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"Forging National Identity: Cultural Representations of the Greek Army in Modern History (1821–1949)"

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Abstract

This manuscript examines the cultural representations of the Greek Army and its role in shaping national identity during the critical period of modern Greek history, from the War of Independence in 1821 to the aftermath of the Greek Civil War in 1949. By analyzing a diverse range of primary sources, including literature, newspapers, propaganda posters, films, military uniforms, and public rituals, this study explores how the army functioned not only as a military institution but also as a powerful symbol of unity, authority, and nationalism. The research is structured around three core themes: the use of propaganda to influence public perception, the evolution of military uniforms and insignia as reflections of shifting ideals of Greek identity, and the role of ceremonies such as parades, funerals, and commemorations in shaping collective memory.

Through an interdisciplinary approach, this study situates the Greek Army within broader European and Balkan cultural contexts, highlighting both the unique and universal elements of its representation. It argues that the Greek Army served as a key agent in constructing an "imagined community," fostering cohesion during periods of war and political instability. By bridging cultural history, military studies, and semiotics, this manuscript contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between armed forces and national identity in modern history.

Keywords: Greek Army, National Identity, Propaganda, Military Uniforms, Cultural History, Public Rituals

1.0. INTRODUCTION

The Greek Army has played a pivotal role in shaping modern Greece's national identity, functioning not merely as a military institution but as a powerful cultural symbol. Its evolution, from the revolutionary fighters of 1821 to the structured forces involved in the Greek Civil War, mirrors the broader trajectory of the nation's struggles and aspirations. The period spanning from 1821 to 1949 is particularly significant, encompassing Greece's emergence as an independent state, its efforts to establish and consolidate territorial sovereignty, and its survival through internal divisions and global conflicts. This era captures the dynamic interplay between military power and national consciousness, as the Greek Army came to embody ideals of unity, sacrifice, and patriotism during critical moments of the nation's history.

The War of Independence in 1821 against Ottoman rule served as the cornerstone of Greek national identity. It was not merely a military conflict but a cultural and ideological revolution. The irregular bands of fighters, often depicted as "klephts" and "armatoloi", became iconic representations of heroism, tied deeply to the imagery of Hellenic revival and freedom (Kyriakidis, 2016). Their exploits were immortalized in literature, poetry, and art, creating a lasting association between the military and the ideals of Greek independence. As Greece transitioned into a modern nation-state, the army became central to its self-representation, adapting its symbols, uniforms, and public role to align with evolving notions of national identity.

The time frame of 1821 to 1949 reflects the army's enduring significance across different historical phases. The 19th century was marked by nation-building, territorial expansion during the Balkan Wars, and the consolidation of national myths. The early 20th century brought global challenges, including Greece's participation in World War I and its aspirations for the "Great Idea" (Megali Idea), a vision of uniting all Greek-speaking regions (Kyriakidis, 2022). The Asia Minor Catastrophe of 1922, which ended these territorial ambitions, profoundly shaped the Greek Army's identity and its symbolic role in society (Mazower, 2021). The subsequent interwar period and the Metaxas dictatorship saw the army utilized for nationalist propaganda, while its role in World War II and the Greek Civil War highlighted its function as both a defender of the nation and a divisive force during periods of internal strife. These events underscore the duality of the Greek Army as a unifying symbol and an instrument of power, reflecting broader tensions within Greek society.

Despite the army's significance, its cultural representations and symbolic functions have received limited scholarly attention. While military history often focuses on battles, tactics, and geopolitics, this study emphasizes the cultural dimensions of the Greek Army, exploring how it was depicted in literature, media, and rituals. These representations reveal not only the army's institutional role but also its capacity to shape collective memory and national identity. By examining the army's portrayal in propaganda, its evolving uniforms and insignia, and its participation in public ceremonies, this study sheds light on the intersection of culture and power in Modern Greek history.

1.1. Research Questions and Objectives

This research aims to address three interrelated questions that explore the cultural and symbolic dimensions of the Greek Army:

1. *How was the Greek Army culturally represented in various media and public rituals?*

The study examines depictions of the army in literature, newspapers, posters, films, and other forms of media to uncover how these representations evolved over time. For instance, how did 19th-century literature romanticize the klephts as heroic figures, and how did early 20th-century propaganda use the army to promote nationalist ideologies? Additionally, what role did visual media, such as posters during the Balkan Wars or films during World War II, play in constructing public perceptions of the military?

2. In what ways did these representations contribute to the construction of national identity?

This question explores the army's symbolic role in fostering a sense of Greek identity, unity, and continuity. How did depictions of soldiers, uniforms, and military victories align with broader national narratives? The study investigates how the army's image was tied to key historical moments, such as the War of Independence and the defeat in Asia Minor, and how these associations reinforced or challenged collective memory.

3. *What roles did propaganda, uniforms, and ceremonies play in shaping public perception?*

This objective focuses on the mechanisms through which the army's image was constructed and disseminated. How did changes in military uniforms reflect shifts in national identity, from the traditional attire of the klephts to the modernized uniforms of the 20th century? What role did military parades, funerals, and commemorations play in establishing the army's centrality to Greek public life? This study also examines the use of propaganda during key historical periods, such as the Metaxas regime, to mobilize popular support and legitimize the state's authority.

By addressing these questions, the research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the Greek Army's cultural significance, highlighting its role as a mediator between history, memory, and identity.

1.2. Theoretical Framework and research studies

The study draws on an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that integrates cultural history, military history, and national identity studies. Central to this approach is the recognition that the army is not merely a military institution but also a cultural and symbolic entity that operates within the realm of collective memory and representation.

One foundational concept is Benedict Anderson's notion of "imagined communities," which emphasizes the role of cultural artifacts, such as newspapers and ceremonies, in creating a shared sense of national belonging (Anderson, 2016). The Greek Army's cultural representations, from the klephts of the 1821 revolution to the parades of the 20th century, can be seen as tools for fostering this imagined community. These representations helped to construct a narrative of continuity between ancient Greece, Byzantine heritage, and Modern Greek nationalism, aligning the army with the broader project of nation-building.

Another key theoretical perspective is the study of symbolism and its role in shaping identity. Symbols, such as military uniforms, insignia, and rituals, are not static but evolve to reflect changing social and political contexts (Geertz, 1973). For example, the transition from traditional klephtic attire to standardized uniforms in the late 19th century symbolized Greece's modernization and its

aspiration to align with European norms. Similarly, the use of specific insignia, such as the double-headed eagle or the cross, evoked historical and religious associations that reinforced the army's role as a guardian of Greek heritage.

The study also engages with theories of propaganda and its role in shaping public perception. Propaganda, as defined by Jowett and O'Donnell, involves the deliberate use of communication to influence attitudes and behaviors (Jowett, O'Donnell, 2018). The Greek Army's portrayal in posters, films, and other media during key historical moments, such as the Balkan Wars and the Metaxas dictatorship, exemplifies the strategic use of propaganda to legitimize military actions and mobilize support. By examining these materials, the study reveals how the army was constructed as a heroic and unifying force, even in periods of political division.

