

## **Bios and Subjectivity: Migration in Life-story Narration**

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**I**n the contemporary context of resurgent nationalisms, globalization and the rise of racism and xenophobia in Europe and the United States, the notion of “migrancy” as a form of social existence and political disposition has become central in contemporary political debates over citizenship and sovereignty as well as in critical cultural theory.<sup>1</sup> Progressive and radical intellectuals have recently argued that the contemporary social phenomenon of migration from “third countries”<sup>2</sup> to Europe may create the political conditions that would challenge and destabilize superiorist political definitions of Europeanness and would create the space for the emergence of alternative forms of culture, community and political subjectivity.<sup>3</sup>

In this context it has become more important than ever before to trace historically the role that perceptions of migration have played in European cultures and the ways in which the migrant has become a culturally and socially recognizable figure in European societies in the course of the twentieth century. This article was essentially conceptualized as part of a broader problematic that concerns the historical formation of modern subjectivities and the experience of labor migrations in the course of the twentieth century. It is my contention that the historical analysis of the cultural engineering of migrant subjectivities in Europe in the twentieth century can raise some critical awareness within the contemporary context of cultural criticism. I would argue that even positive European perceptions of migration (including migration from and towards Europe) have historically contained – and been contained by – hierarchical representations of culture, self, and political subjectivity. The historical analysis of the emergence of migrant subjectivity in the twentieth century seeks to dislodge the pretensions of neo-liberal multiculturalism and intends to introduce some analytical uneasiness into contemporary popular correlations between border-crossings and democratization of culture.

European nation-states that have had a history of emigration constitute a particular category in this context.<sup>4</sup> Under the impact of incoming migration, social memories of emigration play a particular role in contemporary self-conceptualizations of collective self and subjectivity.<sup>5</sup> The question that needs

to be addressed however is how the importance of these memories changes in a period when the country is transformed from a country of emigration to a country that receives immigrants.

Within the European context, Greece constitutes an interesting case of a country that was transformed rapidly from a nation of emigrants to a state recipient of immigrants. The study of the history of Greek immigration may offer an insight into the ways in which memories of migration can or cannot invoke progressive political and cultural dispositions in the present time.

The relation between historical memory and contemporary political and cultural dispositions can be approached from the perspective of the history of subjectivity. The analysis that I pursue in this article is inscribed within a broader attempt to trace historically the interrelation between experience, self-representation, cultural legacies and subjectivities. From this perspective, I examine historically and critically the forms of historicity and accumulated social experience, that have been inscribed in the image of the Greek immigrant. The experience of Greek transatlantic migration led to the production and dissemination of dominant images of migrant subjectivity that transformed earlier images of diaspora, operated as archetypes and determined the ways in which later experiences of migration were made culturally intelligible.<sup>6</sup> In the following section I analyze certain aspects of these processes of production. The analysis that follows seeks to provide an account of the interrelation between nationalism, migration, subjectivity and history and is based on the study of specific levels of cultural production: life-stories, biographies and autobiographies.

### *Life-story Narration as a Practice of Migration*

If the critical suggestion I am making is that people tell their stories (which they do not know or cannot speak) through others' stories, then the very force of insight of this critical suggestion was at once and actively enacted, put in motion, by the process of my writing which was driven, in effect, by the ways in which I was missing my own implication in the texts before me.<sup>7</sup>

Historical inquiry involves reading and writing stories on many different levels. Historical experience is transmitted by means of stories written or told by historical actors about themselves or about others. The historian, on the other hand, tells her own story through re-iterating and researching other people's stories about themselves and others. Historical knowledge is the result of the interplay between these different levels of story-telling and the historical actors' involvement in the reading of these stories, the historian's included.

It is often supported by historians that "too much" methodological self-

reflection is debilitating, “uninteresting”, or it may lead to dangerous forms of agnosticism. Contrary to this argument, it is my contention that critical awareness of this interplay between different orders of story-telling enables the historian to render methodological and interpretational self-reflection the moving force of historical inquiry.

Contemporary historical research on phenomena of migration uses different types of life-stories as fundamental sources of knowledge about processes of physical diasporization and practices of cultural disseminations. In the process of my research on early Greek migration to the United States, I have been reading numerous stories about the lives and deeds of individual Greek migrants. Some of these stories were written by the migrants themselves, whereas others were written by their descendants or by members of the migrants’ families in Greece. Other types of stories were written by state officials and representatives, intellectuals and academics of the period of migration, and finally contemporary scholars, such as social scientists and historians, who studied Greek migration to the United States as a social and historical phenomenon.

Primary research on the history of Greek transatlantic migration makes us realize that contemporary perceptions of Greek migrant subjectivity derive from the generation, circulation, repetition and diffusion of a specific body of narrative accounts of the migrant life-courses. Narration of life-stories constitutes a means by which individual and collective experience is processed and transformed on the level of representations of collectivity. These realizations question the role of life-story narration in the process of international migration and prompt further research in the modes of cultural production of migrant life-stories.

Life-story narration constituted a fundamental part of the experience of migrating and has to be explored itself as a practice of migration. The migrants’ attempts to make sense of their personal and subjective stories in the context of already existing definitive narratives of history and collectivity rendered life-stories a fundamental means of cultural signification.

The study of biographies and autobiographies reveals a particular connection between migration and life-stories. In these life-stories migration was most often perceived as an “event” that interrupted the “normal” course of one’s life. Since migration was seen as a rupture, an interruption or a diversion from “normal” life-course, telling the story of one’s migration constituted a way of restoring continuity, keeping track of the diversion, mapping the collective experience by drawing the lines and identifying the threads of subjective experiences. From this perspective the life-stories of migrants constituted stories of migration, since in the particular case the driving force for narrating one’s own life was exactly the event of migration. In the stories, migration represented the event that re-signified the individual life-courses in a catalytic way.

The analysis of biographies and autobiographies seeks to discern the

patterns through which migrant lives were narrativized, pointing out the recurrent elements that constituted the social and cultural portrait of the migrant, tracing the points of tension and rupture that characterized the biographical and autobiographical accounts. My aim is to show how these points of rupture were related to dominant—albeit conflicting and antagonistic—discourses of nation and nationhood, community and selfhood.

The very process of the production and circulation of life-stories unravels the ways in which the concept of the nation decisively intervenes in the process of self-conceptualization and in the context of physical movement and migration across cultural and geopolitical borders; it is through the study of this intervention that we can foreground the ways in which the emergence of a migrant subjectivity within the context of Greek culture was accompanied by the emergence of particular images of the nation and determined by the modes of cultural production in modernity. Who wrote and/or told stories of life in migrancy? What were the modes and means of the production and circulation of these stories? What was the role these stories played in the process of identity negotiation? Which stories were privileged and which stories became dominant in the sense that they participated in the process of forming of dominant versions of migrant subjectivity? What were the routes of cultural traffic that enabled the circulation of migration life-stories? How did migration influence nation-, ethnic-, race-, class- and gender-/sex- specific conceptualizations of the self during this historic period?

***Regulative Biographies: Constitution of Subjectivity  
and the Study of Greek Migrant Psychobiography***

[Psychobiographies] are the model narratives that give “meaning” to our reworkings of ourselves and others. *We* are used to working variations on, critiques of, and substitutions for, the narratives of Oedipus and Adam. What narratives produce signifiers of the subject in other traditions? Always in a confrontation and complicity with the epistemic reconstitution of the subject-in-imperialism, traces of this psychobiography can be found in the indigenous legal tradition, in the scriptures, and of course, in myth ...<sup>8</sup>

The study of subjectivity involves research in textual descriptions of lives and psychic formations that often function as archetypes even for the most humble forms of self-representations in everyday life. Gayatri Chakravotry Spivak has drawn our attention to the study of these psychobiographies that operate as model narratives for other representations of subjectivity and the (literary, cultural, intellectual, legal) traditions that produced these narratives. My research in migrant biographies follows this line of exploration.

In the context of Greek migrant cultural production in the United States, life-stories often operated as a means of propagating exemplary versions of Greek identity within the Greek migrant community. These regulative life-stories were not necessarily narratives of migration. They were stories intended to function as examples for the Greek migrants in the United States. Their study offers an insight into the processes of the cultural engineering of migrant subjectivity, since it discloses the content and the cultural references of model versions of Greek migrant identity.<sup>9</sup> My analysis of biographies focuses on the cultural means (narrative, literary, ideological or institutional) that expedite the construction of individual and group identity.<sup>10</sup>

The formation of Greek migrant subjectivity in the United States took place within the context of battling institutional, ideological and political forces of cultural transformation, assimilation, integration, preservation and alienation. Existing historical, anthropological and sociological literature on the Greek migrant community in the United States suggests that the 1920s and 1930s constituted a period of maturation and consolidation of Greek American identity. It is often argued that in this period the Greek migrants were culturally assimilated and socially integrated in their adopted homeland.<sup>11</sup> Although there seems to be a consensus over the final result of this process of transformation from undesired labor migrants to assimilated members of the native society, the process itself is not usually analyzed. Assimilation is rather presented as a natural event in the context of North American cultural and social history.<sup>12</sup> Most of the scholarly approaches to the history of the Greek American community seem to focus either on the early years of life in the United States (with emphasis on the hardships caused by poverty, native prejudices and anti-migrant hostility), or on the period after the late 1930s (with emphasis on the achievements of the second-generation of Greek Americans and the history of Greek American support to Greece during the period of German occupation).

