeks had to do’ since 2010 was ‘to mimic the Germans’. This time the advice was not offered by the 1836 Minister of Greece’s German King but by the likes of the 2013 Germany’s Minister of Finance, Wolfgang Schäuble, the Dutch President of the Eurogroup, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, and the French chairwoman of the IMF, Christine Lagarde. It was echoed by local elites and politicians who insisted that Greece *had to become a normal country by returning to the path of modernization, progress and development*.

In a detailed analysis of 2011–2016 official discourses on the Greek crisis, Stavrakakis and Galanopoulos (2019) reveal that ‘normality’ was presented in the official narratives of conservative and socialist governments as a series of ‘turns’ and ‘re-turns’ to the future of European capitalist modernity. The medium of identification was this time, not the classical past, but the austerity measures. Austerity would allegedly help the country to return to

the normality of the markets and eventually, through its full participation in the capitalist system, to become reinstated in the EU as an equal partner. This is what a number of EU officials, Greek politicians and journalists maintained. Speaking at the Conference of the Greek Union of Entrepreneurs in October 2014, the then leader of the socialist party that participated in the Greek coalition government claimed that “*the return to normality is not a return to the past, but a return to the future*” (my emphasis, Stavrakakis and Galanopoulos 2019: 181). Achieving normality through an austerity programme that would help Greeks to successfully imitate their European counterparts, rendered – yet again – the country’s present “something that is absent and temporally deferred... a representation of time that is always elsewhere, a repetition” (Bhaba 1994: 51).

Chronocracy, however, did not just manifest in Greece as a colonial technology of governance. It was also enacted as *phroneses* (cf. Bear 2016; Kirtsoglou and Simpson this volume), that is, in the form of a series of *moral* statements about the Greeks as degenerate mutations of the ideal modern European citizen (cf. Herzfeld 2016a, 2016b; Knight 2013). Articulated by local and international officials and the media, these statements presented Greeks as Ottoman relics who would not hesitate to cheat the state or the EU for personal gain. Through an emphasis on Greek anachronism and dubious moral standards the crisis was not presented simply as an economic or a fiscal event but as a proof of the Greek people’s moral and cultural lag (cf. Douzinas 2011; Gkintidis 2018; Rakopoulos 2019). As Graeber (2011) has argued, debt is not actually an economic but a moral statement (cf. also Athanasiou 2014: 7; Goddard 2019; Narotzky 2016; Sabaté 2016). As such, the way the country’s debt was handled constitutes a particular facet of chronocracy that served to deny the Greek people *moral* (as well as cultural and historical) coevalness with the rest of Europe.

Epistemic chronocracy – as a form of denying coevalness through regimes of expert knowledge – was also a feature of political, journalistic, academic and technocratic discourses of the crisis. Austerity was a regime primarily designed to transfer the financial risk of major European banks onto the shoulders of Greek and other European citizens.¹² Nevertheless, it was presented and defended as an expert remedy to a country’s lagging modernization. During the so-called ‘crisis’, Greek people’s fates, their future ‘progress’ and their future as progress were decided in closed Eurogroup meetings and also in Hilton, a landmark hotel in Athens where the Troika met with local government officials. These critical decision-making events at the margins of the state (cf. Das 1995; Knight and Stewart 2016: 10) created asymmetrical timelines between decision-makers and those forced to bear the consequences of other people’s decisions (cf. Kirtsoglou 2010). In official and public discourses that medicalized and pathologized the ‘Greek condition’, forms of expert knowledge were employed as diagnostic tools and simultaneously as therapies of the country’s assumed pathologies (cf. Stavrakakis and Galanopoulos 2019; Stoler 2006: 410). In one of my visits

to Athens in 2013, I took a taxi to a meeting I had near the Hilton hotel. Upon hearing where I wanted to go, the taxi driver remarked: “Ah, you want to go to the hospital!” “No the Hilton hotel”, I replied failing to tune in to his subtle irony. “I know”, he replied

at the hospital. This is where Greece, the Big Patient as they call it now (*o megalos astehnis*) is supposedly lying¹³. All the top doctors have come from Europe (*apo tas Evropas*) and confer all the time about what kind of chemotherapy they will give her in order to cure us from anachronism (*apo tin anachronistikota*). But you know what happens when you get a big dosage of such medicines. You die and that’s the end of it (*pethaineis kai teleionei to zitima*).