Finally, the research draws on scholarship on collective memory, particularly the work of Maurice Halbwachs, who argued that memory is shaped by social frameworks and institutional practices (Halbwachs, 1992). The Greek Army's participation in public rituals, such as parades and commemorations, served to anchor collective memory in specific historical narratives, reinforcing the nation's identity as a community forged through shared sacrifices. For instance, the annual commemorations of the War of Independence and the rituals honoring fallen soldiers during the Balkan Wars linked the army's legacy to the broader story of Greece's survival and sovereignty.

By combining these theoretical perspectives, the study provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the Greek Army's cultural and symbolic role in modern history. It situates the army within the broader context of national identity formation, highlighting its function as both a military force and a cultural icon. This interdisciplinary approach allows for a nuanced analysis of the army's representations, revealing their complexity and their impact on Greek society.

Existing research on the Greek Army has made significant contributions to understanding its role in Greek history, yet these studies largely focus on its military and political dimensions, leaving the cultural and symbolic aspects underexplored. For instance, Roderick Beaton in *Greece: Biography of a Modern Nation* examines the role of the military in the context of Greek nation-building but does so primarily through the lens of political and geopolitical events (Beaton, 2019). Similarly, Mark Mazower's *The Greek Revolution: 1821 and the Making of Modern Europe* offers a groundbreaking analysis of the War of Independence and its impact on European and Greek history but devotes little attention to the ways in which the army was culturally represented during this period (Mazower, 2021). These studies emphasize the practicalities of military engagement and state formation without delving into how the army's image was constructed and disseminated in cultural narratives.

Scholars such as Richard Clogg, in his seminal *A Concise History of Greece*, trace the evolution of Greece's modern state and its military's role in major conflicts, including the Balkan Wars, World War II, and the Civil War (Clogg, 2002). While his work highlights the army's strategic significance, it does not engage with its cultural representation in media, literature, and public rituals. Similarly, John Koliopoulos and Thanos Veremis in *Greece: The Modern Sequel* offer valuable insights into the intersection of the military and politics, particularly during the Metaxas regime, but stop short of analyzing how propaganda, uniforms, and ceremonies

shaped public perceptions of the army and, by extension, national identity (Koliopoulos, & Veremis, 2002). Constantine Tsoukalas's sociological study *The Greek Tragedy* addresses the army's centrality in Greek politics but does not explore its cultural or ritualistic functions (Tsoukalas, 1969).

The gaps this manuscript seeks to address lie in the intersection of cultural history, military symbolism, and national identity. Specifically, no comprehensive study has yet analyzed how the Greek Army's cultural representations - from propaganda and literature to uniforms and rituals - helped construct and sustain the imagined community of the Greek nation. By filling this void, this research will provide a more nuanced understanding of the army's role not just as a military institution but as a central cultural symbol in Modern Greek history.

1.3. Methodology

The research methodology was determined based on the nature and type of research material and the ultimate research objectives. It was necessary to follow the historical-pedagogical method with additional source analysis, as this approach aligns with the interdisciplinary nature of the study. The content of historical research is broad, covering various fields such as: a) the history of education, which studies educational systems, institutions, organization, and administration of educational units; b) the study of the levels of education, classes, and structures; c) individual issues and problems at different times, such as propaganda, ceremonial rituals, and visual representations as pedagogical tools; d) critiques of cultural narratives and military symbolism; e) national policies at different times, and their impact on public perception (Borg & Gall, 1989). This historical research belongs to the realm of qualitative research and specifically focuses on the cultural representations of the Greek Army, which marked significant periods of Greek modern history. It explores how propaganda, military symbols, and rituals intersected with national identity during critical historical phases.

Through archival primary texts, this research studies newspapers, posters, literature, films, ceremonial records, and visual artifacts, including military uniforms and insignia, to understand their symbolic power. According to D. Mavroskoufis' definition, primary or direct sources "are those that come from a specific period of the past, contemporary with the one the historian is studying," and secondary or indirect sources "are the later interpretations" (Mavroskoufis, 2005). This research is characterized as difficult to approach, both theoretically and practically, because it is based on incomplete data or materials for the construction of knowledge (Verdi, 2015), relying on causal factors and conditions that have now been altered or lost. In this respect, the scientific view is valid that "the more remote the events that have occurred and are being analyzed, the greater the difficulties" (Athanasidou, 2003).

This methodology is oriented toward placing the study's subject within its historical, cultural, and symbolic context. It explores answers regarding how the Greek Army's cultural representations helped forge national consciousness through propaganda, rituals, and visual materials. Characteristically, Jaspers stressed, "whereas ancient science appeared as something perennial for which the concept of progress was not fundamental, modern science is directed towards infinity" (Jaspers, 1950). The primary method used is historical analysis, which "helps mainly in establishing facts, in the external and internal critique of the available evidence, and in establishing sequences" (Mialaret, 1999). This method

allows us to approach the past: to analyze events that took place in different periods, their causes, results, and the protagonists, along with the cultural and symbolic tools used to construct their narratives (Athanasiou, 2003).

Historical analysis in this study includes:

1. **Analysis of Primary Sources:** Newspapers, posters, literature, films, and ceremonial records are examined to uncover how the Greek Army was represented across different periods.
2. **Visual and Textual Analysis:** Military uniforms, insignia, and propaganda materials are critically analyzed as reflections of national identity and cultural power.
3. **Interdisciplinary Approach:** By combining cultural, historical, and semiotic analysis, the study investigates how the Greek Army became a symbol of unity and patriotism.

According to Louis Cohen and Lawrence Manion, historical research is defined as "the systematic and objective identification, evaluation, and synthesis of evidence in order to establish facts and draw conclusions about past events. It is an act of reconstruction undertaken in a spirit of critical inquiry, which aims to achieve a faithful representation of a past era" (Cohen & Manion, 1977). This method clarifies the concepts used in representing the Greek Army, studies the coherence of these representations within historical contexts, and evaluates their impact on national identity. Topolski argues that historical analysis "helps to clarify the concepts used, to study the internal and external coherence of educational activities, to verify the correspondence of educational activity with clearly defined objectives." (Topolski, 1983)

This research relies on primary sources, which are the cornerstone of historical research, characterized by originality and a direct material connection with the events and participants studied. Secondary sources complement these by offering interpretations and analyses of the historical context (Cohen & Manion, 1977). Hill and Kerber classify the benefits of historical research as follows: a) It provides the opportunity to search for past solutions to contemporary problems; b) It highlights present and future trends; c) It emphasizes the relative importance and effects of cultural interactions; d) It allows for the re-evaluation or re-examination of past theories and generalizations (Hill & Kerber, 1967).

