CERS

Centre for Ethnicity & Racism Studies

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Greek apprentices and European patrons:

The dialogics of self-presentation[1]

Dr Rodanthi Tzanelli

March 2007

National birth in 'Western' discourse

Ernest Gellner (1998) was quick to point out the nationalist's nonsensical claim that nations are perennial entities but at the same time they retain the magical power to be 'born' like any living organism in some nanoseconds of history. His comment becomes pertinent in this book if we link it to Fabian's (1983) reading of the notorious evolutionist project into which imperial apparatuses weaved discourses of governance. As explored in chapter IV, evolutionists furnished humanist *epistemes* with a repudiation of the chronicle time and the adoption of linear, chronological time. This led to a projection of the axis of time onto the axis of space – in other words, a 'mapping' of time that created hierarchies of 'backward' and 'progressive' species.

---

[1] Early draft of chapter 7 from *Nation-Buidling and the Dialogics of Reciprocity* (Palgrave-Macmillan, 2008)

Among the 'species' subjected to this enterprise, were nations. Those nations that could be modernized – that is, comply with the Western European paradigm of political and social progress – were awarded by an imaginary collective, but actually non-uniform, fictional entity called 'the West', a 'bonus'. This bonus was nothing other than the successful nation's promotion to a higher level in the hierarchy of civilization. Inversely, those nations that presented signs of anomalous or belated development remained in the lower stages. Political disorder, social unrest and public insecurity were all signs of anomaly instead of being regarded as inherent in the process of modernization – or, for the sake of political correctness, they were 'the other side of modernity' (Weber, 1985). It goes without saying that practices of classification and accusations of deficiency enabled Western imperial powers to justify their patronizing attitude towards such nations. It would also be incorrect to lump together different imperial projects as 'Western', for this theoretical umbrella legitimated various collective political identities over the last few centuries. The hazy category of the 'West' cultivated fears of deficiency, a fear that was eventually internalised by patronised or colonised nations and ethnicities.

Subaltern identities however tend to formulate counter-hegemonic agendas too. Returning to Weber's analysis of Calvinism as the precursor of capitalism, Herzfeld noted that bureaucratic systems instil a form of secular theodicy to those subjected to it, 'provid[ing] them with social means of coping with disappointment' (1992: 7). Likewise, the vocabulary of moral accountability Western powers invented to satisfy their own political plans was often turned on its head: as suggested in the previous chapter, the weak can also accuse the powerful of moral deficiency. Whereas such accusations reify master-slave relationships in

the geopolitical arena, they also work to the subaltern's self-satisfaction, allowing space not only for formulaic grievance for 'gross injustices' but also for the transposition of the selfsame discourses of inter-state patronage into the domain of the nation. Many, allegedly 'lesser', national communities were denied access to the benevolent family of progressive European nations – a telling metaphor of emotive power I am setting out to unpack. The result of this exclusion was not complete resignation, but a turning of the nation-state's efforts inwards, in order to accomplish self-recognition (Chatterjee, 1986). Damaged political reciprocities are useful tools in the process of nation-building.

When modern Greece did not escape the European myth of modernisation, Britain made it its mission to consolidate control of the new state, a control that dated back to Greece's institution after all. Putting aside British economic interests in the South-Eastern Mediterranean region for a while, patronising the Greek state certainly had to do with the impact economic success had on the way the British reflected on the world and themselves. The optimism that abundance brought was coupled with a sense of superiority *vis-à-vis* the colonized, and gave birth to the idea of a civilizing mission. The rationale of this mission was that if the British were able to produce wealth, then they could become agents in the improvement of the human condition (Robinson and Gallagher, 1967, pp. 1–2). In the first half of the nineteenth century, when the tug of war and social revolutions threatened the very existence of other European countries, Britain remained almost intact. This was regarded as a godly sign. 'Amidst the ruins of the old order, Britain was felt to be specially preserved by God and to have a central role in the fulfilment of purposes now hastening to their climax' (Wolffe, 1994, pp. 42–3).

The political revival of ancient Greece was one of the many imperial projects that added to the Victorians' prestige as agents of civilization (Dakin, 1955, pp. 5–6) and would not be dropped easily. This tiny Mediterranean state presented a challenge because it entertained ideas symmetrical to British imperial ambitions. Greek irredentism directed against the Ottoman empire was a nuisance for Britain: not only did it pose a threat to the fragile political stabilities on the Eastern European border, it also humiliated the magnanimous European protectors of Greece. The British response and the Greek counter-reaction were articulated in a fashion that deserves analysis: in the course of the 1860s and 1870s, one of the rhetorical means Britain employed to chastise the Greek state was to maintain that the country was simply too 'young' to follow such serious ventures as the Great Idea. Conversely, in Greek discourse the nation-state assumed the role of a powerful pedagogue, destined to mother and 'nourish' the Greeks of the East and the rest of the world. Both sides displayed a tendency to push collective self-presentations (Goffman 1987: 114) further every time they would be antagonized politically. The transposition of social knowledge (of gender and familial relations) into the public political domain assisted in the construction of a formalised 'self' from the messy materials of cultural intimacy.

The importance of this rhetoric is somehow obscured when we consider it as mere linguistic game. Post-colonial theorists have been blamed of unnecessary semiotic obsession time and again, yet their persistence to highlight the political effectiveness of discursive tropes has broadened the horizons of interdisciplinary cultural analysis. Tropes, enduring and repetitive formulas of speech that communicate irony, invite substitution and revel in truisms are more than innocent figurative speech when they become implicated in geopolitics. As Herzfeld so eloquently explained, 'the absence of kinship seems to be one of the defining characteristics

of the West's view of itself' (1992, p. 68). The claim political units make that they operate on strictly rational, bureaucratic principles sidesteps the dependency of the 'rational' upon the symbolic' (*ibid.*, p. 148; see also Sutton, 2000, p. 175; Schneider, 1977).

