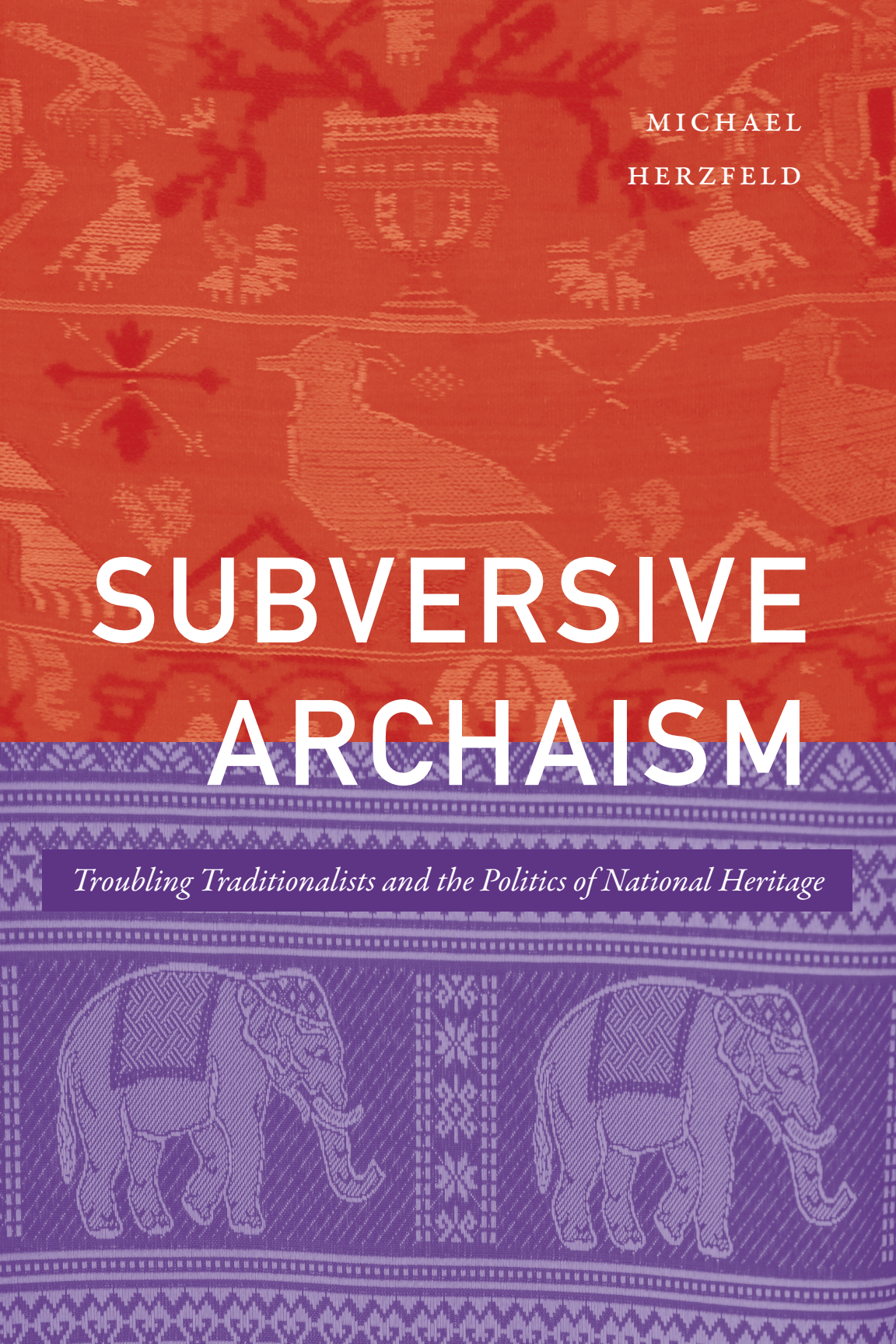
MICHAEL
HERZFELD
SUBVERSIVE
ARCHAISM
Troubling Traditionalists and the Politics of National Heritage