This research aims to study and demonstrate issues of the past concerning the Greek Army's cultural representations and their impact on national identity. It seeks to understand how propaganda, rituals, and visual elements symbolized the army's role as a unifying force. Verdis highlights the importance of studying symbolic interactions to uncover societal values, norms, and collective perceptions, which this research applies to Greece's historical and cultural context (Verdis, 2015). By analyzing how the Greek Army was culturally constructed and symbolically represented, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the triptych of politics, education, and society (Nova-Kaltsouni, 2006).

In education and training, historical research of this nature is essential for highlighting the results of historical interactions from a cultural perspective. It also offers new ways of thinking by re-evaluating past theories and reconstructing data useful for the

present and future. As Bitsaki (2005) asserts, any historical research should aim to:

1. Deepen knowledge of the past in terms of its nuances and complexities.
2. Draw conclusions valuable for the present and future.
3. Explore the historical trajectories of ideas, concepts, and cultural phenomena.
4. Utilize the ideas of past thinkers and symbolic figures in contemporary contexts (Bitsaki, 2005).

Melanitis aptly states that understanding any era requires consideration of its cultural tendencies, spiritual development, and socio-economic conditions (Melanitis, 1957). This research transcends simple historical description, seeking to reveal how the Greek Army's cultural and symbolic roles shaped the national consciousness of modern Greece.

2.0. Propaganda and Public Perception

2.1. The Army in Literature

The representation of the Greek Army in literature played a significant role in shaping public perception and fostering nationalist ideologies during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Literary works from this period reflect the army's dual role as a physical force in Greece's struggles for independence and territorial expansion, as well as a symbolic embodiment of national identity and unity. This analysis examines how Greek writers, poets, and essayists utilized literary forms to portray the army, linking it to broader nationalist narratives and the construction of a cohesive Greek identity.

2.2. The Role of the Army in 19th-Century Greek Literature

The Greek War of Independence (1821–1829) was a critical moment in the nation's history, and its cultural significance is deeply embedded in the literature of the period. Early 19th-century works often romanticized the klephts and *armatoloi*, irregular fighters who were central to the revolutionary struggle. These figures, celebrated for their bravery and defiance against Ottoman rule, became archetypes of the Greek soldier, bridging the gap between historical reality and the idealized image of the national hero (Clogg, 2002).

One of the most influential figures of this period was Dionysios Solomos, whose *Hymn to Liberty* (1823) not only became Greece's national anthem but also established the literary tradition of associating the Greek Army with freedom and sacrifice (Kyriakidis, 2016). Solomos depicted the army as the defender of the nation's Hellenic heritage and the bearer of liberty, invoking classical and Christian imagery to emphasize its moral and historical legitimacy (Beaton, 2019). His work epitomized the romantic nationalist narrative, portraying soldiers as successors to ancient Greek warriors and reinforcing the connection between military service and national pride.

Similarly, Alexandros Rizos Rangavis, another prominent 19th-century writer, used his poetry to extol the virtues of the Greek soldier. His work often idealized the army as a unifying force, highlighting its role in liberating Greece from Ottoman rule and safeguarding its territorial integrity. In Rangavis's poetry, the army is depicted as a sacred institution, embodying the moral and spiritual values of the Greek nation (Mazower, 2021). These literary depictions contributed to the construction of a shared

national consciousness, fostering public admiration and support for the army.

2.3. Nationalist Narratives in 20th-Century Poetry and Essays

By the early 20th century, literature shifted to reflect the army's role in Greece's territorial expansion during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913) and its broader geopolitical aspirations under the "Great Idea" (Megali Idea). This period saw the rise of nationalist narratives in poetry and essays, which sought to glorify the army's achievements and reinforce its symbolic significance (Kyriakidis, 2021).

Kostis Palamas, one of Greece's most celebrated poets, exemplified this trend in his works, which often emphasized the moral and cultural superiority of the Greek nation (Kyriakidis, 2016). In poems such as *The Dodecalogue of the Gypsy* (1907), Palamas portrayed the Greek Army as the defender of Hellenism, linking its struggles to the broader continuity of Greek civilization from antiquity to modernity (Mackridge, 2009). His use of classical references and patriotic themes sought to inspire a sense of unity and purpose, presenting the army as both the protector and the symbol of Greek cultural heritage.

The Balkan Wars, in particular, inspired a wave of patriotic literature that celebrated the army's victories and sacrifices. Poets such as Ioannis Gryparis and Angelos Sikelianos produced works that glorified the army's role in reclaiming Greek territories and fulfilling the aspirations of the Megali Idea. Gryparis's poetry often depicted soldiers as heroic figures who embodied the nation's resilience and determination (Gryparis, 1967). Meanwhile, Sikelianos blended nationalist themes with spiritual and metaphysical elements, portraying the army's efforts as part of a divine mission to restore Greece to its historical greatness (Sikelianos, 1945).

Essays and patriotic writings from this period also contributed to the cultural representation of the Greek Army. Writers such as Emmanouil Rhoides and Pavlos Nirvanas used their prose to critique or praise the army, often emphasizing its role as a unifying force in a fragmented society. For instance, Nirvanas's essays highlighted the army's contributions to national cohesion, portraying military service as a rite of passage that transcended social and regional divisions (Nirvanas, 1968). This narrative reinforced the idea that the army was not merely a professional institution but a vital component of Greece's national identity.

2.4. Patriotic Literature and Propaganda During the Interwar Period

The interwar period (1918–1939) marked a significant shift in the literary representation of the Greek Army. Following the Asia Minor Catastrophe of 1922, literature began to reflect the complex and often ambivalent public perceptions of the military. While the army's defeat in Asia Minor challenged its symbolic role as the defender of Hellenism, it also inspired a wave of introspective and patriotic literature that sought to reaffirm its cultural significance.

For example, Stratis Myrivilis's *Life in the Tomb* (1924) is a seminal work that explores the experiences of Greek soldiers during World War I. While the novel critiques the brutality of war, it also portrays the army as a microcosm of Greek society, highlighting the soldiers' camaraderie and shared sense of purpose (Myrivilis, 2004). Myrivilis's work reflects the growing tension between the idealized image of the army and the harsh realities of

military life, offering a nuanced perspective on its role in shaping national identity (Beaton, 2019).

During the Metaxas dictatorship (1936–1941), literature and propaganda were heavily influenced by state-driven efforts to glorify the army and promote nationalist ideologies. The regime's cultural policies encouraged writers to produce works that celebrated the army's historical achievements and its role in defending Greece against external threats. This period saw the proliferation of patriotic essays, poems, and plays that depicted the army as the guardian of Greek sovereignty and cultural heritage. Writers such as Spyros Melas (Karra, 2010) and Fotis Kontoglou contributed to this narrative, using their works to emphasize the army's centrality to Greek national identity.