When examined cross-culturally, kinship and family relations can become potent metaphors of responsibility or indebtedness – metaphors that can be applied to either party in a relationship (Herzfeld, 2001, p. 231). The selfsame metaphors can turn into a centripetal political force when used by the state in the context of nation-formation. Although the vocabulary of intimacy is mobilised primarily to consolidate political control, it camouflages an inescapable moral interdependence (Benhabib, 1995): family, kinship and mothering tropes are another way to express the need to care and be cared for (Borneman, 1996), and work as an affirmative expression of our humanity. The ritual application of these tropes in politics also exposes human deficiencies and error, notably the exclusiveness of all social connections fostered on the idea of 'blood'. Engendering political units may be a *prima facie* practice that reflects enduring patterns of social inequality, but it is also a practice that confirms the intersubjective 'accomplishment' (Connell, 1987; 1995) of hegemonic identities (Delaney, 1995). Nineteenth-century Greek and British practices of emasculation, valorization and infantilization both uncover the dialogical struggles of national identity and present the origins of the European project as a site of reciprocal political definitions.

On immaturity and patronage

Relationships of patronage are rife with allusions to discipline as pedagogy. Their invariable use by the powerful party in the relationship also asserts a number of 'manly' attributes that belong to the discourse of 'normative masculinity' (Mosse, 1996): willpower, (self)control,

competitiveness, competence and reliability. All these attributes converge behind a masculinized ideal of liberty, political autonomy and independence (Bederman, 1995), commonly considered as the outcome of collective civilizing processes. During the Cretan Insurrection of 1866-1869 British allegations that Greece was unable and unsuitable to partake in the Western European civilizing mission were frequent. Crete, then under Ottoman rule, had repeatedly rebelled against its Ottoman 'oppressors' and asked for unification with Greece. Although the Greek metropolis had to declare its loyalties to its European protectors who favoured neutrality, it secretly aided the rebels on many occasions. Even the late British philhellenes retained ambivalent feelings toward this attitude. In 1867, when the insurrection was at a turning point, a letter signed by a 'Philhellene' in *The Times* analyzed the situation in European Turkey. The 'Philhellene' began his analysis by drawing attention to the superficial gloss of 'Mohammedan civilization', under which one could still find all the ancient 'vices' of the 'Turkish race': religious persecution, polygamy, domestic slavery, unequal and oppressive treatment of conquered nations. These references were coupled with comments on the ability of 'Greek Christianity' to make the future of 'the East' happier. In a radical vein, the 'Philhellene' carried on to say that the new Kingdom of Greece needed the Greek provinces of Thessaly and Epirus, then under Ottoman rule, as much as Crete, to regain self-respect. For,

> Independence and self-respect are necessary conditions of national existence.
> A playing kingdom, without resources either for internal improvement or
> external defence, without any feeling of responsibility, a mere spoilt child of
> the protecting Powers, Greece has never seriously applied herself to the work
> of her own regeneration (*The Times*, 1 January 1867).

Putting aside the conflation of ethnicity with religion that lays the foundations of the 'clash of civilizations' thesis (Huntington, 1993), for the 'Philhellene' Greece appeared to be too 'young' and weak to help itself. The discourse of responsibility is coupled with that of honour and shaming that frequently frames the rhetoric of nationalist movements (McClintock, 1995, pp. 356-7). Enloe has explained how nationalism 'has typically sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation and masculinized hope' (1990, p. 45). Greece assumes the feminine but childish form in the passage, which remains in need for moral discipline (Nagel, 1998) because it constantly shames its manly European Protectors. Similar normative takes on masculinity (Connell, 1995, p. 70) continued to circulate in the British press in the 1860s and kept returning to the subject of Greece's suitability for expansion, noting that only Britain had the right to supervise, advise and 'preach Greece' (*The Times*, 8 April 1867), since only Britain helped the country to expand by granting her the Ionian Islands in 1864. Such engendered reflections highlighted the missing political consistency of Greek nationalist agendas, even though the conditions of national self-realization differed so much for Greece and Britain. British expectations for consistency presented demands for Greek commitment in Anglo-Greek relations, a commitment that would allegedly be based on mutual self-interest (Becker, 1960, p. 34). Despite the call for reciprocity, what the British patrons demanded was forced (instilled by preaching), rather that value commitment (Stebbins, 1970) that normally flourishes in relationships of mutual respect.

Thus the dialogics of Greek presentation (Herzfeld, 1997: 116) would emerge every time British discourse shifted from an analysis of Greek nationalism to speculations on the nature

of British control in Greece. After the Dilessi kidnapping in April 1870 the small Kingdom was likened to 'an offspring of the sympathy of Christian powers', which now 'disgraces her creators' (*The Morning Post*, 28 April 1870) and has a 'perverse and forward childhood' (*The Times*, 26 April 1870). The verdict unveiled a twofold fear: it certainly echoed Victorian psychopathologies concerning the untimely death of nations that are morally degraded – that is, *downgraded* on the ladder of civilization (Bowler, 1989, pp. 9, 193–4; Chamberlin and Gilman, 1985, pp. 290–1). However, such verdicts also mirrored changing Victorian perceptions of childhood: the way in which Victorian middle-class society looked at children was significantly different from earlier puritan conceptions that were based on the firm belief that children were small adults fallen from God's grace (Norton, 1995, pp. 63–4; Aries, 1962). Rousseau's pedagogical ideas, which had a profound impact on the Victorian mind, presented children as innocent creatures who ought to be given the chance to understand the natural and social world in their own way. Due to the persistence of puritan ethics, Victorian perceptions of childhood did not evolve evenly: positive images of childhood receded in the early nineteenth century only to come back in the mid-Victorian period. Discontinuities in social perceptions of childhood were nicely manifested in the discourse on Greece's 'anomaly': its (naturalized) development was described as 'forward and perverse' against the Romantic Victorian image.