SUBVERSIVE ARCHAISM

THE LEWIS HENRY MORGAN LECTURES
presented at the University of Rochester

Rochester, New York

Duke University Press Durham and London 2021

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MICHAEL HERZFELD

DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞
Designed by Courtney Leigh Richardson
Typeset in Garamond Premier Pro and Din by
Westchester Publishing Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Herzfeld, Michael, [date] author.
Title: Subversive archaism : troubling traditionalists and the politics of national heritage / Michael Herzfeld.
Other titles: Lewis Henry Morgan lectures (Duke University Press)
Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2021. | Series: The Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2021012724 (print)
LCCN 2021012725 (ebook)
ISBN 9781478015000 (hardcover)
ISBN 9781478017622 (paperback)
ISBN 9781478022244 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Nation-state. | Nationalism—Social aspects. | National characteristics—Political aspects. | Authority—Social aspects. | Marginality, Social—Political aspects. | State crimes. | Political crimes and offenses—Greece—Crete. | Political crimes and offenses—Thailand—Bangkok. | BISAC: SOCIAL SCIENCE / Anthropology / Cultural & Social
Classification: LCC JZ1316.H47 2021 (print) | LCC JZ1316 (ebook) | DDC 322.4—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021012724
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021012725

This book is for
RAVINDRA K. JAIN,
anthropologist, guide, and friend,
my first graduate teacher in anthropology,
who taught me by example how to ask usefully awkward questions
and how to listen carefully to the answers.

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Preface and Acknowledgments

This book is based on the 2018 Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures, which I delivered at the University of Rochester, Rochester, New York, on 10–13 October. The invitation to give these lectures is a great honor and an extraordinary intellectual opportunity. Bob Foster, in conveying the invitation to me, requested that I look back on my earlier work, causing me to recall his generous 1999 invitation to serve as discussant on an American Anthropological Association panel about regional anthropologies. This book, which is based on the Morgan Lectures but has entailed considerable refinement of the argument, continues that commitment to a critical and comparative approach, grounded in local ethnography but alert to its entailment in wider, cross-regional dynamics.[1] It seems to have been my anthropological fate to end up, in two different countries, in tiny, obscure places that both became foci of spectacular conflict with hard-fisted state power.

In neither place was I expecting anything of the kind. In Crete, I thought I was going to study kinship and marriage, just as an obedient Oxford-trained anthropologist should. In Bangkok, I was seeking to understand the impact of historical restoration and conservation on local historical memory, a theme that I had explored in urban settings in both Greece and Italy.[2] In Crete, I instead ended up studying competitive masculinity and its relationship to the nation-state. And in Bangkok I found myself studying what initially seemed to be an unimportant community that then turned out to be a source of enormous aggravation to the municipal (and implicitly also the national) authorities; its predicament became an international cause célèbre—minimally if at all, let me hasten to add, as a result of my own intervention. The sad end of that community is also an illustration of what happens when an already hostile bureaucracy, restrained to some extent by the rules of the democratic game, passes into the rougher hands of a military dictatorship. In a society that treats virtue as innate and represented at its purest in the monarchy, marginal people—the poor, the provincial, migrants, and squatters—must also contend with implicit assumptions about their karmic predestination to failure. Such assumptions politically shore up the material causes of their marginality.[3] By comparison, the Cretan villagers were rather lucky. They live and participate in a lively

democracy, their village still exists, and today, with a charming blend of cheek and dignity, they forcefully rebut calumnies that represent them as un-Greek and cheerfully challenge voyeuristic tourists seeking the thrill of criminality. But neither story is a happy one.

For a long time I was puzzled by the Thai authorities' hostility toward the tiny Bangkok community. Its residents, though poor, were staunch royalists; although they tactically stood aside from the clashes between the so-called Yellow (conservative-royalist) and Red (pro-Thaksin leftist) Shirts, yellow shirts far outnumbered red in the residents' everyday dress. Given their political leanings, it was perhaps understandable that the left-populist government of Thaksin Shinawatra would be hostile; long before political violence flared on the streets, the residents had mostly appeared to be loyal to the conservative Democrat Party, although their allegiance was by no means stable. But that the military regime should so enthusiastically finish off a project of destruction that its own favorite bogey, Thaksin, had relentlessly pursued seemed counterintuitive—until I realized that the residents' cultural and political conservatism made their presence, as a self-constituted and self-regulating democratic polity in miniature, potentially embarrassing to the central authorities regardless of who was in charge of government.[4]

Related issues arose in the Cretan village. Gripped for years in the caressing armlock of astute political patrons from the largely pro-Western center-right of the parliamentary spectrum, patrons who happily exchanged access to basic resources for the bloc votes of large clans, the community also resented a larger and more influential neighbor's greater access to this patronage network.[5] The villagers also resented the simple necessity of playing the patronage game at all, seeing it as a violation of their formal and ethical rights as citizens. Having to bribe doctors to perform routine operations or promising votes in exchange for a hospital bed struck them as outrageous but unavoidable affronts to democratic principles. But they also knew how to work the system within the limits of their competition—and occasional cooperation—with their more powerful neighbor.