The notion of cultural assimilation is not, however, self-evident. If we reject the assumption that assimilation was the result of natural laws of social development, and address questions that concern the content of "assimilated" forms of social identification, we then need to study the forces, means and symptoms that marked the process of transformation that took place during the 1920s and 1930s.

In this period, public debates within the Greek communities in the United States often concerned the issue of compatibility between Greek and American culture. The origins of these debates can be traced in the early years of Greek migration to the United States, when leading members of the Greek community were trying to argue against American anti-immigrant nativism. American nativists had in many cases argued, during the first two decades of the twentieth century, that the principles of Americanism were incompatible with the various migrant cultures.<sup>13</sup> As a reaction to nativism, Greek migrant intellectuals propagated the idea that there had always been a natural and organic relation between proper Americanism and Hellenism. This reaction was

not of course homogeneous. There was a lot of internal friction which was often related to political differences between different representatives of the Greek American community and to antagonisms between rival elite groups for the leadership of various community institutions.

In the beginning of the twentieth century migration led to the transnationalization of Greek politics, as the old world political divisions were transferred to the Greek communities in the United States.<sup>14</sup> The political split between royalists and anti-royalists (Venizelists), which marked the political life of Greece during the second decade of the twentieth century, defined political alliances and antagonisms in the United States.<sup>15</sup> Greek communities were often divided into the royalist and the anti-royalist groups whose political outlooks were mainly expressed by the two major daily Greek newspapers in the United States, *Atlantis* and *Ethnikos Keryx*, royalist and anti-royalist respectively. The notion of Americanism was introduced in the public political discourse that was developed by these two newspapers during the second decade of the century, and it functioned as a common denominator between the two political poles. Americanism concerned the commitment to the cultural ideals of the United States and dedication to the United States' interests in terms of international affairs. Both royalists and Venizelists claimed Americanism as a means through which they achieved political legitimacy and validity.<sup>16</sup> The cultural ideals and political principles that were foregrounded by these two different political expressions were often vague and undefined. Despite the antagonisms and the vagueness of the political statements they made, both royalist and anti-royalist groups agreed on their conviction that the migrant communities in the United States were forced to find ways to negotiate their culture and politics within the dominant Anglo-American context. On the discursive level their rivalry derived from the fact that each group claimed to be the only legitimate representative of true Americanism.<sup>17</sup> Thus, migrant political antagonisms were often expressed through public debates over the characteristics and the cultural profile that the community was expected to have in the future and the processes of political negotiation and cultural translation that would form this profile.

Two major fraternal associations were founded in the early 1920s in the context of the strong resurgence of anti-immigrant nativist movements in the United States, both on the national and on the local level: the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) and the Greek American Progressive Association (GAPA). Despite their differences, both organizations intended to lead the Greek migrant communities in the process of negotiating their cultural profile and political position.<sup>18</sup> By the end of the 1920s, it was however generally accepted that assimilation as such was undesirable and contradictory to the principles of proper Americanism. As it was argued in an article published in the monthly journal *Μηνιαίος Εικονογραφημένος Εθνικός Κήρυξ* [Ethnikos Keryx Monthly Illustrated],

Η Αμερική, παρ' όλα τα κηρύγματα περί ομοιομορφίας και συναμιξέως των φυλών εις μίαν, παραμένει ... εν μωσαϊκόν φυλών, θρησκειών, πολιτισμού και κοινωνικών ηθών και εθίμων διαφόρων ... Οι πρώτοι Έλληνες ηθέλησαν ευθύς εξ αρχής, όπως χυθώσιν εις τον Αμερικανικόν εθνισμόν πρόθυμοι ν' αφομοιωθούν, αλλά τοιούτον εθνισμόν ξεχωριστόν και αμιγώς Αμερικανικόν δεν απήντησαν πουθενά. Εξ εναντίας απήντησαν αυτοκλήτως Αμερικανούς, Ιρλανδούς, Σκώτους, Ουαλλούς, Γερμανούς ... Οι Έλληνες δεν ευρήκον ούτε αμιγή Αμερικανισμόν, αλλά ούτε και ανοικτάς αγκάλας Αμερικανικάς προς αφομοίωσιν, διότι τοιούτος αμιγής Αμερικανισμός δεν υφίσταται ακόμη. Η τριακονταετής των πείρα εις την χώραν έπεισε τους Έλληνας ότι έπρεπε να δημιουργήσουν και αυτοί ιδικόν των Ελληνοαμερικανικόν περιβάλλον.<sup>19</sup>

[Despite all the lectures about homogeneity and the melting of all the races into one, America remains ... a mosaic of races, religions, cultures, social manners and customs ... The first Greeks [migrants] wanted right from the beginning to identify with the American ethnicity and were willing to be assimilated, but nowhere did they find such a separate and purely American ethnicity. On the contrary, they encountered Americans, Irish, Scots, Welsh, Germans ... Greeks did not find either pure Americanism or open American arms welcoming them to be assimilated, because such pure Americanism does not exist yet. Thirty years of experience in this country convinced the Greeks that they had to create their own Greek American environment.]

A number of Greek intellectuals in the United States played an active role in creating and forming this new "Greek American environment". Biography was used by these intellectuals as a means of propagating the cultural elements that Greek Americans ought to cultivate. In 1926 the editor of the *Ethnikos Keryx*—the Greek language New York daily newspaper—, Demetrios Callimachos, published a series of articles in the journal *American Hellenic World*. His articles were biographical portraits of important figures of modern Greek history. The articles were later compiled in a book entitled *Νεοελληνικός Πολιτισμός* [Modern Greek Culture].<sup>20</sup> In the introduction to this book the author noted,

Έχων υπ' όψιν μου την βαθμιαίαν ψυχικήν και διανοητικήν αλλοίωσιν, η οποία συντελείται μεταξύ των Ελλήνων της Αμερικής, λόγω διαφόρων αιτίων, αλλά προπαντός λόγω της επηρείας του περιβάλλοντος, συνέγραψα το παρόν βιβλίον, ως συμβολήν εις τον αγώνα της συγκροτήσεως των ομοεθνών μου εις την ιδεολογικήν γραμμήν των φυλετικών παραδόσεων.<sup>21</sup>

[Bearing in mind the gradual psychological and intellectual deterioration that is taking place among the Greeks of America, for different reasons, but mostly because of the influence of the environment, I wrote the present book, as a contribution to the struggle for keeping my compatriots within the ideological lines of their ethnic traditions.]

Demetrios Callimachos was born in Thrace in 1879. He studied Theology at the University of Athens. After his graduation he became active as a journalist and he collaborated with Greek journals and newspapers, such as *Ελληνισμός* [Hellenismos] and *Ακρόπολις* [Acropolis]. He served as a priest in Egypt from 1906 to 1911. In 1914, he was invited to the United States by the *Panhellenic Union*. He stayed in the United States until the end of his life and he developed both a secular and an ecclesiastic career. He became the editor of the newspaper *Ethnikos Keryx*, while for a short time he served as a priest in Brooklyn, New York. Callimachos was one of the most active Greek intellectuals in writing and preaching on issues of Hellenism and the Greek American identity.<sup>22</sup>

Callimachos supported the idea that the Greeks in the United States should not let themselves be assimilated by the new cultural context of their adopted homeland. He believed that the migrant community should redefine and further develop the fundamental elements of Greek culture and the principal ideals of Hellenism. His assumption was that there were particular aspects of Greek culture that were compatible with contemporary mainstream Anglo-American culture. He advocated that the Greek community in the United States had the historical responsibility to retrieve these particular aspects, which he referred to as *Hellenism*, to render them central elements of modern Greek culture and, thus, to prove the organic relation between Hellenism and Americanism.

According to Callimachos, this process of cultural self-definition and integration was not just a Greek American affair but had a wider importance for the Greek nation, since the ultimate goal was the transformation of Greek culture both in the diaspora and in the homeland.<sup>23</sup> The idea of a “new” subject, which had emerged out of the historical circumstances of migration and which had the ability to undertake a leading role in the process of transforming and elevating modern Greek culture was quite popular among migrant circles in the end of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s. As it was often argued in articles published in leading Greek American newspapers and periodicals,

... Ο Αμερικανικός Ελληνισμός οσημέραι καθίσταται οργανικό-τερος, ως σύνολον, και συνειδητότερος. Με τα υλικά μέσα που διαθέτει, με το ευνοϊκότατον περιβάλλον της Αμερικανικής ζωής η οποία ανοίγει απεράντους ευκαιρίας δια την ανάπτυξιν αυτού, την πρακτικήν και θεωρητικήν, ο Αμερικανικός Ελληνισμός δύ-

ναται αληθώς να δημιουργήση μιαν νέαν Ελλάδα, πνευματικήν Ελλάδα, πρωτοφανή εις την ιστορίαν της φυλής μας. Ο Ελληνισμός δια πρώτην φοράν έρχεται εις επαφήν κατά μάζας με την Αγγλοσαξωνικήν ζωήν και σκέψιν και δεν υπάρχει αμφιβολία, ό-τι υπό την επιρροήν αυτής μακράν του να αφομοιωθή και να εκμηδενισθή, απεναντίας θ' αναπτύξη ισχυροτέραν και πλέον ιδιότυπον οντότητα.<sup>24</sup>

[... American Hellenism continuously becomes more organic, as a whole, and more conscious of its potentials. Using all the available means and the favourable environment of American life which provides it with numerous opportunities of practical and theoretical development, American Hellenism can indeed create a new Greece, an intellectual Greece, unprecedented in the history of our race. Hellenism, for the first time, comes in contact with the Anglo-Saxon life and thought, and there is no doubt that this influence, instead of assimilating and eliminating it, will help it develop into a stronger and more unique entity.]