Yet, the language of kinship constantly invoked in these texts suggests that the British envisaged the Anglo-Greek relationship in terms of consanguinity: both countries were European and shared a bond of 'blood'. Therefore, the rhetoric of failed patronage was also articulating the fear that modern Greece 'does not belong' racially. Speculating on the chasm between Greece's actual condition and the nation's 'sweet belief' in its uniqueness, both

Tuckerman and Finlay viewed the Greek state as 'the Oliver Twist of nations [who] had the unblushing temerity 'to ask for more' gifts from Europe (Tuckerman, 1872, p. 125; *The Times*, 31 March 1873). It goes without saying that conceptualisations of the Anglo-Greek 'bond' on the basis of racial affiliation circulated within Greece too. We can read them in a cartoon published by an anonymous Greek in the 1870s, which depicts a boy engaged in a graffiti enterprise: the 'design' of a 'Great Idea' of Turkish–Greek battles on the wall of a house. In semiotic terms, this indicates 'untimely' Greek aspirations; perhaps pushed a little bit further, the way Greece functioned as political trouble for her neighbours (symbolized by the wall, the foreign Ottoman property the cartoon boy damages). The wall however also signified the racial boundaries that 'puerile' Greece disturbed without second thought. The fear of European miscegenation was widespread in the country due to unreasonable European expectations of Greek 'civilized' performance in politics – hence, the cartoon is critical of Greek expansionism.

This critical attitude can be found in other sources of the period: for example, the author of a theatrical play published in Cephallonia after the Dilessi Murders presents the unfortunate British captives discussing European progress and Greek irredentist politics. In a scene Greek culture is called 'an infant' that has to 'be taken care of' by the Great Powers. Nevertheless, the author was convinced that the poor Greek nation that 'only yesterday was liberated from the barbarous four-century [Ottoman] bonds…will eventually present signs of progress analogous to those of ancient European nations' (Iatridis, 1870, p. 19). Here the infantilised image of Greece has a double meaning: on the one hand, it functions as an allegory of historical discontinuity in Greek culture – a discontinuity introduced into Greek history after the conquest of Byzantium by the Ottomans. In this respect, modern Greece

will have to become more like its ancient counterpart to fulfil its *telos*. On the other hand, the author implied that Greeks accepted the idea of the country's collaborative European control, which would ensure the country's safe 'rite of passage' to the European family of nations. Counter-hegemonic games were also present in gendered political discourse: perhaps Britain acted as the patron of a puerile female state, but it seemed to forget 'the womb' it had come from, the womb of the dishonoured mother of Europe (Psychas, 1870, p. 7). The idea of 'Greece' as the cradle of European civilization was nothing new in the 1860s and the 1870s Europe. The need of Britons to see modern Greece 'evolving' into a country 'after their likeness' translated their yearning to see their intellectual/political philehellenic project 'in the flesh'.

The fear of racial contamination would often be codified in a scientific vocabulary that alluded to British 'experimentation' with 'infantile' Greece. But this vocabulary, which introduces us to the evolutionist world from the back door, was in fact quite common in British dealings with the Turks too. British involvement in the Eastern Question became very intense due to European expectations of the imminent collapse of the Ottoman Empire. During the Balkan revolutions of the 1870s the Ottoman empire would figure in British political discourse as a 'Sick Man' in need of the 'family physician' and 'solicitor', an honorary family member in other words who expected the death of the old to secure his 'inheritance [i.e. lands] to his natural heirs, the Christian populations subject to his rule' (Grant Duff, 1876, p. 8; see also Mill, 1876, p. 6; Farley, 1876, p. 29). The comment belongs to Grant Duff, a colonial administrator who expresses the aspiration to become the fair arbitrator of someone else's property, but glorifies his intentions by describing his task as a 'family duty'. Consider also Tuckerman's vitriolic comments on Greece, whom he presents

'as the lame mendicant … told by Britain that since she has only one leg (the Greek Kingdom), which she cannot use, she should not regret the loss of the other (Greek-speaking parts of the Ottoman Empire)', because she 'would not know how to use it' (Tuckerman, 1972: 126).

The language of experimentation, decline and patronage run parallel lives and were utilized extensively by Greeks on the outbreak of Bulgarian nationalism in the 1870s and the subsequent European support of Bulgarian claims in the Balkans. After accusing some of the Constantinopolitan Greeks of high treason because they did not actively oppose the foundation of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870, the author of a political monograph proceeded to explore why the Greek nation was so weak at such a crucial moment. He explained that nations are like children that need guidance by a good pedagogue. However, the pedagogues of the Greek nation, the Great European Powers, 'against the laws of nature, gave to the child poisoned food'.

> That is why, while there is still time, let us try to fight the causes of weakness and degeneration in our society. And those are – with the exception of any inclinations we may have developed - the lack of scientific light and warmth, spiritual progress and the moulding of a strong soul. Finally, let us adopt a healthier diet, so that we will not relapse into the same illness (Asklipiadis, 1872, p. 79).