By the time I revisited the village in 2013, my earlier work about it, *The Poetics of Manhood*, had appeared in Greek. Shortly thereafter, in a television interview, I criticized the police action and the resulting and nationally uniform infamy suffered by the village.[6] The warm reception accorded by the villagers to both of these productions amplified an already embracing friendship and led easily to new field research.[7]

My gratitude to the people of both communities for accepting and even encouraging my interest at what were extremely difficult times for them is

enormous. I am greatly indebted to Harvard University's Asia Center and Weatherhead Center for International Affairs for financially supporting my research during the four years preceding the completion of this book. That research allowed me to look back critically on my earlier work, an aspect of the book that has also necessitated an embarrassingly heavy burden of self-citation; in mitigation, I suggest that the citations do at least save the reader from a much longer volume![8] At the same time, I have been greatly inspired by many other scholars' research; I especially thank Bronwyn Isaacs and Trude Renwick for their willingness to let me cite their unpublished but extremely important and interesting findings. Phill Wilcox was graciously willing to do the same with her doctoral thesis, but happily it has meanwhile been transformed into a book and is cited in that form. Warm appreciation goes to the organizers of the events held around the 2018 Morgan Lectures at the University of Rochester, Robert Foster and Daniel Reichman, who co-chaired the entire event and provided hospitable intellectual leadership and inspiration, splendidly backed up by their colleagues Kristin Doughty, Kathryn Mariner, John Osburg, and Llerena Searle. The indefatigable Donna Mero ably managed all those practicalities that abound at such moments. I am deeply grateful to my five discussants (Katherine Bowie, Douglas Holmes, Andrew Alan Johnson, Deborah E. Reed-Danahay, and Thomas Gibson) for combining incisive critique with kindly understanding of my conceptual confusions and to the six Morgan Fellows (Chuan Hao [Alex] Chen, Zebulon Dingley, Rocío Gil, Kelly Mulvaney, Emiko Stock, and Courtney Wittekind). They all brought usefully provocative responses to my emergent ideas. Four others later added generous and helpful comments: Naor Ben-Yehoyada, Giuseppe Bolotta, Gregory Feldman, and Konstantinos Kalantzis. The manuscript also benefited greatly from the anonymous reports solicited by Duke University Press. At the press itself, Ken Wissoker's warm enthusiasm for this project has been matched at various stages in the book's preparation and production by the meticulous collaboration of Jena Gaines, Ellen Goldlust, Kate Herman, Lisl Hampton, and Joshua Gutterman Tranen. I was accompanied to Rochester—and throughout much of the fieldwork in both locations—by my partner, Cornelia (Nea) Mayer Herzfeld, whose subsequent critical reading of this work brought clarity and focus and whose skilled blend of provocation and support is the glow that pervades my life and writing.

Foreword

ROBERT J. FOSTER AND DANIEL R. REICHMAN

CO-DIRECTORS, LEWIS HENRY MORGAN LECTURE SERIES

Michael Herzfeld delivered the Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures at the University of Rochester in October 2018, continuing an annual tradition that began in 1963 with Meyer Fortes's inaugural lectures on kinship and the social order. Professor Herzfeld presented a public lecture on the evening of 10 October and it was followed by a daylong workshop during which members of the Department of Anthropology and invited experts discussed several draft chapters of the manuscript that became this book. Formal discussants included Katherine Bowie (University of Wisconsin), Thomas Gibson (University of Rochester), Douglas Holmes (Binghamton University), Andrew Alan Johnson (Princeton University), and Deborah E. Reed-Danahay (the University at Buffalo).

Herzfeld offers a fresh take on a familiar question: Does the hyphen in *nation-state* separate or join the two words? This question points toward the historical contingency of nation-state formation—to nation building or nation making as a never-completed process. Over the past two generations, scholars of the nation-state have accordingly turned their attention to struggles between state agents and their various rivals to control the narrative of nationhood on which the legitimacy of the state rests. The capacity to represent, in all senses, the people who comprise the nation presumes control over this narrative, which defines the character and heritage of a discrete and distinctive collectivity.

Herzfeld's notion of subversive archaism directs our attention elsewhere. What if the struggle does not mainly concern the definition of the nation but rather the political structure in which the nation is embedded? That is, what if the challenge to the state's legitimacy focuses on the nation-state itself as a peculiar form of polity rather than on any particular narrative of nationhood or definition of *ethnos*? And what if the challenge, moreover, appeals to a vision

of polity regarded as an older and more homegrown alternative to the liberal bureaucratic state?