Callimachos claimed for himself the role of the nation's educator. He decided to address his books mainly to Greek Americans since he firmly believed that the Greek diaspora needed to be educated by its organic intellectuals so that it could undertake this leading role in the nation's present and future history. According to Callimachos, the Greek community in the United States was not supposed to play the role of a cultural mediator which would transplant, or translate Americanism to Hellenism, or *vice versa*. He did not think of the migrants as cultural entrepreneurs, but as avatars of an elevated form of modern Greek culture. Therefore, his work aimed at educating Greek migrants.

Callimachos published many books, most of which were compilations of articles he had already published in the daily Greek American newspaper *Ethnikos Keryx* and in the journal *Ethnikos Keryx Monthly Illustrated*. Some of his most important books were: *Νεοελληνικός Πολιτισμός. Δυνατοί Νεοελληνικοί Χαρακτήρες, Πώς προοδεύουν οι Αμερικάνοι; Οι Βάσεις της Προόδου, Από το Νεοελληνικόν Πάνθεον: Ο Χαρακτήρ του Έρωτος της Ρούμελης, Το Ευαγγέλιον Υπό Σύγχρονον Πνεύμα. Ψυχολογικά Έρευναι – Φιλοσοφήματα Επί της Ζωής – Κοινωνικά Προβλήματα – Χαρακτήρες*.<sup>25</sup> Callimachos's books were didactic, practical and often simplistic. He used life-stories and biographies in order to articulate his arguments by means of examples and parables. He believed that the national culture had to be in correspondence with the psychological characteristics of a people. Callimachos attributed a psychological nature to the elements that constituted national identity and nationhood.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, in his writings on Greek national identity and culture he used biographies in order to reconstruct the *psychogram* of the Greek people.

Biographical portraits were used in order to illustrate in a simple way the different constitutive elements of the Greek psyche both in his present time and in the historical past. He tried to point out the essential constitutive elements of Greekness (from a cultural, psychological, historical, philosophical perspective). Historical figures were presented as examples of different Greek characteristics. He traced these elements through time, by means of choosing historical figures from the last three centuries of national history. Callimachos used life-story, in the form of biography, as a means of conceptualizing, describing, consolidating and propagating what he considered to be the model version of the Greek migrant as a historical subject.

Callimachos's biographical sketches are psychobiographies, since they were intended to function as psychic references of identification for a particular Greek American readership. In these psychobiographical sketches we find traces of different disciplinary and authoritative discourses. His writings have the character of Christian preaching. Callimachos often identified himself as an enlightened and liberal clergyman, who decided to undertake secular duties driven by his patriotic sentiment and his commitment to the welfare of his people and his nation. In his books he often dedicated many pages to clergymen's life-stories, especially when the particular individuals played an important historical role as organic intellectuals of the nation. He presented these figures as exemplary heroes in the struggle for Greek national independence and emphasized their altruism and the privations they willingly endured.<sup>27</sup>

On the other hand, Callimachos grounded the legitimacy of his intellectual work on the authority of historians and travelers whom he often cites in his own books. He drew material and inspiration from the travel literature written by Western Europeans who traveled to Greece during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as from nineteenth-century Greek national historiography and Western European historiography. Callimachos's biographical sketch of the Greek psyche relied on three main nineteenth-century scholarly traditions of European cultural superiority: the Western European imagination of non-European landscapes and peoples, Greek national historiography, and Western European historiography.

Callimachos conceived the psychogram of Greekness by means of a temporal diasporization. He portioned out the traits and constitutive elements of Greekness in three different historical periods which are represented by three different groups of national figures: War of Independence heroes, national benefactors, and modern migrants.

For Callimachos the War of Independence heroes constituted the nation's historical heritage. They were not models that should be followed. The cultural value of these biographies derived from the fact that the values and principles they represented were implanted in the national unconscious. They represented heroism, valor, irrationality and unconditional commitment to a patriotic ethics.

On the other hand, the benefactors' life-stories were intended to function as models. The benefactors were affluent individuals (merchants, intellectuals and entrepreneurs) who lived abroad before and after the foundation of the Greek nation-state in 1832. They became benefactors because they used their financial, cultural and material resources in order to benefit Greece the first years after the War of Independence.

What were the distinctive features of the benefactors' life-stories that rendered them archetypal and exemplary figures in the conceptualization of the constitutive elements of the modern Greek subject and modern Greek culture, according to Callimachos? First, physical dislocation and geographical dispersion did not weaken their commitment to their nation. Their commitment remained strong because their financial and professional success abroad did not limit them to materialist aspirations, but inspired them to an effort to place their material resources at the service of the national and collective interests. Callimachos accused those Greeks who let themselves be distracted by their material gains and forgot their duties to their homeland:

Υπήρξαν βεβαίως και τότε, όπως υπάρχουν και σήμερα Ἕλλη-  
νες, οι οποίοι πλούτισαντες εν τη ξένη, αντιπροσώπευον μίαν  
παχυλήν αντίληψιν περί αποστολής και εαυτών και του πλούτου  
των. Οι τοιούτοι τύποι συγκεντρώνονται αποκλειστικώς εις τον ε-  
αυτό των. Με σβησμένην την ψυχήν, στείραν από κάθε γενναίον  
και υψηλόν αίσθημα, ζούν μόνον δια να ζούν αυτοί και πλέον ου  
... Τοιαύτη χυδαία και εγωϊστική πλουτοκρατία ... είναι αληθώς  
ξένη προς τας ωραίας παραδόσεις του Ἐθνους μας.<sup>28</sup>

[Certainly, there used to be back then – much like today – Greeks who, after getting rich abroad, had a gross idea about their mission and the mission of their wealth. This kind of people are totally self-centered. Their souls are dead and deprived of any generous or elevated feeling; they live just for themselves and no one else ... Such a vulgar and selfish plutocracy ... is indeed foreign to the beautiful traditions of our Nation.]

Another responsibility of the nation's benefactors was to study superior contemporary cultural and civilizational systems and think of ways to transplant those of the homeland.<sup>29</sup> According to Callimachos the benefactors were, without exception, lovers of the Anglo-Saxon culture and way of life. These diasporic Greeks had been living as citizens of the world and thus they had the opportunity to experience, understand and believe in the global superiority of Anglo-Saxon civilization. The benefactors were the ones responsible for transferring this cosmopolitan experience to their homeland.

The benefactors' life-stories offered useful advice concerning the social behavior of Greek subjects who lived abroad. Apart from the strength of their

moral commitment to the national interests, they also manifested commitment to the preservation of racial integrity, mainly by avoiding marriages with people from different nationalities. Callimachos offered many examples of benefactors who forcefully took control of their daughters' lives and forbade marriages with men other than Greeks.<sup>30</sup> The benefactors were thus represented as guardians of female frivolity—particularly sexual frivolity—and immaturity and thus as safeguards of the national resources.

Female figures appeared only marginally in Callimachos's biographical sketches of the national psyche. Women were usually presented in abstract ways. Physical descriptions of women were absent, whereas physical descriptions of men were found in abundance in the section of the book that concerned the War of Independence heroes. Callimachos offered women's lives as symptomatic of the nation's overall moral advancement or degradation.<sup>31</sup> He argued that the nation's moral state could be evaluated by examining the degree to which female nature—which was primarily characterized by frivolity, deception and superficiality—was controlled.<sup>32</sup> Representations of women as the mothers of the nation were also present in Callimachos's book. In the particular context of migrancy, this traditional representation of womanhood implied that Greek migrant women had the responsibility to tame male passions, advise and control the male migrants, so that the latter would be able to work and benefit the nation.

Callimachos often interrupted his biographical sketches in order to address directly his migrant readership, to urge them to follow the examples of the benefactors, and to point out practical ways in which they could become the benefactors' successors in the course of national history.<sup>33</sup> He insisted on the convergence between the figure of the benefactor and that of the migrant. He made this convergence explicit through the use of the appropriate vocabulary. The Greek word for migrant, *μετανάστης*, was often used with reference also to benefactors and other diasporic Greeks who lived before the foundation of the Greek nation-state. This was an anachronistic use of the word, since modern migration as a concept usually relies on the existence of nation-states between which the migrants move.