The Greek colonial condition has been continuously rearticulated in diverse – and conflicting – narratives of progress as the ‘normal’ expected future orientation. As a collective ideal, progress may appear as being oriented towards a specific end but is in fact a cyclical aporia, as it heavily depends on defeating that which came before (Navaro-Yashin 2009: 7). In terms of how modernity approaches progress in scientific knowledge, revolutions demand that past approaches become defeated and ruined (ibid.; Kuhn 1970). In turn, progress as modernity’s collective societal goal commands that the past is symbolically destroyed as it is conquered, overcome and transformed into a place of no-return, which can be only preserved as singularized history (cf. Bhabha 1994: 56; Chakrabarty 2000; Koselleck 1985; Lyotard 1985). Progress as a quintessential principle of modernity rests on a strict ordering of time in temporalities of before and after and celebrates change, development and substitution of the old and parochial in favour of the new and better. Since this process is both continuous and relentless, its telos remains a slippery and precarious feature. The moment we achieve progress, the goal of future progress reappears in front of us. There is a saying in Greek that captures this aporia well: “the better is the enemy of good” (*o ethros tou kalou einai to kalytero*).

Progress, it would seem, can only exist in a linear time frame so that we can prove the changes by putting them *behind us* and meaningfully strive towards future change. Through exponential repetition of this process however, linear time acquires *cyclical properties*. The repetitive cycle of substituting the new best with an even newer better-best renders the process of progress entirely predictable. As such, modernity’s belief in progress can be seen as an eschatological condition (cf. Guyer 2007). Just as members of various Christian denominations feel they *know* the direction of time towards a salvationist end, the subject of modernity feels she *knows* time’s infinite trajectory.

Because progress cannot but be at once achieved-and-yet-to-be-accomplished, it is actually a state that fills us all (not just the Greeks) with anticipatory nostalgia. We live in a constant condition of being nostalgic of our futures, and we *can be* nostalgic of them because we *allegedly know*

already what they will look like: better than our pasts and presents. Our eschatological belief in progress is our common colonial condition at the heart of both neoliberal capitalism and the revolutionary visions of resistance to it. Both frameworks are ultimately products of modernity, and as such, they are oriented towards a future potentiality envisaged as a state *hitherto* ‘better’ than the present.

I believe that my Greek informants strive to resist the aporia of progress through what I have called nomadic temporality. The polytemporal character of Greek political and historical experience has been documented chiefly in the work of Daniel Knight (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016) and in his collaborations with Stewart (2016) and Bryant (2019). The renewed interest in Southern Europe and austerity made temporality a fruitful entry point of analysis. For example, in relation to memory and resistance (Narotzky 2016), forgetting and suppressed memories (Pipyrou 2016) and trauma and affect (Alexandrakis 2016; Apostolidou 2018). These works complemented anthropological discussions of historicity (Stewart 2016), the near future (Guyer 2007), debt and fiscal disobedience (Graeber 2011; Han 2004; Roitman 2005), hope (Miyazaki 2004, 2006), speed cultures of modernity (Virilio 2005), the study of time through labour (Bear 2014) and the concept of time as a technique (Bear 2016). What does yet another take on temporality have to offer to an already established body of relevant literature? What does the term ‘nomadic’ bring to the debate?

My inspiration here comes from Deleuze and Guattari’s work on Nomadology (2010). In this work they set out to convey the anti-genealogical, impulsive and volatile character of nomadic existence. Here, I extend their thinking by describing a nomadic sense of temporality and one which could potentially be perceived as a de-colonial strategy of resistance to the predictable, ordered cyclicity of modernity as progress. In this sense, I prefer to view the way in which my informants blend temporalities superimposing one upon the other and folding them into each other, as an anti-chronocratic act of rejecting modernity’s impulse to order time through the notion of progress.