The original title for the Morgan Lecture event in Rochester was "What Is a Polity?" While that title has changed, Herzfeld pursues this inquiry throughout this book, laying out the high intellectual and deep ethical stakes involved. What, indeed, is a polity? In answering this question, Herzfeld exposes the underpinnings of the modern nation-state by examining challenges to state sovereignty that emerge from other meaningful "forms of social aggregation." Ethnographically, the book focuses on two of Herzfeld's long-standing areas of expertise—Greece and Thailand—but there is no doubt that his arguments have comparative implications for people and places around the world.

Herzfeld's detailed and sensitive comparison of the fates of two small communities suggests that the challenge of subversive archaism is as serious as it is, on the face of it, improbable. The Cretan village of Zoniana, with its segmentary clan system, and the Bangkok enclave of Pom Mahakan, the materialization of the kingly Siamese cosmopolity (*moeang*), both arouse what Herzfeld terms an "anxiety of unmodernity" among the bourgeois bureaucrats of their respective nation-states. These communities are inconvenient relics of what he describes as "a different ethos and a different age," constant and uncomfortable reminders of "the historical fragility of the very idea of the nation-state." While they might serve the state now and then as a useful internal Other against which a unified modern nation can be mobilized, their moral claims present an irreducible affront to the state's legitimacy. As a result, they live dangerously. Circumstances of political and economic change, such as the ones Herzfeld describes in this book, can trigger violent state actions to bring these alternative polities in line with the prevailing global model of an imagined national community.

Through the concept of subversive archaism, Herzfeld develops a theory of social movements in which people resist the power of the bureaucratic state by strongly identifying with the state's dominant traditions, ideals, and values. Rather than challenging state power from the outside, subversive archaists consciously (sometimes aggressively) claim membership in the "authentic" national community to resist bureaucratic incursions on their lives and livelihoods. In so doing, they assert, as Herzfeld phrases their attitude, that the state "is not the only acceptable or most venerable form of polity." Following the lead of his Zoniani and Chao Pom interlocutors, Herzfeld advises us to expand the meaning of polity beyond that of a formal structure of governance to include a way of life or mode of social existence: "the consensual community reached by people acting with full awareness of constructing a distinctive social environment." The

polity is thus an "ethical space," sometimes evanescent, entailing certain forms of urbanity and civility; it is as much cosmological as political.

Herzfeld's inquiry recalls that of Lewis Henry Morgan in the nineteenth century into the relationship between forms of governance and the forms of urbanity and civility they encompass. Morgan set out to understand the emergence of the territorial nation-state through a social evolutionist lens, tracing the origins of the state (he called it *political society*) as it replaced kin-based social orders, which he called *gentile society*. In *Ancient Society* (1877) he argued that the territorial nation-state emerged historically from societies that were ordered by membership in clans (*gens*), phratries, and tribes. As private property and urban settlements began to develop, "government upon territory and upon property" replaced government of "aggregates of persons" (272). Morgan looked to the ancient Athenian polis to find his own answer to the question "What is a polity?" It is only fitting that Herzfeld begins to answer this question through an ethnography of modern Greece, where tensions between the *politia*, the police, and the people often hinge on the power of bureaucratic rule of law versus personalistic attachments to localities and kin groups. Harkening back to Morgan's discussion of the Greek patrilineal clan or gens, Herzfeld notes that the residents of the village of Zoniana in Crete continue to use the term *yenia* for patriline.

This is of course not to say that Morgan's evolutionist conclusions hold any weight today. The very forms of urbanity and civility that Morgan celebrated as *progress*—the manners and mores of "civilization"—are what Herzfeld's subversive archaists contest or reject outright. In Bangkok, the informal urban community of Pom Mahakan resisted eviction by the Thai state by invoking state-sanctioned traditionalism and norms of upstanding citizenship. They asserted their identity as authentic and respectful Thai citizens in order to avoid being trampled on the path to progress, emphasizing their autochthonous origins and the historical continuity of their settlement. Ultimately, they failed. In Crete, residents of no-longer-remote Zoniana dealt more successfully with attempts by police to curtail sheep stealing and subsequently the illicit cultivation of cannabis by some villagers, although one violent episode in 2007 brought the armed force of the Greek state down on the whole village. Zoniani asserted their autonomy by appealing to nationalistic ideas of roguish masculinity, heroic rebellion against authority, and pride in enduring local and quintessentially Greek traditions. In both of these cases, subversive archaism counteracts marginalization by making claims to cultural centrality.