2.5. The Army as a Symbolic and Cultural Icon

Across 19th- and 20th-century literature, the Greek Army emerged as a powerful cultural icon, embodying the ideals of unity, sacrifice, and patriotism. Literary depictions of the army often drew on classical and Byzantine imagery, reinforcing its connection to Greece's historical and cultural heritage. This symbolic role was particularly evident in patriotic literature, which sought to inspire public admiration and support for the military.

However, these representations were not always uniform or uncritical. While many works celebrated the army's achievements and sacrifices, others highlighted the complexities and contradictions of its role in Greek society. For instance, literature from the post-Asia Minor period often grappled with the disillusionment and trauma of defeat, offering a more introspective and critical perspective on the army's symbolic significance.

2.6. The Army in Newspapers and Posters

The role of newspapers and posters in shaping public perception of the Greek Army cannot be overstated. These mediums served as powerful tools for mobilizing support, glorifying the military, and embedding the army into the cultural and national consciousness. From the War of Independence to the Balkan Wars, both textual and visual propaganda were instrumental in shaping how the Greek Army was perceived and revered by the public.

During the Greek War of Independence (1821–1829), newspapers emerged as vital instruments for rallying support among Greeks and generating international sympathy. While Greece was still under Ottoman rule, revolutionary presses printed bulletins and pamphlets that celebrated the heroism of the revolutionaries and emphasized the army's role in the struggle for freedom. These publications often utilized emotionally charged language, framing the military efforts as part of a broader historical mission to restore Hellenic glory (Mazarakis - Ainian, 2007). Newspapers published outside Greece, particularly in London and Paris, amplified these messages to galvanize philhellenic support and financial aid, portraying the Greek Army as a heroic force standing against tyranny (Dimakis, 1968).

By the time of the Balkan Wars (1912–1913), newspapers had become central to the dissemination of military narratives. Greek journalists embedded with the army reported on its campaigns, crafting narratives that celebrated victories and highlighted the bravery of soldiers. Major newspapers like *Empros* and *Skrip* dedicated extensive coverage to the military's efforts, often using patriotic rhetoric to emphasize the army's role in achieving the goals of the Megali Idea (Kyriakidis, 2016). Photographs and detailed descriptions of battlefield victories created a sense of immediacy, allowing readers to connect with the army's successes.

At the same time, the press was selective in its coverage, downplaying defeats or controversies to maintain the army's positive image (Karikopoulos, 1984).

The interwar period saw newspapers being used for more overt propaganda, particularly under the Metaxas dictatorship (1936–1941). State-controlled press outlets glorified the army, aligning it with Metaxas's nationalist vision and presenting it as the guardian of Greece's sovereignty and cultural heritage. Headlines and editorials often portrayed the army as a unifying force capable of defending the nation against both external threats and internal discord (Gazette "Free Step", 1939). The press also played a key role in disseminating narratives that linked military service to civic duty, reinforcing the idea that the army was an essential pillar of Greek identity.

2.7. Posters and Visual Strategies

Posters emerged as a complementary medium to newspapers, employing visual imagery to convey powerful messages about the army. During the Balkan Wars, posters were used to mobilize public support, often featuring heroic depictions of soldiers marching triumphantly or standing resolutely against the enemy. These images drew heavily on classical and Byzantine iconography, linking the modern Greek Army to the historical legacy of Hellenic and Orthodox Christian traditions (History of the Greek Nation, 1977).

The language used in these posters was direct and emotive, often appealing to patriotism and a sense of duty. Slogans such as "For Greece!" and "Fight for the Homeland!" emphasized collective responsibility, while images of soldiers alongside traditional symbols like the Greek flag or the cross reinforced the army's moral and spiritual significance (Gazette "Empros", 1912). Posters targeting rural populations often depicted soldiers as protectors of Greek villages, appealing to the deep ties between the countryside and the national identity.

Under the Metaxas regime, posters became a primary vehicle for state propaganda. The regime's cultural policies relied on stark, bold imagery to glorify the army's role as the defender of the nation. Soldiers were often depicted as towering, invincible figures, their uniforms pristine and their expressions resolute. These images emphasized discipline, unity, and strength, aligning with the regime's broader fascist aesthetic. During World War II, posters further reinforced the army's heroic image, celebrating its resistance to the Axis powers and presenting it as the vanguard of Greek courage and resilience.

2.8. The Army in Cinema. Early Cinematic Representations of Greek Military History

Cinema emerged in Greece in the early 20th century and quickly became a medium for shaping public perception of the army. Although the Greek film industry was still nascent, early films often focused on historical themes, including the Greek War of Independence and other military conflicts. These productions reinforced the army's centrality to national identity, using dramatized depictions of battles and heroic figures to evoke pride and patriotism (Karalis, 2012). For example, silent films such as the *Greek miracle (1921)*, portrayed soldiers as selfless defenders of the nation, blending elements of folklore and history to create mythic narratives around the army.

As cinema became more sophisticated, filmmakers began to explore the emotional and psychological dimensions of military life. During the interwar period, films such as *The banner of 1821*

(1929) highlighted the army's role in territorial expansion and the protection of Greece's borders, emphasizing themes of unity and sacrifice. These productions often romanticized the soldier's life, presenting military service as a noble pursuit tied to the broader aspirations of the Greek nation (Soldatos, 2015).

2.9. Cinema as a Propaganda Tool During the Metaxas Regime and World War II

During the Metaxas dictatorship, cinema became a vital tool for state propaganda. The regime recognized the potential of film to reach mass audiences and promote its nationalist agenda, commissioning productions that glorified the army and reinforced its image as the protector of Greece's sovereignty. Films produced during this period often depicted soldiers as disciplined and morally upright, emphasizing their role in defending the nation against both external threats and internal subversion (Karalis, 2012).

For example, state-sponsored documentaries showcased military parades, training exercises, and battlefield victories, creating an idealized image of the army as a modern and capable force. These films often employed techniques such as slow-motion shots of soldiers in action, rousing musical scores, and narrations that celebrated the army's accomplishments. The visual language of these productions echoed the aesthetics of other fascist regimes, using grandeur and spectacle to inspire awe and admiration for the military (Dermitzakis, 2016).

World War II saw Greek cinema further emphasize the army's role in the national resistance. Films such as *The Battle of Crete (1970)* portrayed the army as a symbol of courage and resilience in the face of overwhelming odds. These productions were not only propaganda tools but also cultural artifacts that documented the collective memory of Greece's wartime experiences. They reinforced the narrative of the army as a unifying force, drawing on themes of sacrifice and heroism to inspire post-war reconstruction and national solidarity.

It's becoming clear that newspapers, posters, and cinema played pivotal roles in shaping public perception of the Greek Army during critical historical periods. Through textual and visual strategies, these mediums glorified the army, linked it to Greece's cultural and historical legacy, and mobilized public support for its efforts. While newspapers provided detailed narratives and commentary, posters used bold imagery and emotive slogans to reach a broader audience. Cinema, as a relatively new medium, combined visual spectacle with storytelling to reinforce the army's symbolic significance. Together, these forms of propaganda contributed to the construction of the Greek Army as a cultural and national icon, deeply embedded in the collective imagination of modern Greece.