Callimachos included only one Greek migrant's life-story in his book on modern Greek characters. Despite the convergence between representations of benefactors and migrants, there was at least one element that differentiated migrant biographical sketches. The benefactors' life-stories had a pedagogical role; they constituted past examples that should be followed. Although they were not as monumental as the life-stories of the war heroes, they belonged nevertheless to a bygone era. On the contrary, the migrants' life-stories functioned as explicit descriptions of contemporary historical agency. Migrant life-stories were not intended to function as examples, but as proofs. Callimachos used them in order to explain and prove why Greek migrants were the main acting subjects in the nation's contemporary history.

The migrant life-story that Callimachos included in his book was a

biographical sketch of Michael Anagnostopoulos. In the same chapter, entitled "Eminent Greek Americans", Callimachos included a short biographical sketch of Samuel Howe, an American philhellene who adopted Anagnostopoulos in the early nineteenth century and brought him to the United States. Callimachos explained that he decided to include Howe in a book about Greek identity, because Howe's life and deeds manifested, in an exemplary way, the truth of his arguments. Howe, as most American philhellenes, believed in the organic relation between Hellenism and Americanism. The life of Michael Anagnostopoulos was thus a result of this belief in the compatibility of the two cultures. In his biographical sketch of Anagnostopoulos, Callimachos presented a story of success in the usual way that the lives of eminent Greek-Americans were described in that period. He did not, however, emphasize material success, as would be expected in the story of a migrant's success in the New World. Callimachos rather insisted on the fact that Anagnostopoulos's life constituted an explicit manifestation of the possibility and the importance of bridging American and Greek cultural ideals and principles. He wrote:

Η ζωή του Αναγνωστόπουλου ... εχάραξε δια τους μεταγενέστερους την οδόν την οποίαν πρέπει να ακολουθήσουν, υπηρετούντες εκείνον τον ανώτερον πολιτισμόν ο οποίος κατέστη συνώνυμος με την υψηλοτέραν Ελληνικήν ιδεολογίαν.<sup>34</sup>

[Anagnostopoulos's life ... traced for future generations the course they have to follow, in order to serve the higher civilization which has become synonymous with the highest form of Greek ideology.]

Anagnostopoulos's life demonstrated, in an incontestable way, that it was in fact possible to bridge Americanism and Hellenism without sacrificing either of them:

Ο εναρμόνιος συνδυασμός της Ελληνικότητός του με το Αμερικανικόν πνεύμα, εδημιούργησαν τον ανώτερον άνθρωπον και το πρότυπον δια τους ομοεθνείς του που επέλεξαν ως θετήν των πατρίδα την χώραν ταύτην ...

Η βιογραφία και η σταδιοδρομία του Μιχαήλ Αναγνωστόπουλου θα έπρεπε να είναι το κατεξοχήν διδακτικόν ανάγνωσμα των Ελλήνων εκείνων, οι οποίοι υποθέτουν ότι ο Αμερικανισμός είναι εξάπαντος ταυτόσημος με την απεμπόλησιν της εθνικότητός των ... Διότι μελετήσας και εμβαθύνας εις αυτόν ευρήκεν ότι η Ελληνική του παιδεία και ο Ελληνικός του πατριωτισμός και η Ελληνική του αρετή ενηρμονίζοντο με ό,τι υψηλότερον εσήμαινε ο Αμερικανικός πολιτισμός ... Εάν ο Αναγνωστόπουλος παρέμεινε Έλληνας χωρίς και κατ' ελάχιστον να είναι λιγότερον Αμερικανός

νός, δεν βλέπομεν πώς μερικοί Έλληνες, οι οποίοι ούτε από μακριά αντελήφθησαν τα Αμερικανικά ιδεώδη, εξηγείρονται και όταν ακόμη τους γίνεται υπόμνησις περί της εθνικότητός των.<sup>35</sup>

[The harmonious combination of his Greekness with the American spirit created a great man and a model for his compatriots who chose this country as their adopted homeland ...

Michael Anagnostopoulos's biography and career should become a textbook for all those Greeks who assume that Americanism is, without fail, synonymous with the betrayal of their ethnicity ... And this is because Anagnostopoulos studied Americanism deeply and discovered that his Greek education and his Greek patriotism and his Greek virtue were attuned to the noblest elements of American culture ... Since Anagnostopoulos remained a Greek without becoming not even in the least any less of an American, we cannot understand why some Greeks, who did not understand in the least the American ideals, revolt even at reminders of their ethnicity.]

Anagnostopoulos represented the exemplary version of the modern Greek migrant. Callimachos argued that Anagnostopoulos's Americanism was not natural or genetically inherited.<sup>36</sup> On the contrary, it was acquired through a process of systematic effort and study. Anagnostopoulos studied the Anglo-Saxon American culture and through his study rediscovered those elements of his own national culture that were compatible with Americanism. He thus became an exemplary representative of a hybrid culture which retained characteristics of both cultural systems. Callimachos warmly supported the idea that this hybrid new culture – whose representative was the modern migrant – was certainly defined by the principles of Americanism, since the subject had to learn those principles first and then retrieve the elements of his own culture that seemed to be compatible. Callimachos's support was grounded on his conviction that Anglo-Saxon Americanism was, at his time, the superior cultural system universally.

In this biographical book Callimachos defined the content of Hellenism. According to him, Hellenic subjects were endowed with a genetically inherited commitment to their nation, adaptability to foreign conditions and way of life, ability to make use of resources for the common good. The migrants needed to be educated in their national heritage, so that they would be able to realize that they had the historical duty to become the representatives of modern Greek culture and further cultivate a superior form of this culture.<sup>37</sup>

Migrant intellectuals like Callimachos believed that the modern migrant was a new historical subject because of the historical context that determined the social and political conditions of migrancy. This new subject needed to be educated into new forms of culture and collective consciousness. Biographical

narration of life-stories was used as a means of propagating of the elements that would constitute these new forms. Grounded on the belief in the advancement of American civilization, the reconstruction of the life-stories of Greek national heroes was over-determined and re-signified according to Anglo-Saxon cultural values and principles of racial superiority. Biographical narration operated as a means of re-imagining the nation's historicity according to the imperatives of life in migrancy.

Callimachos's work contributed to the formation of Greek migrant *psychobiographies* and his life-stories operated as model narratives that produced signifiers of migrant subjectivity. Many of these signifiers can be traced to different levels of life-story narrations that were produced in later decades. The study of Greek migrant autobiographies reveals the ways in which these model narratives "produced" the subject within different levels of cultural enunciation.

*Autobiographical Writing: Stories on How "We Were at Last Permitted to Freely-Associate as Normal Migrants"*<sup>38</sup>

Most of the autobiographies and memoirs written by first-generation Greek migrants were published during the two decades that followed World War II. The majority of these autobiographies were written in Greek (some in English), by male migrants and repatriated Greeks and were most often published in Greece.<sup>39</sup> Migrant autobiographies were addressed to a wide readership that included both the Greek communities in the United States and the general public in Greece, and more particularly people who were thinking of migrating. The reasons why an individual decided to write his/her autobiography determined the readership, the content and the character of the narrative. Most of the autobiographies had a didactic tone and some were particularly practical and utilitarian. They provided information that concerned the current opportunities of migration, and advice that was intended to help future migrants. Repatriated migrants often decided to write their autobiographies in order to explain the reasons for their repatriation to their compatriots who were still in the United States. These autobiographies included advice concerning the status of repatriates in Greece, state policies, legal issues and social perception. Finally, migrant autobiographies were intended to provide the young generations of Greek-Americans with knowledge of the fifty-year history of their community in the United States.

The autobiographical texts were communicative. Their analysis offers an insight into the self, as well as the social alterity that operated as a point of reference in the process of self-conceptualization of the migrant as such.

Contrary to the contention held by traditional scholarship that autobiographical writing is necessarily marked by individualism, migrant autobiographies referred to collective forms of subjectivity in general.<sup>40</sup> The subject of the autobiography used his personal life-story as a starting point in

order to narrate the stories of relatives, friends and compatriots. Most subjects used the first person plural of narration (*we*) to describe personal experiences as migrants in the United States. The individual subject of the migrant autobiography is a part of a group which is the collective subject of migration. The contemporary reader of migrant autobiographies often finds it difficult to distinguish between the individual and the collective story, since the main narrative is intertwined with multiple other stories that present the lives of other migrants in the United States. Migrant autobiographies thus refer to collective forms of experience not because the individual presents him/herself as an ideal type, but because the individual is always self-represented *in relation* to a community. The inter-subjective character of migrant autobiographies renders them a valuable source for historical research.

The autobiographies under consideration included a foreword written by a widely known public figure, usually an intellectual, a politician or a journalist. The purpose of this foreword was to evaluate the book by pointing out its didactic value. The forewords often indicated the ways in which migrant autobiographies were received by the public. In them the migrant was presented as an example for the younger generations of modern Greeks and emphasis was put on the national and social importance of the migrants' moral input to modern Greek culture. As Greek journalist Spyros Demenagas remarked in his foreword to the autobiography of Karolos Manos, published in 1964, the migrant did not possess knowledge and lacked the means of scholarly or systematic reflection on his own life. The value of autobiography as a genre derived from the fact that it allowed the communication of experience by means of subjective modes of conceptualization and representation.<sup>41</sup> In the process of *auto-bio-grafein* the migrant was operating as a living "container" of unprocessed experience. At least, this was the reception of Greek migrant autobiographies in Greece.<sup>42</sup>

Autobiographical texts written in the 1950s and 1960s should be seen as textual distillations of the cultural elements that grounded the discursive emergence of contemporary images of the Greek migrant subject. Autobiographical texts operated, thus, as a form of cultural remittance in a period marked by an increased Americanization of state politics, popular culture and way of life. The 1950s and 1960s were also marked by a second wave of massive migration from Greece to North-Western European countries and to the United States. Since many of these autobiographies were addressed to future migrants, the study of the autobiographical text gives us an insight into the imagery of early century migration inherited by later generations of Greek migrants.