Clinical language could be seen as an insidious sign of subjection to a harsh Western omniscient that cares nevertheless for the patient, like a good parent. The author wonders

about the causes of Greece's misery, assuming that the remedy is a Western secret. The Greek popular counterpart of such speculation can be found in the story of the ignorant peasants who thought that their new 'Frankish' dentist's collection of dentures consisted of teeth abstracted from the dead to be magically fitted into the mouth of the living. Clinical language is based on the logic that the evil West holds a secret Greeks have to uncover. Nevertheless, setting the scientific gaze of the Westerner before the desire for it, leads to a deadlock; it is also the Greeks' forgetfulness that excludes their own desire to be treated as patients that produces the impression of subjection (Lacan, 1985, p. 207). To invoke Žižek's argument, 'the mystery…is to be sought not *beyond* its appearance but in the very *appearance of mystery*' (1991, p. 107). In a Hobbesian fashion, one may argue that relationships of political patronage are often based on contractual oblivion.

At the same time, the Greek text mirrors an unmistakably Victorian logic concerned with ideas of moral physiology (Haley, 1978). The false causal link between morality and bodily disease, which was not uncommon in the nineteenth century, manifested itself in the context of other, more recent cases, of nationalism. Commenting on the case of the Isreali nation-building project Roginsky (2006) highlighted the link between bodily politics and the politics of identity. Although the body is a suitable site for the expression of cultural sentiments (Douglas, 1966; Foucault, 1979), *like* the ethnic 'essence' of a nation, it remains an indisputable natural property. The body is also traditionally related to irrationality, femininity, sensuality and primitivism – as opposed to the rationality and knowledge of the male Western 'doctor' of the passage. The metaphorical employment of physical properties in relationships of patronage precludes the 'national body' from the sphere of modernity (see Handler, 1988; Cowan, 1990; Herzfeld, 2004). Here gender postulates a normative

masculinity set against a femininity that is construed as 'lack' or 'aberration' (Butler, 1990). The binary opposites that are produced cast European Britain as a masculine presence, ready to dominate a feminized, 'Oriental' Greece (Said, 1978). The interchangeability of gender and racial positions complements colonial discourse.

Contrast this to the author's use of the 'soul' or the 'spirit' as future visions of salvation for the Greek nation. Soul (*psychi*) and spirit (*pneúma*) are two concepts of widespread use in Greek nationalist discourse even in the 21st century. Bryant (2002) identified the same tropes of spiritual growth in Greek Cypriot nationalist discourse, which uses the word *psychí* to represent the community's kinship with the (home)land in religious terms. The union of 'the people' with the land is depicted thus in spiritual terms and strongly 'resembles the Christian idea of the Immaculate Conception' (*ibid.*, p. 511). *Pneúma* also has religious connotations because it simultaneously describes the breath of life, intelligence *and* the Holy Spirit. This resembles Herder's take on the perennially existing *Volksgeist* (Smith, 2000) and its correspondence to, if not replacement of the ultimate metaphysical authority, God. What acts as a catalyst for the creation of national solidarity is the belief that this solidarity exists in a magical way. When Anderson (1990: 11) argued that national sovereignty was achieved with the decline in religious belief he was simply reproducing the old Durkheimian argument (1997[1893]) on organic solidarity as an autopoetic mechanism. The purity of the 'national soul' presents communal bonding as an esoteric experience of feminine nature, chaste and in need for manly protection from any usurpers.

Religious metaphors were present in British understandings of Greek patronage too, but with an emphasis on the creation of Greece by masculine forces. Many times did Britain

assume the role of the benevolent godly 'Father' who gives the much-sought 'breath of life' to the Greek nation, but fails to protect it from tasting the forbidden fruits of freedom. The metaphor was always linked to the Greek state's unwillingness to meet the constitutional requirements for entry into Europe, an obdurate demand on the part of its British patrons. Commenting on the abuse of constitutional principles in Greece, a British journalist said in 1870:

> Perhaps the fault of the failure has lain all along with the Protectors themselves, who said 'Let Greece arise; let us create a kingdom "after our likeness"' in a land which, however patriotic in guerrilla warfare against the Turks, did not possess even the first elements of a municipality. It was very much as though three rich uncles were to say "Here is our nephew, a child only five years old, it is true, but for all that, we will make him a man, and he shall be a man at once."…It was worth trying the experiment, perhaps, just to prove that a Constitution cannot be fitted to a country like a coat to a man's back! (*The Times*, 16 May 1870).

The language is both religious and gendered, linking national and imperial 'honour' to moral consistency and manliness. Yet the religious experiment that Britain has undertaken returns to notions of ethnic innocence and purity. Ethnic Greekness is examined through the orientalist Romantic eyes of the patron as a peripheral entity (Fanon 1970 [1958]) devoid of spirituality and caged in the physical body. Like women, sexualised creatures lacking rationality and virility, children are uncivilized entities on the evolutionary scale (Yuval-Davis, 1997, p.8; Sluga, 1998). The tale of the godly uncle and his emasculated nephew – the

boy who fails to become 'a man' due to his erratic conduct - was narrated throughout the 1860s and 1870s in many different versions (Benjamin, 1867, p. 232; *The Daily News*, 18 May 1870) and is the secularized counterpart of the language of patronage. This 'forced passage' from innocence to adulthood is haunted by earlier puritan attitudes. Britain is not a benevolent Father here, but a severe pedagogue. Again this implicit reference to pedagogy needs contextualizing, as compulsory schooling was introduced in the 1870s within the framework of the sacralization of childhood in Victorian England (Zelizer, 1994).