3. Uniforms and Symbols

3.1. The Evolution of Military Uniforms

The evolution of Greek military uniforms from the klephtic attire of the 1821 revolutionaries to the standardized uniforms of the 20th century reflects the broader transformations in Greece's national identity, modernization, and political structure. During the War of Independence, klephtic and armatolic attire served as both practical and symbolic clothing. These garments, characterized by fustanellas (pleated skirts), embroidered vests, and red fez caps, were deeply rooted in the traditions of rural Greece and symbolized resistance against Ottoman rule. Their use by revolutionary fighters

tyed the army to Greece's folk culture and the broader struggle for national liberation (Mazower, 2021).

The fustanella, in particular, became a powerful symbol of Hellenic identity. Its association with classical Greek aesthetics and its resemblance to ancient warrior attire, such as the chiton, allowed the revolutionaries to present themselves as heirs to ancient Greece, aligning their struggle with the ideals of freedom and democracy (Petropoulos, 1987). This sartorial link between the ancient and modern periods played a vital role in cultivating international philhellenic support, as foreign observers romanticized the Greek cause and its visually striking fighters.

As Greece emerged as an independent state in the mid-19th century, its military uniforms underwent significant changes to reflect the country's aspirations for modernization and alignment with European norms. King Otto, Greece's first monarch, introduced military uniforms inspired by Bavarian and Prussian models, marking a departure from traditional klephtic attire. These uniforms, which included dark tunics and caps, symbolized Greece's shift from revolutionary fervor to institutionalized governance (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002). The adoption of European styles signaled the state's desire to project an image of modernity and sovereignty, aligning itself with the Western powers that had supported its independence.

The 20th century saw further standardization and modernization of military uniforms, driven by practical considerations and political developments. During the Balkan Wars (1912–1913), the Greek Army adopted khaki uniforms, reflecting the influence of British and French military practices. The shift to neutral, functional attire signaled a move away from the symbolic and ornate designs of the 19th century, emphasizing efficiency and modern warfare. By the time of World War II, Greek uniforms incorporated standardized insignia, ranks, and decorations, reflecting the increasing professionalization of the armed forces and the influence of global military trends (Army Headquarters, 1998).

3.2. Insignia and Symbols

Military insignia, badges, and flags have served as vital markers of authority, hierarchy, and patriotism within the Greek Army, evolving alongside the nation's political transformations. These symbols reflect not only the functional needs of the military but also broader cultural and ideological shifts.

During the monarchy (1832–1924 and 1935–1973), royal emblems were prominently displayed on military insignia and flags. The double-headed eagle, a symbol rooted in Byzantine heritage, was widely used to signify Greece's connection to Orthodox Christianity and its imperial past. This symbol, along with the crown and the national flag, reinforced the monarchy's role as a unifying institution and the protector of Greek sovereignty (Mazower, 2021). Insignia during this period often featured elaborate designs, incorporating elements of both classical and Byzantine traditions to emphasize the army's historical continuity and legitimacy.

The republican period (1924–1935) brought changes to military insignia, reflecting the nation's political shift away from monarchy. Republican emblems replaced royal symbols, with a greater emphasis on national unity and democratic ideals. The military flag was modified to remove royal iconography, instead focusing on the blue and white stripes of the Greek flag, symbolizing the nation's independence and maritime heritage (Clogg, 2002). These changes

signaled the army's alignment with the new political order while maintaining its role as a symbol of national identity.

Under the Metaxas dictatorship (1936–1941), insignia and symbols took on a distinctly nationalist and authoritarian character. Metaxas sought to portray the army as the guardian of Greece's sovereignty and cultural heritage, using military symbols to reinforce his regime's ideological goals. The phoenix, a symbol of rebirth, was incorporated into insignia to represent the regime's vision of national rejuvenation. Additionally, flags and badges often featured patriotic slogans, such as "Greece above everything else" reflecting the regime's emphasis on unity and loyalty (Announcement of Prime Minister, 1940).

Comparatively, the use of insignia during these periods highlights the adaptability of military symbols to different political contexts. While the monarchy emphasized historical continuity and royal authority, the republic and the Metaxas regime utilized military symbols to align the army with their respective visions of national identity.

3.3. The Army as a Visual Icon

The Greek Army has long been a visual icon in the country's cultural and artistic landscape, represented in paintings, sculptures, monuments, and even civilian fashion. These depictions have played a crucial role in embedding the army into the national consciousness and shaping its symbolic significance.

In the 19th century, the War of Independence inspired a wave of artistic works that glorified the revolutionary fighters and their struggle. Paintings by artists such as Theodoros Vryzakis and Peter von Hess depicted scenes of battle and heroism, often emphasizing the soldiers' traditional attire and their connection to the Greek landscape (Papanikolaou, 2024). These works not only celebrated the army's role in securing independence but also reinforced the romanticized image of the Greek soldier as a defender of freedom and national identity (Beaton, 2019).

Sculptures and monuments further cemented the army's place in Greek cultural memory. Monuments commemorating key battles, such as those at Thermopylae and Navarino, often featured figures of soldiers in traditional attire, symbolizing the continuity of Greek resistance from antiquity to modern times. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Athens, unveiled in 1932, exemplifies this visual representation of the army. The monument's design, inspired by ancient Greek motifs, emphasizes the soldier's role as a timeless and anonymous defender of the nation (Army Headquarters).

In the 20th century, the visual representation of the army extended beyond fine art to civilian fashion and everyday culture. Military-inspired designs, such as khaki fabrics and insignia, became popular in civilian clothing, reflecting the army's influence on national aesthetics. This trend was particularly pronounced during periods of heightened nationalism, such as the Balkan Wars and World War II, when the public embraced symbols of the military as expressions of unity and patriotism (Koliopoulos & Veremis, 2002).

The visual iconography of the army was also evident in state-sponsored media and propaganda. Posters, postcards, and other visual materials often depicted soldiers as heroic and idealized figures, using bold colors and dramatic compositions to evoke pride and admiration. These images reinforced the army's symbolic role as the protector of Greek sovereignty and cultural

heritage, particularly during critical moments such as the Metaxas regime and the resistance against Axis forces in World War II.

It becomes clear that the evolution of military uniforms, insignia, and visual representations of the Greek Army reflects broader changes in Greece's national identity and political landscape. From the klephtic attire of the 1821 revolutionaries to the standardized uniforms of the 20th century, these elements have served as powerful symbols of Greece's historical continuity, modernization, and resilience. Insignia and symbols, adapted to different political contexts, have reinforced the army's role as both a functional institution and a cultural icon. Meanwhile, visual representations in art, monuments, and popular culture have embedded the army into the collective imagination, shaping its symbolic significance in Greek history.