In 1954 Nina Ladogianne published a semi-fictional autobiography of "Uncle Charly", a Greek migrant to the United States who returned to Greece in the early 1950s.<sup>43</sup> The book was published privately in five hundred copies. As Ladogianne mentioned in the introduction, she met Uncle Charly—who had left Greece in the beginning of the twentieth century as an illiterate village-boy

and returned in the 1950s as an illiterate old migrant—at a dinner, and she heard him narrating his life-story to a group of curious friends and relatives. The author decided to write his autobiography for him. The narrative itself repeated many elements of stereotypical representations of migrant life, including references to the adversities of the first years, the poverty, the struggle, the exploitation, the injustice, as well as the determination to survive and succeed, the desire to work, his intelligence and social adaptability. There was, however, a particular characteristic: the reference to the scarcity of all kinds of resources (such as money, education, knowledge of the cultural and social mores of the USA) was related to the issue of generational difference. The old migrant belonged to an already bygone era and generation. He thus represented Greek qualities and virtues which were quickly disappearing in the post-civil war Greece. Older generations were deprived of resources, but they were endowed with mental and moral qualities such as determination, faith and courage. These characteristics were preserved and developed under conditions of migrancy. The presence of the old migrant guaranteed the possibility of a rejuvenation of Greek character. Ladogianna decided to author this “autobiography” because, for her, migration had already become “history”, and the experiences of the Greek migrants seemed to constitute part of the nation’s cultural past. As the author remarks in her introduction,

Οι πολύπλοκες ψυχικές καταστάσεις που έχουν φωλιάσει στην ψυχή της τωρινής γενιάς δεν είχαν καθόλου αγγίξει τη δική του ψυχή ... Κρατούσε από την παλιά γενιά των απλών πραχτικών ανθρώπων που ξέρουν καλύτερα να δουλεύουν και ν’ αγωνίζονται παρά να στοχάζονται και να λεπτολογούν.<sup>44</sup>

[The complex psychological states that characterize our generation had not touched him ... He belonged to the old generation of simple and practical people; people who know how to work and to struggle rather than to reflect and talk.]

The issue of the scarcity of resources operated as a leit-motif in migrant autobiographies. It recurs and provides the ground for the representation of other qualities that marked migrant life. In the autobiography of Karolos Manos, the author explained that his survival under very adverse conditions in America was due to the principles he followed in his life. The topic of the lack of resources was again related to the issue of generation:

Εμείς οι παλαιότεροι, που θεωρούμεθα οι σκαπανείς στις εστιατορικές επιχειρήσεις, πρέπει να παραδεχθούμε ότι πρώτον οικονομικώς είμεθα ανεπαρκείς, επιστημονικώς επίσης, αι δε γνώσεις μας ήσαν περιορισμένα.<sup>45</sup>

[The people of my generation, who are thought of as pioneer restaurateurs, have to admit that from an economic point of view we were disadvantaged and that, from an educational point of view, we were very limited.]

The lack of knowledge and other resources was compensated for by the migrant's moral qualities:

Τα πρώτα μεταναστευτικά χρόνια, εργαζόμενοι ως βοηθοί μαγείρων και πιατάδων, είτε στα μεγάλα και μικρά ξενοδοχεία, ως σερβιτόροι με ολίγα σπασμένα μας αγγλικά, κατορθώναμε λόγω της φιλεργίας μας ν'αγαπάμεθα και να μαθαίνουμε τρόπον τινά τα των εστιατορικών επιχειρήσεων.<sup>46</sup>

[During the first years of migration we used to work as cook assistants and dish-washers in small or big hotels, or even as waiters using our broken English, but due to our industriousness we managed to become popular and somehow learn the business.]

The Greek migrant represented old and well-preserved Greek values which had perished in post-civil war Greece, but which flourished under the conditions of migrancy. Migrant autobiographies propagated the idea that endurance and patience in conditions of economic deprivation, social inequality and political depredation were essential characteristics of the Greek nature, and that the cultivation of these virtues, combined with hard work, was the only way to progress and improvement. Since migration was culturally inscribed as part of the nation's cultural heritage; it was also related to a particular work ethic.

In other autobiographies the theme of the scarcity of resources grounded claims to the migrants' need for guidance and protection. In Emmanuel Polenes's autobiography, published in Athens in 1945, migrants were presented as children in need of parental protection and care.<sup>47</sup> The role of the father-protector in the United States was undertaken by the United States government. Forms of self-conceptualization that stressed the scarcity of resources and the impossibilities that characterized migrant life were often combined with perceptions of *America* as the protective supra-individual agent.

Όσοι λοιπόν από εμάς επήγαμε εις την Αμερικνήν, παιδιά πτωχά και απροστάτευτα, ευρήκαμε εκεί αμέσως μεγάλη ηθική και υλική υποστήριξη και, σαν πραγματικοί κληρονόμοι και πνευματικά παιδιά του αρχαίου ελληνικού δαιμονίου πνεύματος, προσαρμοσθήκαμε αμέσως εις το αμερικανικόν περιβάλλον, πράγμα εις το οποίον τεραστίως μας εβοήθησαν, οι επιτόπιοι Νόμοι της Αμερικανικής Κυβερνήσεως και το φωτισμένο ενδιαφέρον των μεγάλων αμερικανικών φιλανθρωπικών Ιδρυμάτων και Σωματείων.<sup>48</sup>

[Those of us who went to America as poor and unprotected children, immediately found great moral and material support there. As true inheritors, descendants of the ancient Greek spirit, we adapted immediately to the American environment. We were greatly assisted in this by the local laws of the American Government and the enlightened interest of the great American charity foundations and associations.]

Similar pictures of the American state-mechanism were almost always juxtaposed to representations of the Greek state as inherently and incurably inefficient. Through this antithetical representation of the state, many authors expressed political opinions that favored American intervention in Greek political life and argued for the need for paternalistic international politics.

The theme of scarcity often functioned as an introduction to references to the virtues of Greek identity and the importance of these virtues in the context of migration. Despite the scarcity of resources, the Greek migrant had supposedly always been naturally diligent, frugal and progressive. These were the qualities that had permitted the integration of the Greek migrant in the recipient American society. In Polenes's autobiography we read:

Ο Έλλην είναι εργατικός, λιτοδίαιτος και προοδευτικό στοιχείο και γι' αυτό πρέπει να ευχαριστούμε τον Θεό, που τον επροίκισε με αυτά τα προτερήματα. Γι' αυτό και οι Αμερικανοί προσέχουν και εκτιμούν τη φιλεργία μας, καθώς και τον ειλικρινή πατριωτισμό μας.<sup>49</sup>

[The Greek is industrious, frugal and progressive; we should thank God for blessing us with all these virtues. That is why Americans respect our industriousness and our sincere patriotism.]

Polenes did not construct a totally positive picture of the Greek migrant in the United States. He portrayed the misgivings of the migrants' social behavior very eloquently, and he gave related advice to future migrants. His advice concerned mainly the bohemian life that a number of Greek migrants led. Bohemian life included illicit relationships with women, contraction of contagious diseases, gambling and alcoholism, all of which the migrants had to avoid if they were committed to survival and progress.

According to Polenes, despite all the dangers and the hardships involved, migration offered Greek people the opportunity to overcome the limitations and the scarcity imposed on them by their national and cultural origin. Migration was the result of economic underdevelopment, cultural backwardness, and inferiority.<sup>50</sup> But migration also provided the subject with an

opportunity to transcend historical and geographical determinations and improve his position in the context of international division of labor and in the international hierarchy of cultural advancement. Polenes's decision to migrate was solidified when a close friend informed him about the possibility to improve his status as a worker by moving to a place where his position within race/class hierarchy would give him some advantage.

Κάποιο βράδυ εκεί που τρώγαμε, μου εκμηστηρεύτηκε ότι στις Ινδίες είχε έναν εξάδελφο, που ειργάζετο εις τα ονομαστά Καταστήματα των Αδελφών Ράλλη και Σία, ο οποίος είχε υποσχεθή εις την οικογένεια του φίλου μου, ότι θα φρόντιζε να τον προσλάβη και αυτόν εις τα καταστήματα αυτά, όπου οι προσλαμβανόμενοι Ευρωπαίοι ετοποθετούντο ως προϊστάμενοι των ιθαγενών. Αυτό μου εκέντρισε τον πόθο να ξενιτευθώ.<sup>51</sup>

[One evening as we were having dinner he told me that he had a cousin in India, who was working at the famous Rallis Bros and Co. stores. That cousin had promised to my friend's family that he would see to it that my friend would be hired in these states, where Europeans are employed as supervisors of the natives. This roused my desire to emigrate.]