Even the Greek side sanctioned British masculine self-presentations. Aristarchos Bey, a Greek appointed by the Ottoman government as a brigadier and an ardent supporter of the Great Idea, produced a massive collection of speeches, articles, Church edicts and parliamentary debates concerning the Bulgarian Question, which he published in the 1870s. In 1876, when he finished the fourth volume of his work, the revolution in Bosnia and Herzegovina raged, the Serbians had declared war against the Ottoman Empire and the Bulgarians were organizing an anti-Greek campaign in the Balkans. In this climate of general instability, Britain still tried to secure her passage to India via Suez. Among the numerous speeches in Aristarchos' collection there were two by Lord Salisbury and Lord Derby on British policy on Suez. Aristarchos adopted an enthusiastic attitude towards this 'anti-Turkish' British policy, 'for the masculine roads it opened' in international politics (Bey, 1876, p. 121n.). The enduring tradition of depicting the British Empire as male (MacKenzie, 1987) played a significant role in the building of such imageries, in which the 'colonized' is seen as effeminate, degenerate or childish. As Spurr has noted, the victory of the colonizer would often be hedged with the rhetoric of protection, in which the threat of distrust or violence remained inherent, but was covered up 'by the mellow language of the restoration

of a harmonious order; not that of aboriginal conservatism, but of a more benign one, at once natural and civilized' (Spurr, 1993, p. 34), like the love between father and child.

Even the image of a generous British mother ('Britannia'), which was popular in the metropolis over the same period (Bohata, 2004a, 2004b), would grant Britain with properties traditionally linked to the imperial image: wisdom (Britannia as the ancient Greek goddess Athena), prestige and virility. In fact, the use of family tropes was not unique to Anglo-Greek reflections. British administrators and colonizers used it to describe their relationship with India; anglicized Indian subjects also mobilized the family vocabulary to describe their country's relationship with a 'benevolent' Britain *(The Empire Review,* May 1924, pp. 488–96). In a series of articles published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* between 1846 and 1852, French Orientalists used similar patriarchal imageries to describe their relationship with the Oriental Algeria. (Gemie, 1998, pp. 58–62). Although Greece was not a British colony, the language employed by both sides in the nineteenth century unveils a British fantasy in which the Greek Kingdom is already colonized.

The recognition that ethnic-as-racial affiliations have an ambivalent status in European politics, especially when they are connected to the production of colonial otherness, has been the subject of an on-going debate in postcolonial studies (Fanon, 1970 [1958]; Said, 1978; Bhabha, 1990a, 1990b; Chatterjee, 1993; Bhabha, 1994). The constant conflation of gender and racial identities in the Anglo-Greek dialogue facilitated the codification of political dilemmas. As Bhabha (1990a: 7) has explained, when it comes to the living experience of ambivalence on the part of the subaltern, the tensions between the formalization of identity and its everyday practice can only be resolved by recourse to

(self)stereotyping (1990b). Whereas the masculinization of Britain in Anglo-Greek discourses of patronage remained indisputable, Greece seemed to have acquired a split identity that enabled the nation and the state to move between two gendered poles, depending on the requirements of the moment and always reflecting the patron's desire back (Butler, 1990, p. 45). It may be incorrect to view this 'masquerade' (Hassan, 2003: 310) as a mindless sort of subject interpellation for, as I will proceed to explain in the following section, its internal, Greek, resonance was to assert the nation-state's will to autonomy though an *active* control of political self-presentation.

Mothering Hegemonic Projects

A national community is actualized not solely through a symbolic reproduction of the value systems though which it interprets the world, but also through its ability to simultaneously reflect and act on challenges introduced from outside (Benhabib, 1995, pp. 238-9). Since the emergence of 'imagined communities' in human history, the survival of weak nations has been dependent on their ability to adapt to external pressures while safeguarding the normative orders they would choose to uphold. In other words, the capacity for adaptability would remain dependent on a hermeneutic assessment of the socio-political environment these nations would aspire to inhabit: the 'European ethnic family'. Quite often the continuation of the struggle for self-preservation would threaten to destroy the space of communication with their significant (political) 'others'. The master-slave nature of such international communications blocked the potential for egalitarian reciprocity – and how was Greece to act in the face of such a challenge? Again, gender and kinship relations provided the Greeks with familiar means for political self-presentation.

Following Frantz Fanon, Bhabha (1994) claimed that the language of the colonizer re-merges both as mimicry and mockery once it is adopted by the colonized. As other readers of Fanon pointed out, Bhabha identifies in mimicry the double effect of imitation/parody and subordination/resistance. This ever-present possibility of slippage discredits the colonizer's version of colonized otherness. The two notions of mimesis 'interact and cross continually', producing confusion and subverting roles in colonial discourse (Fuss, 1994, p. 24). I will argue however that mimicry is not the result of colonial oppression exclusively but of any kind of unequal relationship. Feminist studies of work and organisation have revealed the omnipresence of bifurcated self-presentations. Kathy Ferguson's (1984) comparisons of work and personal life patterns of relationship, effectively uncover how deep gender stereotypes run into the language of bureaucratic organization and of everyday life. Clients and low-ranking bureaucrats, often effeminised in public discourse, have to acquire the necessary skills to cope with work, just like women, who learn the skills of femininity to cope with social challenges. The 'art' of femininity retains an exquisite ambiguity precisely because of its tendency to both subvert authority and disempower the performer (Ferguson, 1993). Similar insights are offered by Herzfeld's (2004, pp. 152-3) shrewd analysis of apprenticeship not just as a 'social skill', but also as a form of social action. The poetics of authority in master-apprentice relations, he argues, harbour subversive attitudes, such as mocking and stealing the secrets of craftsmanship from a jealous master in order to gain respect in his eyes. Although stealing assists apprentices in overcoming their symbolic feminization by a ruthless master, their eventual 'becoming' masters in their turn transforms them into an embodiment of their former tyrant (*ibid.*, p. 92). In Bakhtinian (1968) terms, the *carnivalesque* of apprenticeship both broadens the horizons of the human spirit and lays the reproductive foundations of the moribund rituals of power (Clark and Holquist, 1984, p. 302).