4. Ceremonies and Rituals

4.1. Military Parades and Public Display

Military parades in Greece have served as powerful tools for political messaging and national symbolism, particularly during national holidays and anniversaries. From the early 19th century to the mid-20th century, these parades evolved to reflect the shifting priorities of Greek society and its political institutions. They were not merely displays of military strength but carefully orchestrated performances designed to reinforce collective identity, celebrate national achievements, and project state authority.

The first military parades following Greece's independence in 1829 emphasized the revolutionary roots of the Greek state. Soldiers marched in traditional klephtic attire, evoking the legacy of the 1821 War of Independence and the heroic struggles against Ottoman rule. Although anniversary celebrations of the Revolution of 1821 began as early as 1822, according to testimonies (Striebeck, 1834), the official celebration was established in 1838 through a Royal Decree during the reign of King Otto (Circular, 1838). These parades symbolized the triumph of the Greek nation over foreign domination and served to solidify the connection between the army and the founding narrative of the modern Greek state (Mazower, 2021).

By the late 19th century, military parades began to adopt a more formal and standardized format, reflecting the modernization of the Greek Army and the state's efforts to align with European norms. During the reign of King George I, parades emphasized discipline, order, and modernity, showcasing the army's growing professionalism. This shift also reflected the state's desire to project an image of stability and unity, particularly during periods of political turbulence such as the National Schism (Clogg, 2002).

National holidays such as Independence Day (March 25) and Ohi Day (October 28) became focal points for military parades, where the army was celebrated as the guardian of Greece's sovereignty and cultural heritage. These events blended historical commemoration with contemporary political messaging, linking the sacrifices of past soldiers to the army's ongoing role in defending the nation. The Metaxas regime (1936–1941) intensified the use of parades as propaganda tools, using them to promote its nationalist and authoritarian ideals. Soldiers were presented as disciplined and loyal protectors of the Greek state, while the inclusion of youth groups and civilian organizations reinforced the regime's vision of a unified, militarized society.

During World War II, military parades were suspended due to the Axis occupation, but their symbolic significance persisted in the

occupied population's collective memory. When parades resumed after the war, they became celebrations of resistance and liberation, emphasizing the army's pivotal role in Greece's victory and resilience. The evolution of parade traditions from 1821 to 1949 highlights their adaptability to changing political contexts and their enduring significance as instruments of national identity and unity.

4.2. Funerals and Memorials

Military funerals and war memorials have been central to the rituals of public mourning and national remembrance in Greece, serving as sites where individual and collective sacrifices are honored. These practices not only commemorate the fallen but also reinforce the moral and symbolic legitimacy of the army as the protector of the nation.

In the 19th century, military funerals were informal affairs, often conducted in local communities where soldiers had lived or fought. However, as the Greek state consolidated its identity, military funerals became more formalized and imbued with national symbolism. The funerals of prominent military figures, such as General Makriyannis, were marked by grand public ceremonies that emphasized their contributions to the War of Independence and their role in shaping modern Greece (Archive Vlachogiannis, 1907).

The creation of war memorials further institutionalized the commemoration of military sacrifice. Early memorials, such as the monuments to the Battle of Navarino and the heroes of Missolonghi, were designed to evoke the classical tradition, featuring motifs such as columns, laurel wreaths, and inscriptions that celebrated the fallen as modern-day descendants of ancient Greek warriors (Clogg, 2002). These memorials played a crucial role in shaping the collective memory of the army's sacrifices, linking individual acts of heroism to the broader narrative of national liberation and unity.

During the Balkan Wars (1912–1913), the scale of military funerals and memorials increased significantly, reflecting the growing importance of the army in Greek society. State-sponsored ceremonies honored the dead as martyrs for the Megali Idea, reinforcing the army's role as the vanguard of Greek territorial expansion. The interwar period saw the establishment of more permanent memorials, such as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Athens, which became a focal point for national commemoration. Unveiled in 1932, the tomb's design drew on classical and Byzantine imagery, symbolizing the continuity of Greek identity and the army's role in defending it across centuries (Mazower, 2021).

Military funerals and memorials also played a unifying role during periods of political crisis. For example, the funerals of soldiers killed during World War II and the Greek Civil War (1946–1949) were used to foster national solidarity, even as the country was deeply divided. These ceremonies emphasized the common sacrifices of the fallen, presenting them as defenders of Greek sovereignty regardless of political affiliation. This narrative was particularly important during the Civil War, when the state sought to portray the national army as the legitimate force defending the nation against communist insurgents.

4.3. Commemorative Practices and Public Memory

The anniversaries of key military events have played a vital role in reinforcing the centrality of the army in Greek identity, serving as opportunities to renew collective memory and national solidarity. These commemorations, often orchestrated by the state, have

combined historical reflection with contemporary political messaging, ensuring that the army remains a focal point of public life.

The Battle of Navarino (1827), a pivotal event in the War of Independence, has been commemorated annually as a symbol of international solidarity and Greek resilience. These celebrations, which include military parades, naval displays, and public speeches, emphasize the army's foundational role in securing Greece's independence. Similarly, the commemoration of the Exodus of Missolonghi highlights the sacrifices of soldiers and civilians, linking their heroism to the enduring values of freedom and self-determination (Beaton, 2019).

During the 20th century, the anniversaries of World War II victories, such as Ohi Day (October 28), became major national events. These commemorations celebrated the army's resistance against the Axis powers and its contribution to the Allied war effort. Under the Metaxas regime, Ohi Day was used to promote nationalist ideology, portraying the army as the embodiment of Greek courage and independence. The inclusion of military parades, reenactments, and public speeches reinforced the narrative of the army as the defender of Greece's sovereignty and cultural heritage.

Government-led initiatives also sought to use military rituals as a unifying force during times of political division. For example, during the National Schism (1916–1917), the Venizelist government emphasized the commemoration of military victories to legitimize its policies and rally public support (Kyriakidis, 2023). Similarly, during the Greek Civil War, state-sponsored commemorations of battles and victories were used to present the national army as the legitimate defender of Greek democracy against communist insurgents (Clogg, 2002).

These commemorative practices have not only preserved the memory of the army's achievements but also shaped public perceptions of its role in Greek society. By linking the sacrifices of soldiers to the broader narrative of national identity, these rituals have ensured that the army remains a central symbol of Greek resilience, unity, and sovereignty.

Ceremonies and rituals associated with the Greek Army, such as military parades, funerals, and commemorations, have played a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of the army and its significance within Greek national identity. From the celebratory parades of Independence Day to the solemnity of military funerals and the commemorations of key victories, these practices have reinforced the army's symbolic significance as the defender of Greece's sovereignty and cultural heritage. By examining these rituals in their historical and political contexts, it becomes clear that they were not merely displays of tradition but powerful tools for constructing and maintaining collective memory and national unity.