Migration was the way to overcome the economic and cultural time-lag that was related to the underdevelopment of the migrant's birthplace and national origin.

The issues of personal self-improvement, moral, physical and psychic well-being and professional progress were central and recurrent in migration narratives. Self-improvement and well-being often constituted elements of the process of Americanization. We have already encountered this interrelation between Americanization and personal improvement in the regulative psychobiographies. In the personal autobiographies we can trace this interrelation in the sections where the authors gave advice on how to achieve happiness and how to progress in the new homeland. "How-to" chapters were included in almost all autobiographies. In Manos's autobiography we read:

... Είναι ανάγκη να μάθωμεν την τέχνην του να κάνωμε τη ζωή μας όμορφη και χαρούμενη. Έτσι με κατανόησι των ψυχικών μας συναισθημάτων, της φυσικής μας επαγγελματικής κλίσεως και της σκέψεως μας, θα πορευώμεθα σταθερά, προς την κατάκτησιν της ευτυχίας ...<sup>52</sup>

[... It is necessary to learn the art of making our lives beautiful and cheerful. Through an understanding of our emotions, our natural intellectual and professional inclinations, as well as our

thoughts, we will be able to go forward with steady steps and achieve happiness ...]

Other virtues of life in America concerned the more private spheres of everyday activity, such as family life and more specifically the upbringing of children. The “American ways” included rationalization of family life and personal relationships.

Είναι καιρός αυτές οι αντιλήψεις να πρωτανεύσουν εις την Ελλάδα. Εις την Αμερικήν, όπου τα πάντα κατευθύνει η σοφή πείρα και η ψυχολογημένη Επιστήμη, η διαπαιδαγώγησις της νεαρᾶς ηλικίας δεν είναι ζήτημα απλό και υπόθεσις παρωνυχίδος. Οι Αμερικανοί, άνθρωποι πρακτικοί και πολιτισμένοι, έχουν αφήσει το παιδί ελεύθερο, του ενισχύουν κάθε αγαθή πρωτοβουλία, το χειραγωγούν με μέθοδο σε κάθε βήμα του ...<sup>53</sup>

[It is about time that these ideas became dominant in Greece. In America, where everything is guided by previous experience and scientific psychology, the education of the youth does not constitute a simple or secondary issue. The Americans are practical and civilized people and as such they have given freedom to the child and they support every good initiative that s/he takes; they guide children through every step of their lives.]

The virtues of the American way of life were also manifested in the public spheres of international and domestic politics. Many migrants thought that their mission to transplant American qualities of life to Greece was a continuation of a long process of Greek-American exchange and international relations. The subject's individual history of migration thus found its way into the collective history of the nation. Polenes started his autobiography with a reference to the history of Greek-American relations and more specifically to the movements of American Philhellenism during the period of the Greek War of Independence. Migrants often represented themselves as the successors of nineteenth century American Philhellenes.

The theme of the emergence of new forms of subjectivity in the United States was very popular in Greek migrant autobiographies. The application of American ways of life and the expansion of these ways around the world was generally expected to lead humanity towards progress and cultural achievement. This belief was expressed most impressively in the ways in which the intermixing of ethnicities and populations in the United States was expected to produce a “new race” of American peoples who were expected to be superior to existing European races. As Polenes mentioned:

Και δι' αυτό επαναλαμβάνω και εδώ ότι η Αμερική είναι ένα με-

γάλο χωνευτήριο εις το οποίον πίπτουν διάφορα μέταλλα, και εκ του οποίου αναπηδά μια νέα γενεά, μια νέα Φυλή, ή ως θα ελέγαμε μια νέα “ράτσα”, η οποία εκ των γεγονότων πιθόμεθα ό-τι, προώριεται να ηγηθή, να προστατεύση και να διδάξη την γηραιάν Ευρώπην.<sup>54</sup>

[I repeat at this point that America is a big melting-pot which receives all kinds of different metals and produces a new generation, a new Race, or we could say a new ‘breed’, which – as the facts prove – will lead, protect and teach old Europe.]

How did the authors of autobiographies deal with the Americanization versus preservation of national culture debate?

In his autobiography Polenes dealt almost exclusively with the issue of double national allegiance. He began with the assumption that the migrants are *de facto* “people without a homeland” (“άνθρωποι χωρίς πατρίδα”). “Having a homeland” could be detrimental for the migrant, since it imprisoned him in an unproductive state of nostalgia. With reference to the first generation of Greek migrants in the United States, he mentioned:

Εμείς ενομίσαμε, μέχρι τίνος, ότι ευρισκόμεθα υπό κράτησιν, ότι είμεθα εξόριστοι, ως απόκληροι της τύχης και ότι τώρα μετά από τόσα έτη απελευθερωνόμεθα.<sup>55</sup>

[Until recently, we thought that we were under arrest, that we were exiles, deprived of our share of good luck, and that now after so many years we were at last liberated.]

Taking his own experience as a starting point, he advised other migrant Greeks to develop more positive forms of self-understanding and representation. He also argued that the migrant community needed to develop new alternative ways to relate to their country of origin. First, nationhood should be disconnected from notions of territoriality and civic allegiances.

Αγαπητοί ομογενείς, ο πατριωτισμός και η αγάπη προς τους εκλεκτούς μας δεν χάνετε οπουδήποτε και αν ευρισκόμεθα, ή οιανδήποτε υπηκοότητα κι αν φέρωμεν ... Απεναντίας γνωρίζομεν πολύ καλά όλοι, ότι οι μεγαλύτεροι ευεργέται της Ελλάδος υπήρξαν οι ομογενείς του εξωτερικού.<sup>56</sup>

[Dear compatriots, our patriotism and our love for the ones we choose to love are alive no matter where we live or what citizenship we have ... On the contrary, as we all well know some of our nation’s most important benefactors were Greeks who

lived abroad.]

In his attempt to define the relation between locality and nationhood the author used the concepts of travel and tourism. Migrant autobiographies borrowed elements which were typical in travel literature. Autobiographies written during the 1950s and 1960s—a period marked by the full emergence of the phenomenon of mass tourism—included descriptions of scenery, landscapes and monuments in the United States as well as in the homeland. The narration of Polenes's wanderings first in the United States and then in Greece included descriptions of landscapes and historic monuments. The new forms of migrant nationhood that the author advocated were similar to forms of tourist disposition towards culture, peoples and places. Migrant nationhood should have a cultural and moral content while remaining free from territorial references and civic constraints. The cultural content of migrant nationhood would be the result of a cultural eclecticism which would allow the migrant to keep all those elements that were compatible with his everyday life in a different country and ignore all the rest. Furthermore, the application of the model of tourism to forms of migrant nationhood privileged a voyeuristic approach to national culture. Much like the tourist-voyeur, the migrant appeared to require and desire a pre-arranged scene, a pre-fixed image of the nation. In the autobiographical text this desire was expressed through insistence on the definition and description of essential and inherited constitutive elements of Greek identity. To carry the metaphor of the tourist-voyeur a bit further, we could argue that in voyeuristic relations the voyeur holds a position of authority that allows him to enter and exit the scene according to his own will. The voyeur has no commitment to the scene (or its protagonists). In the same way the migrant-tourist, through a process of fixation and objectification of national culture, took the place of the observer and kept the privilege to enter and exit nationhood at free will.

Polenes was, however, conscious of the fact that the migrant, because of social, political and economic constraints, could not afford to follow the tourist model of nationhood. The author explicitly underlined the difference between the traveler and the migrant. Whenever he included descriptions of monuments or landscapes, he also commented that during his whole life he rarely managed to take the opportunity to “be transformed for a while to a traveler”. Although the subject can provisionally play the role of the traveler, he identifies consciously with what he calls “the world's migrants” (*οι μετανάστες όλου του κόσμου*).

In the 1960s the Greek migrant community had moved beyond the inter-war period controversies over Ethnic-American *versus* Greek national cultural identity and had discovered new poles of identification based on notions of transnational movement. The emergence and establishment of these new poles of identification was definitely related to the maturation of approximately fifty years of controversies over issues of identity. However, it was also related to

contemporary phenomena such as the rapid development of mass tourism and other forms of consumerism that created new modes of identification; the latter were no longer based on the idea of inherited culture, territorial origins, or civic allegiances, but on individual preferences, initiatives, possessions and activities.

The autobiographies that were written by migrants and repatriates privileged essentialist definitions of Greekness and folklore notions of nationhood. By disconnecting nationhood from territorial references and civic attachments they propagated de-politicized notions of nationhood. Finally, through the analysis of the autobiographical text we can discern the migrants' self-appointed position on the level of the transnational political scene. The subjects considered migration a result of their country's civilizational time-lag which was itself related to the phenomenon of unequal international development. They also saw migration as the only way to compensate for this time-lag, and in this way incorporated their individual subjective stories of migration into the historical narrative of the nation.

### ***Conclusion***

Through the study of the history of cultural representations of Greek migration in the twentieth century, I attempted to retrieve the modalities of self-conceptualization and the forms of cultural engineering of notions of nationhood and subjectivity. By focusing on the analysis of representations of migrant subjectivity I sought to retrieve expressions of the long encounter of situated forms of sociality with modernity.