At stake for the nineteenth century Greeks was their happy completion as a national unit, but it had proven difficult to circumnavigate the tight control of European political forces since Independence. The response was to both accept and contest their subordinate position, seeking to autonomize the nation's symbolic domain. As we will see in the next few pages, the Greek rhetoric of patronage gestures towards an inversion of what Herzfeld has termed practical orientalism, 'the translation of hegemonic ideology into everyday practice so that it infiltrates the habitual spaces of ordinary experience' (1997: 96). Hegemonic ideologies of nationhood do not represent the advent of a 'modern era' as Gellner (1998: 25-30) would have it, because they inhabit the spaces of an everyday sociality that defines meaningful human togetherness throughout mankind's history. It is the selfsame universally recognizable patterns of sociality that modern hegemonies draw upon to organize and legitimize themselves in the eyes of 'the people'. The gendered and kinship images of the nation that were employed in Anglo-Greek relations would find a new resonance in Greek domestic affairs, as they would now be addressed to a different audience: the Greek state's subjects and the unredeemed Greeks of the Ottoman Empire.

Gendered tropes would assume more currency in 'nation-defining moments', periods of crisis that threatened the nation's lifeworld (Ray, 1999; Eley, 2000). In 1865, a year after the cession of the Ionian Islands to Greece, the Greek entrepreneur Stefanos Xenos published in London his historical study *East and West*, in which he examined the trajectory of Anglo-Greek relations. The addition of seven islands to the Greek state marked a turning point in Greek self-definitions, as he Ionian State had spent a long time under a series of 'civilized' but also hated foreign rulers, such as Britain. Xenos was opposed to the demolition of

fortresses in the Ionian Islands when England handed them to the Greek Kingdom. Criticizing the British 'despotic attitude' towards the Ionian Greeks, he stated:

> The conduct and dispositions of the Ionians are perfectly intelligible. Let us suppose the case of a respectable mother with her children falling into slavery, and reduced by averse circumstances to extreme want; but one child escapes, and has the good fortune to meet a wealthy patron, who adopts him, for whom he provides every comfort, and who gives him every advantage becoming his new position. But, at length, the mother, with one or two of her other children, after a hard struggle, succeeds in raising her head again in the world and becoming free. She has not been able to recover from her early position – far from it; but she enjoys an independent, though humble, existence. Now, what may we suppose would, under such circumstances, be the natural feelings of the son whom a powerful patron has placed in a position so much superior to that of the rest of his family? Would not his first impulse be a desire to return to his mother, and afford her that aid which the education he had received, and the wealth he had acquired, rendered him so competent to afford her to free his own brothers still in slavery? But should the patron refuse his consent, existence becomes a torture to the protégé, who can think of nothing but his mother's position, and can listen only to the voice of nature (Xenos, 1865, p. 28).

Xenos' readership was both British and Greek and therefore his reflections deserve attention. The passage is replete with ideas from the Christian cosmology, which range from

the idea of a secular Edenic Fall to Christ's Resurrection: Greece, the mother of European civilization, becomes a 'poor mother' who has lost her freedom but is somehow awakened and breaks away from the centuries-long oriental bondage. The comment on slavery is nicely inserted: having lost her freedom, Greece becomes a woman who is not respected anymore, like the slaves of the Oriental harems whose status was reduced to that of a concubine. The son-version of Greece of Anglo-Greek relations is transferred to the Ionian Islands, who may be subordinate but more 'civilized' than his mother. Britain is the only persona in the story whose status as the symbolic 'Father' remains unchanged.

The metaphor also draws upon the domestic function of female imagery and the criss-crossing of nationalist and gender discourse. In Greek culture to copulate with the kinswomen of one's enemies equates sexual rivalry with social difference, as the 'rape' of a woman is symbolically a violation and penetration of 'the domestic hearth' (Herzfeld, 1987, p. 173; Just, 2000). Since for Xenos the symbolic 'rape' of Greece is not conducted by Britain but by Turkey, his metaphor is at the same time a metaphor of British patronage and the narrative of Greek culture's adulteration by the Turkish uncivilized character. The story likens masculine shame and honour, a common theme in Mediterranean societies (Schneider, 1971; Herzfeld, 1985, pp. 232-3; Gallant, 2002, p. 119), to national integrity and autonomy.

There was more, nevertheless, to the Greek rhetoric, since the audience for the Greek metropolis was split into Britons and subjected Greeks. With the non-native Greeks of the Ottoman Empire in mind, the maternal image of Greece would become that of a skilled matron whom all the 'unredeemed' Greeks ought to love and respect. Let us have a look at a letter sent to the Greek nationalist newspaper *Palingenesía* by a Constantinopolitan Greek in

1868. The letter was concerned with European, especially British, persistence in keeping Turkey 'alive' by sabotaging the Cretan struggle. For the anonymous Greek, the imminent threat for Turkey was the Great Idea, which contributes to the 'conception and birth of the East'. Greece is suitable to play a leading role in the East, because 'her' aspirations in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean region are to 'save her daughter', the Ottoman provinces the Greek centre claimed as part of the nation's dominions from the Turks. 'Europe' is challenged in the letter 'to dare, if she can, abstract forcibly the East from her mother'. Moreover, Greece is asked to use 'her intellectual skills…to succeed Turkey who is still alive only because – to cite European commentary – "there are no able successors". Finally she should prove that Greece is independent and not a European feud' (*Palingenesía,* 4 July 1868).