At each turn of history, Greek temporal subjectivities appear to be composed of collapsed fragments of time. As the colonial condition compels them to move seemingly ‘ahead’, my informants instinctively apprehend that linearity is nothing more than a short-term illusion; a small fragment of a bigger curve. When one walks on a straight line, one knows that this is actually part of an elliptic earth and if one keeps walking, one will eventually reach the same point. Similarly, nomadic temporalities destabilize the linear illusion of modernity-as-progress and reveal its cyclical properties. Greek temporalities are nomadic, I argue, because they resemble complex, curvy configurations with manifold, unbounded interconnections between different time fragments that produce potentially infinite temporal assemblages as they expand in all directions.¹⁴ The anti-genealogical, impulsive and volatile character of nomadic temporal existence is revealed in the way various time fragments are being recursively and retrocausally assembled

and re-assembled in provisional chronotopes. This kind of temporal disobedience, causes historical events to be selectively re-lived in the present (cf. Knight 2015), connecting nominal notions of past, present and future with the local and the global in instances of analogical thinking (cf. Sutton 1998).

Nomadic thinking is in a sense the inverted image of anticipatory nostalgia. Conversely to anticipatory nostalgia that is ultimately a future-oriented event, nomadic temporality is eclectic and sometimes unpredictable. It creates all sorts of unexpected connections between events that maintain “the possibility of springing up at any point” (Deleuze and Guattari 2010: 5). Its consistency is that of a ‘fuzzy aggregate’ plural, affective and distributed between persons and things (ibid.: 44, 82–83). Since nomadic temporality is a kind of anti-progress temporal agency, it is also non-teleological. It is not organized around temporal *trajectories* (cf. Bryant and Knight 2019: 17–18). It enacts a multi-accentuated sense of time as contingency and promotes the creation of serendipitous entanglements between experience, memory, inference, affect, visuality and materiality. Just as nomadic temporality remains stubbornly anti-progressive and non-directional, however, it also reifies colonial duress (cf. Stoler 2016). Colonial vestiges are inscribed and re-inscribed onto the manifold temporal surfaces through a process of successive folding and re-folding of chronocracy into the fabric of time. The manner in which chronocracy enters and inhabits nomadic temporality poses a limit to the subject’s temporal agency and renders it an assemblage of thoughts, discourses and practices that both resist and reify the relevance of the colonial gaze.

Conclusion: a long-standing grief – kaimos

*but Greece, as it is known, never dies and as it has been foretold one day it will rise again from the dead.*¹⁵

Different scholars, including myself, have documented through the years Greek feelings of injustice over the unequal relations of power promoted by the failed project of modernity (Herzfeld 2002, 2016a, b; Kirtsoglou 2006, 2010; Sutton 1998; Theodossopoulos and Kirtsoglou 2010a, 2010b).¹⁶ Up until 2010, my interlocutors used to tell me that they were the asymmetrical allies of Europe and of the US (cf. Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos 2010b). They provided me with complex narratives of political aetiology, as they elaborated on their relationship with an imaginary West, of which they felt ‘simultaneously an image, a creation, an appendix, an ally and an enemy’ (Kirtsoglou 2006: 64). The open secret of Greek political, cultural and economic dependence (cf. Herzfeld 2015) was locally articulated after 2010 as a case of straightforward colonial domination. The term ‘debt-colony’ (*apoikia hreous*) was one of the most frequent expressions my interlocutors employed to describe their experiences in the years of austerity. They offered it to me in supermarket queues and later on at the long queues in front of ATMs after the imposition of capital controls in the summer of 2015.

They used it to express their anticipatory nostalgia of the times (always past and yet to come) when Greece was/will be seen as a sovereign country and an equal member of Europe and the world. They employed it to talk about freedom, democracy and dignity, the values they have fought/fight/will fight for against an ‘imperialist capitalism’ that sought to operationalize their lives and to turn them into ‘slaves for the world’s few’.