5. Discussion

5.1. Connecting Cultural Representations and National Identity

The cultural representations of the Greek Army - through propaganda, uniforms, and rituals - intertwined to construct and reinforce its pivotal role in shaping modern Greek national identity. These representations were not isolated phenomena but deeply integrated mechanisms that worked in tandem to project the army as both a protector and a symbol of the Greek nation.

Propaganda provided the narrative foundation for the army's cultural significance. During key historical moments, such as the War of Independence and the Balkan Wars, newspapers, posters, and later films depicted the army as the embodiment of Greek resilience and heroism. These media forms emphasized themes of sacrifice and victory, often aligning the military with Greece's ancient and Byzantine heritage. For example, propaganda during the Metaxas regime framed the army as the vanguard of Greek nationalism, using posters and parades to glorify soldiers as disciplined, selfless guardians of the nation (Petraakis, 2001).

Uniforms, as visual symbols, reinforced these narratives by creating a sense of continuity and modernization. The evolution from klephtic attire to standardized military dress reflected broader shifts in Greek identity, transitioning from revolutionary fervor to a modern, European-oriented state. The adoption of Byzantine-inspired insignia during the monarchy and the nationalist imagery of the Metaxas dictatorship underscored the army's symbolic role as a link between Greece's historical legacy and its aspirations for sovereignty and unity (Mazower, 2021).

Rituals, such as military parades and commemorative ceremonies, provided a public stage for these cultural representations. Through the synchronization of movement, music, and symbolic displays, parades communicated state authority and national pride. Similarly, commemorative events such as Ohi Day linked the army's sacrifices to collective memory, making the military an inseparable part of the Greek identity. These rituals transformed abstract notions of patriotism into tangible, shared experiences, strengthening the emotional bond between the army and the people (Clogg, 2001).

Together, these cultural tools created a powerful feedback loop. Propaganda shaped public perceptions, uniforms visually reinforced these narratives, and rituals institutionalized them into collective memory. This multidimensional approach ensured that the army was not only seen as a military institution but as the physical and symbolic representation of the nation itself.

5.2. Comparative Reflections

When compared to other European nations during the same period, Greece's cultural representations of its army share certain similarities while also exhibiting unique features tied to its historical and cultural context.

In many European countries, armies were central to the construction of national identity. In France, for instance, the military became a symbol of republican values following the Revolution and Napoleon's campaigns. French propaganda often emphasized the army as a force for liberty and equality, a narrative that paralleled Greece's portrayal of its revolutionary fighters during the War of Independence (Hobsbawm, 1990). Similarly, in Germany, the military was a focal point of national unity, especially during the unification process. The Prussian-led army was idealized as a disciplined and modern force, an image that influenced Greece's adoption of European-style uniforms and military practices in the 19th century (Clark, 2007).

However, the Greek case diverges in significant ways due to its unique historical and cultural circumstances. The deep influence of classical and Byzantine heritage on Greek identity gave the Greek Army a symbolic role that extended beyond its immediate military function. Unlike in France or Germany, where the army's symbolism was primarily tied to contemporary political ideologies, the Greek Army was consistently linked to a historical continuum

that spanned thousands of years. The use of classical motifs in uniforms, insignia, and propaganda emphasized Greece's claim as the inheritor of ancient civilization, while Byzantine symbols underscored its role as the protector of Orthodox Christianity (Mazower, 2021).

Another unique aspect of the Greek Army's cultural representation was its dual role as both a unifying force and a tool of internal division. While propaganda and rituals often presented the army as a symbol of national cohesion, periods of political upheaval - such as the National Schism and the Civil War - highlighted its divisive potential. This tension was less pronounced in countries like Britain, where the army was rarely drawn into domestic political conflicts, or in Germany, where the military was tightly controlled by the state until the interwar period (Koliopoulos, Veremis, 2002).

In summary, while the cultural representations of the Greek Army shared commonalities with other European nations, its unique historical trajectory and the centrality of its classical and Byzantine heritage set it apart. This distinctiveness underscores the importance of understanding the Greek Army's cultural role within its specific national context.

5.3. Impact on Public Perception and Policy

The cultural representations of the Greek Army profoundly influenced public attitudes toward military service, conscription, and political decision-making. By embedding the army into the fabric of national identity, these representations shaped how the public viewed the military's role in society and its relationship with the state.

One significant impact was the widespread acceptance of conscription as a civic duty. Propaganda, particularly during the Balkan Wars and World War II, presented military service as a rite of passage and a moral obligation for Greek men. Soldiers were portrayed as the guardians of the nation's sovereignty and cultural heritage, and conscription was framed as a way for individuals to contribute to the collective good. This narrative not only legitimized compulsory service but also elevated it to a patriotic act, ensuring widespread public support even during periods of political and social unrest.

Cultural representations also influenced popular perceptions of the army's moral authority. By emphasizing themes of sacrifice and heroism, propaganda and rituals created a sense of trust and admiration for the military. This perception was particularly important during the Metaxas regime, which relied on the army's symbolic role to legitimize its authoritarian rule. Public displays of military strength, such as parades and commemorations, reinforced the narrative that the army was a stabilizing force capable of protecting Greece from both external threats and internal divisions (Mazower, 2021).

However, these representations also had complex political implications. During the National Schism (1915–1922), the army's symbolic role was contested, with rival factions using cultural narratives to claim legitimacy. Venizelist forces portrayed the army as the defender of constitutionalism and national aspirations, while royalist factions emphasized its loyalty to the monarchy. This polarization reflected the broader struggle for control over the army's symbolic power, highlighting the extent to which its cultural representations could shape political outcomes (Clogg, 2002).

In the post-World War II period, the army's cultural legacy influenced policies related to national reconstruction and identity. The commemoration of military victories and the creation of memorials served as tools for unifying a fractured society. These initiatives emphasized the army's role in defending Greek sovereignty, helping to restore public confidence in state institutions following the trauma of occupation and civil war (Beaton, 2019).

Overall, the cultural representations of the Greek Army played a pivotal role in shaping public perception and policy. By linking the military to themes of identity, unity, and sacrifice, these narratives ensured that the army remained a central institution in Greek society, capable of influencing both popular attitudes and political decision-making.

The interplay between cultural representations and national identity is clearly evident in the case of the Greek Army. Propaganda, uniforms, and rituals worked together to construct a multifaceted image of the army as a symbol of Greek sovereignty, heritage, and unity. While sharing commonalities with other European nations, Greece's unique historical and cultural context gave its military representations a distinct character, rooted in its classical and Byzantine legacies. These representations not only shaped public perceptions of the army but also influenced policies related to conscription, national unity, and political legitimacy, demonstrating the profound impact of cultural narratives on the Greek state and society.