Though in theory the article was addressed to 'Europeans', the actual addressees were Britain and a Greek readership. The idea of 'conception' of the East by Greece and the reclaimed 'daughter' belong to the realm of the rhetoric examined before. The image of the 'loving mother', central to this passage, retains its ambiguity: on the one hand, this mother is a dynamic matron. On the other hand, the reference to feudalism presents the Greek Kingdom's gendered identity as an unexpressed fear of subordination that has already taken place. The letter presents an excellent example of the ways in which socio-cultural intimacy, exemplified in the language of honour, is mobilized in international political discourse. As Tuckerman noted in his diary, an insult on the family's reputation, 'a wound of honour…burns till soothed by the blood of the insulter' (Tuckerman, 1972, p. 240) – Turkey in our case. Despite the informal 'motherly' resonance of the letter, the threat of formalized violence lurks in the background – an inversion of the Eliasian 'civilizing process' that in the

British Ionian Islands dictated the separation of everyday masculine violence from the safeguarding of honour (see Gallant, 2002, p. 143-7).

Images of motherhood also appeared in an article on the dinner organized in Manchester for the Cretan struggle, only this time they were addressed solely to a Greek audience. Markos Renieris, representative of the Cretan Assembly and the Central Committee for the Cretan Insurrection in Athens, claimed in his speech that God himself asked for the union of Crete with Greece, because 'families cannot be separated' (*Clió*, 24, 5 April 1867). Later in the year *Clió* revisited the issue of what will happen in Greece if Crete capitulates.

> Internally, Greece will go through a period of insurmountable anomaly, which
> the wounded honour will magnify.…In external affairs, Greece's position will
> be insufferable: the enslaved Greeks will never dare to raise their head again,
> since they will be taught that Greece might perform the loving mother up to a
> point, …but she would never be disposed to run high risks in crucial moments.
> Let us not delude ourselves. Greece should not only support the struggles of
> the subordinate children, but also sympathise and suffer with them. Otherwise,
> what kind of loving mother would she be for the revolting brothers, if, when
> she senses danger, she transforms herself into an inconsiderate stepmother?
> (*Clió*, 15, 27 September 1867).

The same language was used by the Central Committee for the Cretan refugees at Athens, an organization that worked as a mediator between the rebels and the Greek government (*Aión*, 28 March 1868). Obviously, the trope had a certain function to fulfil in Greek state

discourse. For nineteenth-century Greeks women were destined to participate in the Greek hegemonic project in a guarded way, a role that simply affirmed their status as social subordinates. Women might have been presented as the first pedagogues of young Greek generations, but their contribution to the Greek nationalist project had to be performed within the domestic confines and far away from the light of publicity (Ainian, 1876, p. 88). Dominant understandings of femininity led to an interpellation, with many middle-class women reproducing these narratives in times of national crisis (Avdela and Psara, 2005, p. 73). Like women in colonial environments, their role would often be uncertain, as they appeared both as 'subordinates and masters, privileged and restricted, acted upon and acting' (McClintock, 1995, p. 6, p. 355; Gittings, 1996, pp. 1–8).

Chatterjee (1989, p. 629) identified the same discourses of femininity in nineteenth-century Bengali literature, with women assuming the task to maintain the cohesiveness of family life and the kin, and by extension of the national kin. Education was supposed to improve women's identity *in the private sphere* and help them preserve their chastity, cleanliness and sense of personal responsibility. This served to emphasize 'what had in any case become a dominant characteristic of femininity in the new construct of a "woman" standing as a sign for "nation", namely, the spiritual qualities of self-sacrifice, benevolence, devotion, religiosity, and so on' (*ibid.*, p. 630). We note that in Greek tropes of feminized nationhood the ideal of 'woman' is used *in abstracto* and often in relation to religious iconographies (i.e. Virgin Mary); women in the flesh are always patronized, as they remain is the site of (sexualized) pollution. As Avdela and Psara (2005, p. 72) have explained, in nineteenth-century Greek domestic politics the feminization of nationhood in times of crisis would not dispel social prejudice concerning the dangerousness of collective female action.

The transposition of the language of kinship onto the plain of politics requires further analysis. This language was complicit to Greek nation-building because it coincided with the debate on Greek citizenship. As discussed in chapter III, following the institutional recognition of Greece the *autochthone* Greeks (or Greek natives of the Kingdom) had been privileged over the *heterochthones* (or alien, non-indigenous Greeks). In fact, the debate on naturalization of *heterochthone* Greeks had coincided with the first use of the term 'Great Idea' in the Greek Parliament in the 1840s (Zakythinos, 1976, p. 193). In the second half of the nineteenth century, *naturalisation* of the non-indigenous Greeks came to be viewed as a prerequisite for the 'nation's' self-fulfilment. However, the privileged position of the metropolitan Greeks as 'natural' architects of the process of nation-building continued to be asserted. One has to bear in mind what the process of naturalisation comprises to understand the significance of this debate. The state makes non-indigenous peoples *naturalized* citizens – that is, it makes them 'people whose subjectivity conforms to the *nature* of the society that grants them citizenship, *a nature that allows for their subjectivity to be nationalized*' (Gourgouris, 1996, p. 33). *Naturalization* (the German *Naturalisierung*) finds its Greek equivalent in *politográfisis*, the inscription upon one of the mark of the citizen (from *polis* and *grafõ*, engrave). This process naturalizes the notion of national subjectivity because it makes the subject's nationality look inherent – yet another contractual form of forgetting that nations do not posses a natural ethic base (Balibar, 1990, p. 349; Delanty 2002: 346-47; Roudometof 1999; Sassen, 2002, p. 7; Smith, 1981, p. 66; Smith, 1995, p. 98; Soysal, 1997). To these days Greece remains a country that bases conceptions of nationhood on the metaphor of blood relations, thus linking folk formulas of 'brotherhood' to Eurocentric understandings of racial belonging (Just, 1989). Discursive presentations of 'the Greek

nation' as an agnatic group can even be found in the centuries old – and still under use -

term *yénos* or 'race', commonly associated with the period of Ottoman rule.