The feeling of being colonized – taken over as a cultural and political subject – has deep historical roots in Greece. What was termed as the ‘Greek crisis’ and the way this was handled institutionally, in public and in media discourses, has nothing ‘new’ to offer to our understanding of the Greek historical and political condition. It cannot be considered as a kind of rupture in time or as a bounded event. It is merely another facet of Greece’s chronocratic relationship with an imaginary European modernity and its institutional and informal propagations. As Herzfeld argued, the ‘EU is a successor to Great Power imperialism’ (2016a: 11). Modern Greece has been unofficially colonized culturally, politically and economically since the inception of the Modern Greek state. In fact, it may well owe its very existence as a state to the fact that classical Greece had been already appropriated as an integral part of European modernity (cf. Beaton 2014; Tziovas 2014). The manner in which Greek people were chronocratically orientalized, moralized and pathologized since 2010 is just another manifestation of their chronic colonial condition. The stereotypes of profligate tax-evading citizens of an unmodern state that needed to finally become European or else exit the EU were nothing but variations upon the same crypto-colonial themes played out for nearly 200 years.

Through neoclassicism, Hellenism or neoliberalism, the Greek people have been diachronically admonished to ‘catch-up’ as a matter of urgency. Indigenous resistance to the project of (capitalist) modernity has been routinely exoticized, romanticized, and pathologized (cf. Theodossopoulos 2014). From within their colonial condition, my informants are ridden with a chronic, anticipatory nostalgia of the future-past (cf. Kirtsoglou 2010: 86–87; Plantzos 2016). Modernization-as-progress is experienced as an orientalizing project of ‘ruination’ and destruction (cf. Navaro-Yashin 2009) of the Modern Greek cultural eccentricities: their failure to become individuals (cf. Stewart 2014); their collectivist and familist ethos (cf. Douzinas 2013); their ‘mild’ – and not so mild – nationalism (ibid.; Kitromilides 1989), their superstitious religiosity that contravenes Enlightenment ideals of reason and logic (cf. Argyrou 2002: 60–61, 100), their ‘archaic’ notions of retributive justice (cf. Loizos 1988), their ‘conspiratorial’ irrationalism (cf. Brown and Theodossopoulos 2003; Sutton 2003) and their Ottoman-inspired clientalist predisposition were all deemed unfit for the modern, contractarian, fast-capitalist Europe (cf. Herzfeld 2002, 2016a, 2016b; Kirtsoglou 2006). All in all, Greek people have been continuously *urged* to re-turn where they once were or else stop laying claim to the classical past as the holy grail of modernity (cf. Tziovas 2014: 16).

What I have tried to analyse in this paper (namely Greece's colonial condition, its relationship to the chronocratic properties of modernity-as-progress and the production of anticipatory nostalgia) is tied to the concept of nomadic temporalities. My Greek informants seem to be refusing to view the past as history to be preserved. For them, the past remains alive (cf. De L'Estoile 2008; Knight 2015). They also refrain from defeating old frameworks and stubbornly bring all kinds of temporalities onto complex, manifold configurations where everything is potentially related to everything else. Their nomadic sense of temporality both resists and reifies anticipatory nostalgia. The array and unpredictability of connections between different time fragments resist the ordering of time and constitute temporality an open 'expansive ecology' (cf. Widger and Wickramasinghe this volume). The folding and refolding of temporalities into different temporal assemblages, however, reproduces orientalist images of the self and perpetuates anticipatory nostalgia as the affective structure of the Greek colonial condition. Caught in the net of this impossibility, Greece, or *Ellada*, as my informants prefer to call it, is an entity similar to Schrödinger's cat: it at once 'rises from the dead and never dies'. As Christina, one of my dearest Greek friends frequently states, "*every problem has a solution. A problem with no solution is not a problem. It is a long-standing grief (kaimos). Ellada my dear is a kaimos*".