Ethnography from around the world has shown how the territorial nation-state is under stress. Centrifugal forces of globalization and transnational

capitalism pull outward at the boundaries of state and society, while the centripetal forces of populist ethnonationalism and myriad localisms pull inward. As Herzfeld's work brilliantly demonstrates, comparative ethnography can help us understand both the particularities and the commonalities of this phenomenon as it is experienced by people in very different historical and cultural situations. Not all subversive challenges to the nation-state that appeal to heritage imply an attractive alternative polity; some, like the neo-Nazi groups of Europe, are decidedly uncivil and manifestly racist. In both Zoniana and Pom Mahakan, however, people asserted their right to exist as a moral community—to something more than the rights of the sovereign individual. While bureaucratic states continually attempt to encompass these forms of sociality, local people reach back into the past in order to authorize their claims on the future. Morgan, who looked to ancient societies as inspirations for a more democratic future, would have understood.

1. THE NATION-STATE OUTRAGED

Subversion at the Heart of the Nation-State

In the grand sweep of human history, the nation-state is a newcomer to the galaxy of social arrangements. Nevertheless, it has achieved global supremacy. Even though it is now facing competition and infiltration by corporate financial powers, it has already successfully broken the back of most forms of social aggregation at any level higher than that of the nuclear family.

In this success, however, lurks an ever-present danger. The nation-state is built on foundations that are antithetical to its design, its official ideology, and the way in which it operates. Although it has always presented itself as a centralized and unified entity, numerous suprafamilial social arrangements, ranging from the extended family household to the large organized clan as well as regional separatist movements, threaten its stability from within. Those fractures are especially visible to anthropologists who, through intimate interactions in local communities, encounter perspectives that are invisible (or simply unacceptable) to those at the apex of state power. In a world increasingly inundated with talk about heritage, these local complexities often appear in the form of stories and attitudes that contest official renditions of heritage and commandeer official language for very different representations of the past.

The state's problem lies in the history of its own emergence from revolt and warfare. Nation-states typically produce official narratives emphasizing cultural, social, economic, and political harmony and unity. They deploy an array of carefully selected, emblematic cultural products, collectively dubbed *heritage*, as legitimating evidence of the nation's deep past and as a mark of the state's benign tutelage. Yet many states today are conspicuously lacking in harmony. Multiple levels of potential and actual factionalism challenge the

rhetoric of national unity. Anthropologically well-documented accounts of these dynamics concern Jordan, Libya, and South Sudan.[1] By contrast, many older nation-states, especially in Europe, have more or less successfully buried the external markers of historical conflict in top-down historical narratives. Yet even their triumphal stories rest on unstable ground. The emergence of rightist populists claiming to be adhering to "tradition," "heritage," and, in the United States, "strict constitutionalism" and the "right to bear arms" suggests the persistent resilience of a slumbering but powerful volcano. The nation-state, for its part, cannot simply ignore or shut down such outbursts of traditionalism, because to do so puts its own legitimacy (and its revolutionary credentials) in question. Most nation-states therefore survive in part by allowing a measure of play to such inconvenient forms of heritage and culture.

These potentially awkward traits usually appear as officially prohibited but pragmatically licensed naughtiness, concealed within what I call *cultural intimacy*: the space of those cultural traits deemed embarrassing in larger (and especially international) public contexts but evoking "rueful self-recognition" and companionable familiarity among complicit insiders.[2] Benedict Anderson famously argued that nationalism drew its strength from the promise of collective immortality. But this is only half the story—the half the official state narrates.[3] The other half is represented by the lawbreakers. For the most part, the nation-state draws its resilience from a measure of permissiveness with regard to relatively minor but commonplace infractions of law, and most bureaucrats recognize and deal with that reality every day of their working lives.

Arguably, no nation-state can exist for long without that built-in tolerance. Officials often look the other way when minor infractions or unseemly behavior remain relatively discreet but will not countenance anything that too brazenly challenges their moral authority.[4] When a Tea Party insurrection turns into a well-organized militia, or when an eccentrically disobedient cleric's challenge to the state's religious orthodoxy gathers adoring crowds, it is high time for the bureaucracy to be alarmed. States may be more tolerant of tax evasion or unlicensed gun-toting than they are of well-organized challenges to official cultural doctrine.

The threat to the nation-state is that of an insubordinate "way of knowing and seeing"—and using—national heritage.[5] Heritage commonly first appears as a state-generated discourse. Nation-states invest enormous resources in constructing a homogeneous repertoire of collective heritage, which functions as a palpable, ubiquitous representation of national unity. Museums, theatrical displays, music and dance repertoires, and a stream of explanatory rhetoric all conduce to its factitious uniformity. But that is where the state faces its greatest

internal vulnerability. In ransacking vernacular sources, the state risks a knowledgeable local rejection of its totalizing interpretations. Traditionalizing citizens may challenge the bureaucrats' self-ascribed cultural authority.