The historical study of Greek migration indicates that the cultural heritage of the experience of migration cannot by itself function as a vaccination against contemporary Greek racism and xenophobia, since the experience of migration often led to the internalization of hierarchical discourses of racial and cultural inequality and superiority in migrant culture and self-conceptualizations.<sup>57</sup> Representations of migration in Greek culture recapitulate both reactionary and progressive conceptual references. The history of migration does not thus constitute by definition a progressive or alternative narrative of subjectivity.

The analysis of life-story narration, however, indicated that biographical and autobiographical representations of migrant subjectivity constituted historical demonstrations of the possibility and the need to transform and re-signify the content and form of our national identities based on social experience. Migrant biographies and autobiographies re-signified existing notions of nationhood according to the experience of migrancy. Migrant cultural production thus propagated collective identity as a form of historical process.<sup>58</sup>

It could thus be argued that critical historical inquiry can offer a contribution to the wider project of enacting this history of migration in

contemporary culture and producing a historical knowledge that may create the possibility for alternative forms of subjectivity, community and cultural politics to emerge.

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### Notes

1. For two recent examples of this line of argumentation, see Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), and Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).
2. Third countries are the countries that are not members of the European Union. On the definitions of the multiple types of political existence within the European Community, see Council of Europe, *Community and Ethnic Relations in Europe: Final Report of the Community Relations Project of the Council of Europe* [MG-CR (91) 1 final E]. See also Paul Close, *Citizenship, Europe and Change* (Macmillan: London, 1995); Robert Miles and Diereich Thränhardt (eds.), *Migration and European Integration: The Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion* (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1995); Kimberly A. Hamilton (ed.), *Migration and the New Europe* (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1994).
3. For particular examples of this line of argumentation, see Homi Bhabha, "The Other Question Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism" in Barker *et al.* (eds.), *Literature, Politics and Theory: Papers from the Essex Conference 1976-84* (New York: Methuen, 1986); Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" in Jonathan Rutherford (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990); Iain Chambers, *Migrancy, Culture, Identity* (London & New York: Routledge, 1994); Aleksandra Alund and Paul Granqvist (eds.), *Negotiating Identities: Essays on Immigration and Culture in Present-Day Europe* (Amsterdam & Atlanta: Rodopi, 1995).
4. For an official account of the historical and social specificities that characterize countries that have recently been transformed from nations of emigration to nations that receive immigration, see Commission Of the European Communities, Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, "Immigration of Citizens from Third Countries into the Southern Member States of the European Community: A Comparative Survey of the Situation of Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal", *Social Europe*, Supplement 1/91.
5. Progressive intellectuals and cultural practitioners in Greece, Italy and other European countries whose modern history has been marked by phenomena of emigration, have suggested that the historical experience of migration operates as a vaccination against racism. Such arguments indicate that in terms of symbolic national self-representations, the contemporary presence of migrants within the nation is conceptually related to memories of Greek migration abroad. For an example of this line of argumentation see Αντώνης Μανιτάκης "Νεορατσισμός, Μετανάστευση και Ίση Κοινωνική Αξιοπρέπεια. Από τη Συνταγματική Σκοπιά" [Neoracism, Emigration and Equal Social Dignity. From the Constitutional Perspective], *Ο Πολίτης*, 43, November 21 1997, p. 13. With reference to Italy, the same idea was also articulated by Gianni Amelio in his recent film *Lamerica*

(Firenze: Cecchi Gori Editoria Electronica, 1994); see also Gianni Amelio, *L'America: Film e Storia del Film: Sceneggiatura desunta dal Montaggio* (Torino: Einaudi, 1994). I would however argue that far from leading to anti-racist consciousness and political action, this conceptual relation often operates as an excuse for racist behavior camouflaged as “legitimate” or “natural” xenophobia. In order to understand the relation between memories of migration and contemporary political behaviours we need to explore historically the formation of migrant subjectivity and images of migrancy.

6. For an interesting account of the transformations of Greek notions of diaspora, see Alexander Kitroeff, “The Transformation of Homeland-Diaspora Relations: The Greek Case in the 19th-20th Centuries” in John M. Fossey (ed.), *Proceedings of the 1st International Congress on the Hellenic Diaspora from Antiquity to Modern Times. Vol. II. From 1453 to Modern Times* (Amsterdam: Geben, 1991).
7. Shoshana Felman, *What Does A Woman Want? Reading and Sexual Difference* (Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), p. 19.
8. Gayatri Spivak, “The Political Economy of Women as Seen by a Literary Critic” in Elizabeth Weed (ed.), *Coming to Terms: Feminism, Theory, Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 226.
9. Scholars of autobiography have argued that the commitment to introduce critical perspectives of analysis in the study of subjectivity has led to a shift in the generic definitions and a broadening of the range of materials included in the study of life-stories. See Karen Caplan, “Resisting Autobiography: Out-Law Genres and Transnational Feminist Subjects” in Sidonie Smith & Julia Watson (eds.), *De/colonizing the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiographies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), pp. 115-138.
10. Gayatri Spivak, “The Political Economy of Women as Seen by a Literary Critic”, p. 226.
11. The historiographical, sociological and anthropological literature on the Greek-American community is very rich and diverse. The “natural” character of cultural assimilation is an assumption that can be traced—although in different degrees—across the wide range of approaches, and especially in books written in the 1960s and 1970s. See Harry Psomiades & Alice Scourby (eds.), *The Greek-American Community in Transition* (New York: Pella Publishing Company, 1982); Evan Vlachos, *The Assimilation of Greeks in the United States, with Special Reference to the Greek Community of Anderson Indiana* (Athens: E.K.K.E., 1968); Heike Fenton & Hecker Melvin, *The Greeks in America 1528-1977* (New York: Oceana Publications, 1978); Michael Contopoulos, *The Greek Community of New York City: Early Years to 1910* (New Rochelle N.Y.: Aristides D. Cavatzas, 1992); Edwin Clarence Buxbaum, *The Greek-American Group of Tarpon Springs, Florida: A Study of Ethnic Identification and Acculturation* (New York: Arno Press, 1980); Alice Scourby, *The Greek Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984); Charles C. Moskos, *Greek Americans, Struggle and Success* (Englewood Cliffs N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980); Robert James Theodoratus, *A Greek Community in America* (Tacoma, Washington & Sacramento, California: Sacramento Anthropological Society of Sacramento State College, 1971); Theodore Saloutos, *The Greeks in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964).
12. A similar “gap”, combined with a tendency to present assimilation as a natural and inevitable event, I encountered also in immigrant autobiographies and memoirs.

13. On the movement of American nativism, see John Higham, *Strangers in the Land* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992 [1955]); John Higham, *Send Those to Me: Immigrants in Urban America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984); Thomas F. Gossett, *Race: The History of Race in America* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1963); Elazar Barkan, *The Retreat of Scientific Racism: Changing Concepts of Race in Britain and the United States between the World Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Walter Benn Michaels, *Our America: Nativism, Modernism, and Pluralism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995).
14. On contemporary phenomena of the transnationalization of politics in the context of migration, see Linda Basch, Nina Glick, Szanton Schiller and Christina Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments and Deterritorialized Nation-States* (Pennsylvania: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1994).
15. Θάνος Βερέμης, *Μελετήματα γύρω από το Βενιζέλο και την εποχή του* [Studies on Venizelos and his Era] (Athens: Phillipotis, 1980).
16. For example, during the early years of the second decade *Atlantis* accused *Ethnikos Keryx* and the politics of the Greek consulate in Washington of preaching the need to conserve Greek national identity, discourage further immigration and exercise control over assimilation (including Americanization and change of citizenship). On the outbreak of the news about nativist attacks against Greek migrants and the launching of anti-migrant policies, *Atlantis* accused Venizelists of hindering the Greeks' assimilation to American culture and thus jeopardizing the development of American Hellenism. See *Atlantis* 1909-1911, and especially the reports on anti-Greek nativist attacks like the riots that took place in Omaha, Nebraska (February 1909), and the prohibition of fishing for non-naturalized migrants in Providence, Rhode Island (January 1909).
17. In particular, the political turbulence caused by World War I had a great impact on Greek American politics. For example, royalists and the newspaper *Atlantis* were publicly accused by their rivals of anti-Americanism, since the royalist party in Greece had followed a philo-German position and delayed the country's entry into the war. The allegations made against *Atlantis* by *Ethnikos Keryx* led to the application of the Anti-Espionage Act against the newspaper's publication. The rivalry between the two groups is reflected on the records of legal actions taken by *Atlantis* in this period. See *Atlantis*, National Daily Greek Newspaper, Records, 1894-1973 Series III: Records of Legal Actions, 1889-1932, The Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, Philadelphia.
18. Vasilios I. Chebithes, *AHEPA and the Progress of Hellenism in America* (New York: 1935).
19. "Η Ελληνική Αναγέννησις εν Αμερική" [The Greek Renaissance in America], *Μηνιαίος Εικονογραφημένος Εθνικός Κήρυξ* [Ethnikos Keryx Monthly Illustrated], January 1928, p. 32.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
22. On Callimachos, see Σίφης Κόλλιας, *Δημ. Καλλίμαχος: Μια Άρτια Αγωνιστική Συνείδηση* [Dem. Callimachos: A Fighting Consciousness] (Athens, 1963); Πολ. Παπαχριστοδούλου, "Μια γιγαντιαία μορφή της Θράκης εις την Νέαν Υόρκην" [A great Thracian in New York], *Αρχαίον Θρακικών Μελετών* [Thracian Studies Archive],