6. Conclusions

The Greek Army has played an exceptional role in the cultural, symbolic, and national development of modern Greece, extending beyond its military functions to become an enduring emblem of collective identity and societal values. This study has sought to unravel the layers of cultural representation that have defined the army's image from 1821 to 1949, exploring its portrayal in propaganda, the evolution of its uniforms, and its institutional rituals. By addressing the interplay between these dimensions, the research has illuminated the Greek Army's profound impact on national identity and its capacity to reflect and shape the political and cultural trajectory of the nation. The study reveals that the Greek Army, from its inception during the War of Independence, has been instrumental in cultivating a sense of national unity and historical continuity. This process began with the klephtic and armatolic traditions, which symbolized resistance against Ottoman rule, embedding the revolutionary soldier within the narrative of Greek revival. Uniforms, laden with cultural significance, were not mere practical garments but tools of identity construction, evolving from klephtic attire to European-inspired military dress as Greece sought to align itself with modern statehood. These transformations mirrored the shifting priorities of the Greek state - from revolution to consolidation, modernization, and global participation.

Propaganda further cemented the army's role as a cultural institution by crafting narratives that idealized its heroism and sacrifice. From 19th century newspapers that celebrated revolutionary victories to the posters and cinematic depictions of the Metaxas regime, the Greek Army was continually positioned as a guardian of national sovereignty and a beacon of patriotism. Ceremonies and rituals, such as military parades and funerals, institutionalized these narratives in public memory, transforming abstract ideals into collective experiences. Parades, for instance, synchronized national pride with state authority, while

commemorative practices reinforced the army's historical legitimacy.

Importantly, the study demonstrates how these representations worked in tandem to present the army not only as a physical force but also as a unifying symbol during periods of upheaval. Whether in moments of triumph, such as the Balkan Wars, or in the aftermath of tragedy, such as the Asia Minor Catastrophe, the army's cultural significance transcended its battlefield role. The rituals of mourning, memorialization, and celebration tied its image to the survival of the Greek state and the perseverance of its people.

This research advances the understanding of cultural history by positioning the Greek Army as a central figure in the construction of national identity, blending cultural analysis with military history. Existing studies have explored the political and operational dimensions of the Greek Army; however, this work delves into the cultural mechanisms that elevated the army to a symbolic institution. It demonstrates how visual, textual, and ritualistic representations intersected to create a powerful narrative that resonated across generations.

By analyzing the Greek Army through the lenses of symbolism, semiotics, and collective memory, the study contributes to the growing field of interdisciplinary research on nation-building. The findings emphasize that military institutions are not isolated from cultural processes but are deeply embedded within them, functioning as arenas where societal values, historical narratives, and political ideologies converge. This perspective enriches our understanding of how national identity is constructed and sustained through cultural artifacts, rituals, and representations.

Furthermore, this research situates the Greek Army within broader European and Mediterranean contexts, offering a unique lens to examine how Greece negotiated its historical and cultural distinctiveness while engaging with global and regional trends. The emphasis on classical and Byzantine imagery in Greek military representations, for example, sets the Greek case apart from other European nations, where modernity often overshadowed historical references. These insights deepen the comparative study of military representation, illustrating how cultural specificity shapes the symbolic power of the armed forces.

Appendix 1. Posters



World War II Propaganda
(Greek Office of Information, 1942)
Poster (24" X 32") "Greece Fights On,"
Edward McKnight Kauffer Artwork. War.



Greco-Italian War of 1940–41. Propaganda Poster
"Forward, children of Greece"
Chromolithography 0,7 x 1 m
National Historical Museum: No. 12000-34



Greek Armed Forces Vintage Poster: This poster features soldiers from antiquity to the 1821 revolution, highlighting the historical continuity and heroism of the Greek armed forces. It may have been used to evoke national pride during World War I.

«*Rejoice, oh rejoice, freedom*». It is a famous line from Dionysios Solomos' *Hymn to Liberty* (1823), the poem that later became the Greek national anthem



A Greek poster from the Greco-Italian War (c. 1940) depicts a revolutionary fighter (Armatolos) from the War of Independence of 1821, standing alongside an ancient Greek hoplite (marathon fighter), with a modern Greek soldier (Evzonos) resisting the Italian-German invasion at the center. The poster symbolizes the liberators of the nation and the continuity of Greek resistance and heroism across centuries. <https://x.com/propagandopolis/status/1605548001639833600/photo/1>



“*Long live October 28, 1940. The Greco-Italian war. The Giant Battle of the Straits of Klisoura and the utter defeat of the Italians*”. K.P.Karydis S.A.Piraeus: Agyra

2. Photos of Uniforms:



The Foustanella
From Military Uniform to Symbol of a Nation
<https://www.ekathimerini.com/culture>



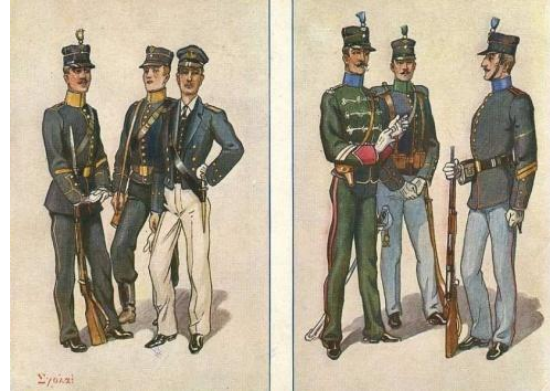
The Presidential Guard of the Evzones
at the Hellenic Parliament today
<https://www.protothema.gr/stories/article/1201421>



ΒΕΛΟΝΑΤΙΚΟΙ 1833 - 1851 ΟΠΑΙΤΑΙ

Uniforms of the Greek Army in the first period of King Otto's reign. Officers left, other ranks right.

<https://jenikirbyhistory.getarchive.net/>



Uniforms of the Military Schools of Greece. Postcard published by Aspiotis (1910)

<https://jenikirbyhistory.getarchive.net/>

3. Excerpts from Newspapers or Literature:

The collage features several historical documents. On the left is a page from the newspaper 'ΣΑΛΠΙΓΓΕ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ' (Hellenic Trumpet) with the date '1833-1851'. In the center is a page from 'ΑΝΕΞΑΡΤΗΤΟΣ ΕΦΗΜΕΡΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ' (Independent Newspaper of Greece) dated '1833-1851'. On the right is a page from 'ΓΕΝΙΚΗ ΕΦΗΜΕΡΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ' (General Newspaper of Greece) dated '1833-1851'. Below these is a postcard titled 'ΕΡΜΗΣ Ο ΛΟΓΙΟΣ' (Hermes the Scholar) published by Aspiotis in 1910, featuring an illustration of a man in a military-style uniform.

Newspapers: "Hellenic Trumpet", "Independent Newspaper of Greece", "Greek Chronicles", "General Newspaper of Greece", and the magazine "Hermes the Scholar" <https://library.parliament.gov.uk/>

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