That may not in itself explain why bureaucrats sometimes respond with disproportionate violence. But it does explain why traditionalism alone does not suffice to protect communities when, for whatever ostensible reason, the bureaucrats decide to use force. Bureaucrats conventionally see themselves as embodiments and agents of modernity, and thus of a rationality they (wrongly) assume to be universal. Why, they wonder, can these absurdly retrograde citizens not understand that their customs are disgusting, archaic, and impediments to progress? Why do these throwbacks persist in holding the nation back, both internally and in the eyes of the world, with their defiance of the law and their persistent harping on the antiquity of local traditions? Why do they reject a modernity that could liberate them from unhygienic living, grinding work, and lifestyles that mire them in a dilapidated past? Why do they not gratefully accept the state's firm guidance on the evolutionary path to development?[6] And why are those wretched anthropologists so intent on encouraging them in their antiquated ways and even in their defiance of legal authority?

Such attitudes are common throughout the world. They are usually expressed as irritation, frustration, and petty acts of spite, and occasionally erupt in headline-catching confrontations. But they rarely result in massive violence. In this book, however, I am concerned with those rarer cases where violence ensues, and especially where at least some of that violence is conducted by state agents. The violence highlights stakes that may not emerge so clearly in less dramatic contestations. By offering a comparison between seemingly very dissimilar cases, I also propose to discommode the universalizing language of heritage.[7] Local groups with distinctive cultural styles reveal the liability that the nation-state accepts in deploying the concept of heritage as its conceptual banner. Rebellious citizens can point to historical antecedents in their local cultural heritage that not only are older than the state itself but also represent alternatives to its disciplined modernity.

Violent responses expose the fragility and contingency of the state's cultural claims. They usually occur in contexts where other factors—unhelpful publicity, shifts in political patronage, unlawful activities by some community members, sudden moves by a few local hotheads—precipitate confrontation. They end with humiliation and, in extreme cases, destruction. They also bring the nation-state's problem into clearer focus: how to assimilate rebellious holdouts who challenge the state's right to impose uniform law and order and to define and represent the national culture? A comparison of cases will show why the

state does not always welcome citizen-generated traditionalism and indeed, on occasion, tries to discredit and destroy it.

Merely One among Many: The Nation-State as a Variety of Polity

The global ubiquity of nation-states creates the illusion, backed by their rhetoric, of absolute permanence. The rhetoric, however, is often belied by historical experience, while the coherence of state authority is repeatedly undermined by the necessity of reconciling contradictions among its laws and by the pragmatic cynicism of everyday bureaucratic and political practice. When formal arrangements break down in smaller or weaker states, more powerful states pounce, crying, "Corruption! Failed state!" In so doing, they—unintentionally, we may assume—reveal the historical fragility of the very idea of the nation-state.

The claims of the nation-state to eternity and universality parallel the very similar claims of European logic and rationality described by Stanley J. Tambiah in his Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures.[8] Typified by Weber's view of the bureaucratic state as the ultimate incarnation of that rationality, these claims are themselves the paradoxical signs of a narrowly European and colonial source.[9] A child of Victorian evolutionism and of European global colonialism, the modern nation-state has always sought to present itself as the logical culmination of political development. The recent acceleration of information flow, however, has fostered increasing speculation about possible alternatives.[10] If universal literacy and print capitalism enabled the rise of nationalism, as Benedict Anderson argued, their current electronic incarnations now undermine the nation-state's pretensions to permanence and permit the resuscitation of older political visions.[11]

Political formations do not necessarily disappear even when they seem to have been displaced. Whereas some authors (notably James C. Scott) have viewed these upsurges of older identities as always egalitarian and often threatened with extinction, there are exceptions.[12] Such cases sometimes exist in a tense symbiosis with the nation-state, which they eventually transform and which they often strip down for some of its more attractive accessories.[13]

I focus primarily on examples from Thailand and Greece. In addition to partially shared relations with colonialism, there are, as Scott has pointed out, similarities between the relations linking mountain-dwelling farmers and pastoralists with the urban and coastal centers of state government in both Southeast Asia and the Mediterranean.[14] I hope, however, that the ethnographic cases will allow us to move beyond any hint of geographical or environmental determinism and will provide a broader vision of how alternatives to the

nation-state emerge from the shadows of the past. A further issue concerns the romantic appeal of resistance to the state, since that romance—or at least its precursor in struggles for national redemption—is part of the state's self-vision. For Pierre Clastres, "archaic" societies often lack the economic greed and hierarchical structures of modern industrial society. He and Scott both offer genuinely romantic visions of what a society could be without the economic interests that dominate our own.[15] Both positions consequently suffer from a too-easy binarism of tribal and nomadic versus urban and sedentary, thereby ironically reproducing the colonial logic that ruthlessly marginalized virtually all such social groups in political reality and, as Johannes Fabian points out, in the anthropological imagination as well.[16]

Clastres and Scott have admirably increased awareness about both the brutality of domination and the possibility of an alternative political ethics. But mention of their work sets the stage, in contrastive fashion, for my chosen focus on something related but different: the proactive, agentive, and often astute production of an idiom of social and cultural archaism for explicitly political ends within the framework of national identity.