- vol. 23, Athens, 1958; Πέτρος Χάρης, “Ο Διασημότερος Έλληνας της Αμερικής” [The Most Famous Greek in America], *Νέα Εστία* [Nea Estia], Christmas Issue, 1955. Also, the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota has now made available to researchers the “Demetrios Callimachos Collection” which was closed at the time of my research on this article.
23. Callimachos considered that his efforts to bridge Hellenism with Anglo-Saxonism and to educate the Greek-American community in order for it to become the avatar of this hybrid culture were parallel to similar modernizing efforts that were taking place in Greece during the same period, and were politically represented by Eleutherios Venizelos and the Liberal Party. Callimachos dedicated one of his books to Venizelos who, as he considered, had tried to “introduce the moral ideals of the Anglo-Saxons into modern Greek life”. See Δημήτριος Καλλιμάχος, *Πώς Προοδεύουν οι Αμερικάνοι: Το Πνεύμα και οι Αρχαί και ο Κώδιξ των Συγχρόνων Αμερικανικών Επιχειρήσεων* [How Americans Progress: The Spirit, the Principles and the Code of Modern American Companies] (New York: Ethnikos Keryx, 1934), p. 6. On Eleutherios Venizelos and modernization politics in Greece, see G. Mavrokordatos, & Ch. Chatziiosif, *Βενιζελισμός και Αστικός Εκσυγχρονισμός* [Venizelismos and Urban Modernization] (Herakleio: Crete Univeristy Press, 1988).
  24. *Μηνιαίος Εικονογραφημένος Εθνικός Κήρυξ* [Ethnikos Keryx Monthly Illustrated], September 1930, p. 1.
  25. Demetrios Callimachos, *Νεοελληνικός Πολιτισμός. Δυνατοί Νεοελληνικοί Χαρακτήρες. Οι Κατά τους Τελευταίους Τρεις Αιώνας Αγωνισθέντες δια την Αναγέννησην του Ελληνικού Έθνους. Ήρωες και Μάρτυρες. Οι Ηγέτες του Φωτισμού των Ελλήνων. Συγγραφείς και Διδάσκαλοι του Γένους. Εθνικοί Ευεργέται. Οι Ανά τον Κόσμον Διαπρέψαντες Μετανάσται* [Modern Greek Civilization. Powerful Modern Greek Characters. Individuals who Participated in the Struggle for the Rebirth of the Greek Nation During the Last Three Centuries. The Nation’s Authors and Teachers. The Immigrants who Succeeded in all Different Places on the Globe] (New York: Εθνικός Κήρυξ, 1927); *Πώς προοδεύουν οι Αμερικάνοι: Το Πνεύμα και οι Αρχαί και ο Κώδιξ των Συγχρόνων Αμερικανικών Επιχειρήσεων* [How Do Americans Progress: The Spirit, the Principles and the Code of American Companies] (Νέα Υόρκη: Εθνικός Κήρυξ, 1934); *Οι Βάσεις της Προόδου* [The Foundations of Progress]; *Από το Νεοελληνικόν Πάνθεον: Ο Χαρακτήρ του Ήρωος της Ρούμελης* [From the Modern Greek Pantheon: The Character of the Roumeli Hero]; *Το Ευαγγέλιον Υπό Σύγχρονον Πνεύμα. Ψυχολογικά Έρευναι - Φιλοσοφήματα Επί της Ζωής - Κοινωνικά Προβλήματα - Χαρακτήρες* [The Gospel Under the Modern Spirit. Psychological Researches. Philosophizing about Life. Social Problems. Characters] (Νέα Υόρκη: 1925).
  26. Δημήτριος Καλλιμάχος, *Νεοελληνικός Πολιτισμός* [Modern Greek Civilization] (New York: Εθνικός Κήρυξ, 1927), pp. 186-187.
  27. *Ibid.*, pp. 282, 304, 306, 315.
  28. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
  29. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
  30. *Ibid.*, pp. 223, 257.
  31. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
  32. Callimachos often condemned in his book specific modes of behaviour which he considered to be very common among Greek women in the United States. He argued that female arrogance, pretentiousness, provinciality and lack of education

- jeopardized Greek family life and values in the United States and could be dangerous for the preservation of Greek culture and consciousness. See *Ibid.*, p. 156 and pp. 198-199.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 176, 180, 191. In these interruptions Callimachos often referred to what were commonly considered to be the most important problems of the Greek-American community in that period, such as gambling, laziness, pretentiousness, lack of education. See *ibid.*, pp. 52-53, 104, 199.
  34. *Ibid.*, p. 331.
  35. *Ibid.*, p. 332.
  36. Callimachos insisted that Anagnostopoulos's Americanism is not similar to the ill-conceived version of Americanism which was supported by the 100% movement and whose purpose was to destroy all the psychological and intellectual treasures represented by the diversity of racial groups in the United States. Callimachos's Americanism had the ability to include cultural diversity and to transform ethnic heritage to national cultural wealth. See *Ibid.*, p. 384.
  37. Callimachos defined the content of Americanism in his book *Πώς προοδεύουν οι Αμερικάνοι: Το Πνεύμα και οι Αρχαί και ο Κώδιξ των Σύγχρονων Αμερικανικών Επιχειρήσεων* [How Do Americans Progress: The Spirit, the Principles and the Code of American Companies] (Νέα Υόρκη: Εθνικός Κήρυξ, 1934). In that book he also defined culture through references to the psychology of the people who are this culture's carriers. The Anglosaxon is thus described as happy, innocent, free of unnecessary passions, productive, systematic, sober, healthy and prone to professional success. The non-Anglo-Saxon and more specifically the South European is described as neurotic, often miserable, full of overwhelming passions, physically disadvantaged, prone to failure. In this book, Callimachos provided advice on how to develop the charisma of Anglo-Saxon culture by transforming the practice of everyday life.
  38. "Μας επιτράπη να ελευθεροκοινωνήσουμε ως κανονικοί πλέον μετανάστες".
  39. A large number of unpublished memoirs and family chronicles are dispersed in various personal or community archives. In this section I mostly use published autobiographies, because I am interested in the diffusion of migration life-stories in the broader social and cultural milieu.
  40. In 1956, Georges Gusdorf noted in his authoritative article "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography", that autobiography is a genuinely Western literary genre since it expresses a concern peculiar to Western man: individualism and the realization of the importance of individual life. This assumption has in general formed decisively all scholarly approaches to autobiography as a literary genre. More recently, however, scholars who have studied autobiographies written by ethnic minorities and women have convincingly argued that minoritarian autobiographical subjects vacillate between the individual self and the collective subject, between the first person singular and the first person plural of narration. It has been argued that in minoritarian autobiographical writings identity is not equated with individuality. The minoritarian subject represents her/himself in relation to a community, and in this sense certain testimonials are written from interpersonal positions. See Georges Gusdorf, "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography" in James Olney (ed.), *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 28-48 and p. 129.
  41. Κάρολος Μάνος, *Η Ζωή Ενός Μετανάστη* [The Life of a Migrant] (Αθήνα, 1964).

42. Manos's autobiography included a second foreword, written by Theofanis Karvelas, an "immigrant intellectual". Although this second commentator also pointed out the didactic character of the autobiographical writing, he drew the reader's attention more to the author's views and reflections, rather than to the book's value as a container of unprocessed experience.
43. Νίνα Λαδογιάννη, *Ένας Έλληνας στην Αμερική* [A Greek in America] (Volos, 1954).
44. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
45. Κάρολος Μάνος, *Η Ζωή Ενός Μετανάστη*, p. 123.
46. *Ibid.*
47. Emmanuel Polenes, *Εγκόλπιον Μετανάστου. Συμβουλαί, Ανέκδοτα, Ιστορικά Γεγονότα* [The Immigrant's Handbook: Advice, Anecdotes and Historical Events] (Athens, 1945).
48. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
50. Polenes asserted that the reason for his early migration was actually his Greek grandmother's ignorance of the "civilized ways" of bringing up a child. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
51. *Ibid.*
52. Κάρολος Μάνος, *Η Ζωή Ενός Μετανάστη*, p. 126.
53. Emmanuel Polenes, *Εγκόλπιον Μετανάστου. Συμβουλαί, Ανέκδοτα, Ιστορικά Γεγονότα* [The Immigrant's Handbook: Advice, Anecdotes and Historical Events], p. 17.
54. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 68.
57. Furthermore, representations of migrant subjectivity were often grounded on the exclusion of certain aspects of the experience of migration from their representational order. The exclusion of women's experiences and the demonization of images of womanhood often operated as a necessary condition for the articulation of culturally intelligible migrant self-representations.
58. On the notion of diasporic identity as a form of historical process, see Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" in Jonathan Rutherford (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), pp. 222-237.