Current concerns about the legal status of migrants in Greece and other parts of Europe echo the prioritization of blood delineation over the civic model of belonging (Soysal, 1994; Herzfeld, 1997), although radical re-conceptualizations of citizenship have begun to emerge (Habermas, 1998; Delanty and Rumford, 2005, p. 98-91). The exclusivity of the Greek national community in particular became apparent after the acceptance of over 1,000,000 refugees from Asia Minor following the end of the last Greek-Turkish War (1919-1922): the Greek state granted citizenship rights to all refugees of Greek descent, mainly because the Greek Anatolian expedition was based on the propaganda of rescuing the 'unredeemed brethren' on the other side of the Aegean from Ottoman yoke and despite the fact that unofficially the Greek natives regarded them with hostility and suspicion as 'aliens' (Voutira 2003: 148; Hirschon 1998: 10). There is nothing intrinsically European or Greek about this conflation of nature with culture: Cooper and Stoler (1989) have outlined the exclusionary mechanisms that Western Europeans introduced in the colonies by importing ideas of national citizenship that were based on a blunt equation of metropolitan elite cultures with human nature. Such post-Enlightenment processes created incredible tensions in the colonies because the association of culture with 'race' was used in the consolidation of a brutal colonial rule (Cohn, 1987; Kaplan, 1995; Stoler, 1989, 1992). European national sovereignties that are legitimated on such conflations are not a far cry from the pitfalls of colonial policies.

This, along with the insistence of the nineteenth-century native Greeks to be regarded as first-class citizens *vis-a`-vis* their '*heterochthone* brothers', found its analogue in the language of family bonds: the very language the Greeks of the Kingdom employed in the Anglo-Greek dialogue. Thus the family vocabulary that the Greek press used naturalized questions of citizenship and participation of the non-*autochthone* Greeks in Greek politics, while at the same time asserting the hegemony of the political center of Hellenism, Athens. Its function was to 'cover up' Greek cultural, social and political fragmentation, and to make the 'Greek nation' (a fictional entity comprised by the Greeks of Greece, the 'unredeemed' ones of the Ottoman Empire and those of the Diaspora, whose civil rights in the Greek Kingdom were being debated) look naturally uniform: like a loving family (Gillroy, 1993; Barthes, 1993; Levi-Strauss, 1964, pp. 26–7). The symbolic wailing for the 'subordinate Greek children' denotes a definitive moral interdependency, but the language is now applied internally: the political centre calls upon a natural bond that defines a system of rights and duties, which gives citizens their social status (Balibar, 16 March 2006, pp. 13-4). The allusion to the Greek state's mothering also celebrates the fusion of blood and spiritual bonds, especially since the political centre's duty is presented here in terms of suffering. Having recourse to Christian cosmology, the *Clió* journalist uses the iconography of Virgin Mary, whose severed bond with her child leaves her devastated. Thus, the miracle of national birth is depicted in terms of an Immaculate Conception and the nation's political losses re-enact the Holy Drama.

The dialogics of identity

The tropes of family and kinship performed a multiple function in Greek and British politics. British discourse valorized the imperial self-image by representing Greece as a weak British protégé, a crypto-colony (Herzfeld, 2002). In Greek discourse, it undermined British

colonial self-perceptions, but also presented the Greek Kingdom as the center of a Greater Hellenism, which was seeking its self-accomplishment by means of territorial expansion and amelioration of internal ethnic differences. Allocation of roles on a symbolic level was reciprocal, although the Greeks utilized gender imageries to construct their own language of resistance. Significantly, when we examine the rhetoric of protection from either side individually, we discover that one parent/partner is constantly missing from the implied 'family structure': the British were good fathers without a 'wife' and the Greeks were good mothers without a 'husband.' The Greek children who appeared in the British rhetoric as half-orphans became mothers in the Greek language of protection. The logic of incomplete parenthood that underpinned both the Greek and the British discourses could be read as a subtle sign of self-contentment for both sides. It is a logic equivalent to Nairn's (1977) recognition of the nation-state's twin, almost gendered, nature both as regressive and war-like, and a cohesive communal force. Putting aside the fact that even Nairn's argument adopts the engendering practices I tried to deconstruct in the chapter, in reality Anglo-Greek theatrical representations concealed the interdependency of roles that make the nuclear family functional. Both Greeks and Britons based their discursive patterns on social experience that governs European cultural intimacies.

However, it also goes without saying that despite their evolutionist conception, both Greek and British imageries operated under purely structural principles, because they were static. In the 1860s, thirty years had passed since the birth of the Greek Kingdom, but Greece was still a child. More than thirty years had passed since Britain had assumed the parental role for Greece, but it still remained a vigorous parent. But modern Greek political regeneration, which was always projected into the future, had its negative equivalent, degeneration - an

undesirable state of things for the British. The clinical language used in the Anglo Greek dialogue was, therefore, the 'symptom' of this British fear. It is useful to examine the discourse of degeneration and regeneration together in order to understand what was foreclosed from the Anglo-Greek symbolic structure. This was nothing other than British decline, a nightmare that visited Victorians in their sleep ever since Darwin and Gibbon's theories of cyclical historic evolution (Bowler, 1989, pp. 193–195). Not only did the British rhetoric of protection serve to emphasize the order of Anglo-Greek relations, but also to repress sad reflections on a hideous British future. A static conceptualization of the Anglo-Greek relationship would secure a frozen British imperial self-image, and would conceal such British anxieties. The British were trapped into an eternal present – a kind of 'Nemesis' for their imperialist desire.