Subversive Archaists and the Nation-State

The subversive archaists of this book are not "insurgent citizens" in James Holston's sense of people seeking a collective identity outside that of the nation-state and rejecting the myths in which national identity is grounded.[17] Far from being Scott's perpetual refugees from civilization and literacy, moreover, they often display an impressive command of official rhetoric, heritage-speak, and bureaucratic formalism. Nor are they ideological anarchists—"the most misunderstood and vilified of political actors"—or Luddites.[18] They do not constitute revolutionary movements. They represent recursive eruptions of ideologies and practices that may, as in some populist movements, be radically conservative.[19] They look remarkably like what they oppose. Above all, they do not spurn the trappings of national heritage. On the contrary, they exceed the traditionalism of the state. They are intensely loyal to the nations of which they are members, and they are often the first to volunteer their lives for national causes. They try to work with the state, or to infiltrate it, and they are hurt when the state rejects their advances.

Their often intense loyalty does not make them less annoying to those in power. Take, for example, the "whiskered lunatics" of Lawrence Durrell's disparaging account: warlike men willing to sail in puny boats from Crete and Rhodes to join the national independence struggle in Cyprus.[20] Such men, for

whom state bureaucrats have no more patience than the British novelist contemplating the chaotic decay of imperial rule, do not patiently wait to be called up. They claim to know better how to *be* loyal members of the nation than do the pen-pushers ordering others to sacrifice their lives. They fight the state's modernism with self-conscious and aggressive displays of loyalty to national ideals, traditions, and history; their traditionalism—as also, in many cases, their dramatic masculinity—both amplifies and parodies official representations of national heritage. We will meet some of them again in these pages.

Subversive archaists do sometimes take up arms, although their predilection for violence is also often exaggerated or misrepresented. In one of the two principal cases, a democratic state—Greece—was dealing with a place where a police officer lost his life and where frequent blood feuds titillate the sensationalist national press and challenge the state's monopoly of retributive justice. The other state, Thailand under a military-controlled government, faced resistance that was not violent but was nevertheless far from passive. The Thai authorities countered the community's claims to represent national tradition and heritage by accusing it of generic turpitude despite strong evidence to the contrary. In both cases, carefully articulated campaigns of vilification presaged a resolute intent to break the archaists' will.

A Global Range of Cases

Perhaps the most famous example of subversive archaism, one in which bureaucrats have often suffered humiliating failure or been caught in embarrassing complicity, is the phenomenon known in Italy as *mafia*. While there is some question about the historical accuracy of treating mafia as an organization, or even as a loose constellation of organizations, *mafiosi* are unquestionably real people and recognized as such, and they have proved highly adept at playing the state at its own rhetorical games.

The seemingly unending confrontation with Italian state power has precipitated a pattern of disrespect for central authority articulated as the localist ideology of "Sicilianism." *Sicilianismo*, which elevates the mafia code to the status of a morally justified alternative to state law, nicely illustrates subversive archaism. It provided a convenient culturalist defense of mafia activity past and present.[21] It purports to justify insubordination against officialdom in the name of cultural purity and pragmatically translates into conspiracies of silence even among those who oppose the activities of the mafiosi.[22]

Italy, with its locally celebrated tradition of compromise between law and social reality, offers many other opportunities for subversive archaism. Tradition

justifies all, as when a former *malavitoso* (underworld thug) in Rome told me in a hurt voice that he and his mates were simply misunderstood defenders of the (archaic) values that led them to protect women from harassment in their district.[23] Italian officials and subversive archaists often engage in forms of complicity that have become a tradition in themselves. The intricate reciprocities between Italian politicians and Sicilian mafiosi, for example, often long defer official reprisals.

Mafia criminality is nevertheless abhorrent to much of the Italian population, especially middle-class urbanites in the northern and central areas, as well as to the local anti-mafia movement.[24] That the state has reacted with reciprocal violence is less surprising than that this response was so long deferred, especially when we consider the Italian state's decades-long feud with alleged bandits in Sardinia. But the delay itself reflects the complex reciprocities in which state actors and subversive archaists are sometimes entangled.