Notes

- 1 The use of the term 'modernity' here does not denote a homogenous temporal, political or historical entity. My analysis demonstrates the 'plural genealogy and ecology of modernity', evident in its relation to the appropriation of the classical Greek past (Mitchell 2000: 12–13).
- 2 IOU – an abbreviation of the term I Owe You – is a kind of informal promissory note which acknowledges debt but does not specify the terms and time of repayment. The term IOU was introduced to public discourse by the then minister of finance Yanis Varoufakis who saw it as tool in a possible parallel electronic payments system, in case Greece was suddenly expelled from the Eurozone. See Yanis Varoufakis *Adults in the Room*, p. 287, section *mea maxima culpa*.
- 3 *Eimaste Ellines. Den proskyname. Emeis kai stous Theous milame orthioi*.
- 4 This verse of the song refers to the soup kitchens organised by EAM during the Great Famine of 1941–1943 German occupation. For how the Great Famine pictured in Greek experiences of the crisis see Knight (2013, 2015). For EAM's soup kitchens see Margaret Poulos (2014), esp. Section 4.2.
- 5 'Beta' here is an official characterization (not to be confused with 'second class citizen'). For more on this subject see Clogg (1979: 168; Samatas 1986: 35).
- 6 The term was coined by Banfield in his 1958 study of a Southern Italian village. The concept of amoral familism sought to provide an explanation of why certain societies fail to progress. It argued that backward societies were not investing their energies towards the public good and prioritized present orientation over future planning. Banfield's proposition was warmly received and used for several years in relevant sociological literature (cf. Ferragina 2009).
- 7 For further historical contextualization, see Diamantouros (1994) on Greek cultural dualism, pointedly discussed in relation to the crisis by Triandafyllidou, Gropas and Kouki (2013).

- 8 For example Knight's (2015) informants experience austerity through the Ottoman past and the 1941 Great Famine, rather than focussing on the civil war era.
- 9 <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/28/04/53/sp091911>.
- 10 See Antoniadis (2012) <http://www.lse.ac.uk/Hellenic-Observatory/Assets/Documents/Research/Research-Projects/Greek-Econ-Crisis-in-the-International-Pressen.pdf>; <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1958721,00.html>.
- 11 <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2013/jun/05/imf-underestimated-damage-austerity-would-do-to-greece>. For an accessible explanation of what became known as the Blanchard-Leigh fiscal multiplier, one of the chief faults in the EU-/IMF design of the fiscal austerity programme see <https://briefingsforbrexit.com/the-imf-abetted-the-european-unions-subversion-of-greek-democracy/> and Jonathan Porte's (National Institute of Economic and Social Research) comment <https://www.niesr.ac.uk/blog/no-debate-please-were-europeans>.
- 12 In 2010 the country's fiscal derailment meant that it could potentially default on its payments to international investors in National Bonds. European banks (particularly German and French) were exposed to this risk. The remedy offered by the EU and the IMF was a mixture of heavy, horizontal taxation (to address quickly the country's fiscal derailment) and bigger loans presented as 'bail-outs'. Disregarding the evidence offered by the IMF's chief economist Olivier Blanchard, the heavy austerity measures imposed significantly slowed the Greek economy, causing the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to plummet. As a result, the Greek external debt as percentage of its GDP soared. The main reason that Blanchard's advice was overlooked was in fact the urgency to remedy the exposure of the European Banking system to Greek National Bonds. The austerity regime needs thus to be seen as a financial tool primarily geared towards saving the European banking system rather than 'reviving' or 'sorting out' the Greek economy. Its externally facing goal (safeguarding European banks) was achieved, but its internal goal (strengthening the Greek economy) failed miserably. The blame for this failure was consistently cast upon the Greek people through a series of orientalist, culturalist discourses about their alleged resistance to modernisation.
- 13 This metaphor used extensively during the crisis by European and local politicians and officials has its own interesting multitemporal character. The image of Greece as a 'patient', covered head to toe in a plaster cast, has been proposed by the dictator Papadopoulos to justify the junta's intervention in Greek politics (see Van Dyck 1998: 16).
- 14 For mathematically inclined readers, what I am referring to here is a sense of temporality akin to a Riemann's surface. The term nomadic is indexical to the holomorphic function of temporality.
- 15 *Ma i Ellada os gnoston, pote tis den pethainei, ki opos ehei eipothei, kapoia stigmati th' anastithei.*
- 16 For an account of why modernity was indeed a failed project, see Kirtsoglou (2006, 2010, 2014); Kirtsoglou and Thedossopoulos (2010, 2013); Christou (2018).

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