Both sides deny that mutuality, as they do their often-shared historical roots. Under-the-table dealings with lawbreakers are to present-day administrators what local defiance of the state in defense of religious or cultural freedom is to the creators of official national history. Attempts to revive historical examples of such defiance are potentially no less embarrassing to the state than the evidence of present-day collusion between officials and citizens. In the United States, the Branch Davidians who made a fatal last stand at Waco, Texas, were the recent embodiment of a lineage that stretches back to the emergence of the Church of Latter-Day Saints and even earlier—indeed, one could argue, to the emergence of the United States as a refuge from the religious authoritarianism of British colonial rule. Such histories recall elements of subversive archaism in the early history of the state itself. The violence conducted against these rebellious elements by the federal authorities certainly threw plentiful fuel on the already raging fires of antistate militancy and the white supremacism that lay at its core and that the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on 6 January 2021 laid bare.[25] Those more consistently violent movements, to which I shall briefly return in the final chapter, do not themselves fit the model of subversive archaism, but they can easily exploit the excessive use of state force against subversive archaists to galvanize support for their own far less sympathetic causes.

We should consider a wide range of groups within this larger exploratory frame without conflating the diversity of their ideologies and practices in a single caricature: armed communities in the western mountains of the United States, the Old Calendarists who form obstinate and often persecuted minorities in Eastern Orthodox Christian nations, the Gush Emunim settlers whose fiery

Jewish orthodoxy and rejection of the secular state provoked a leftist Israeli government to destroy their settlements as illegal.[26] Many, but not all, are religious fundamentalists who accuse the state of sacrilege—a particularly wounding charge, given many states' self-representation as earthly manifestations of a divinely ordained and redemptive destiny.

Where the state is officially atheist, its heritage conservation policies often repressively treat all religious relics and practices as "culture." To the Chinese authorities, for example, groups like Falun Gong represent a potent threat to secular authority. The popularity of their appeal to an archaic meditational practice, *qigong*, a rhythmic exercise in breath and body control, signals more than mere rebellion or even revolution. It suggests an archaism that is inconsistent with the scientistic and modernist qigong adopted by the Chinese state; it also stands in dramatic contrast to the bodily regimentation that Susan Brownell has documented so well in her study of Chinese sports practices.[27] If we look at Chinese anger over Taiwan, moreover, we see a similar rejection of what is a self-traditionalizing entity.[28] The mainland authorities refuse to recognize Taiwan as a nation-state, which adds insult to the injury of its successful heritage program by insinuating that it is not, in fact, a Chinese state but a Taiwanese one, all the while exhibiting a Chineseness that looks more traditional than much of what is on show in the mainland. There, many cultural treasures were pillaged by the retreating Nationalist troops and are now on display in Taiwan; much that was left behind was destroyed later in the Cultural Revolution.

The state confronts serious risk when it attacks subversive archaists. Overkill can have negative and long-lasting repercussions. The state therefore usually prepares its ground well, beginning with a carefully orchestrated attack on the archaists' collective reputation. (China's long propaganda war against Taiwanese separatism may thus have ominous implications for the island's future.) Bureaucrats may feel that subversive archaists are daring them to attack. Archaists sometimes reckon that state officials can indeed be provoked into actions that cast doubt on state claims to represent national virtue. Their risk nevertheless exceeds that faced by the state, which is stronger and owns more effective means of mayhem.

Some cases concern minority populations whose claims to greater antiquity are a source of tension not only with their national government but also with the ethnic majority in general. Such a situation arose in the island zone of Soqotra, in Yemen, studied by Nathalie Peutz.[29] The Soqotrans aggressively championed their heritage as distinct from that of the rest of the country. Here,

however, while the official response entailed a great deal of violence, that violence must be read in the context of a complex civil war. The Soqotrans are speakers of a minority language. Even as their national government attempts to engage UNESCO in the process of monumental conservation, it is losing much of its patrimony to the ravages of ongoing conflict. The Soqotrans, relatively unimportant geopolitically, are concerned that what they regard as their unique heritage counts for nothing in the eyes of any of the forces contending for power in Yemen today.

In one important respect, they resemble other communities that practice subversive archaism. In a world in which the possession of heritage has become a global key to recognition, they champion their distinctive traditions against the special interests of all the major warring factions. Heritage can be a two-edged sword—a prized possession expressive of national unity, but also the (highly vulnerable) target for the state's intolerance of internal difference. Peutz does indicate that the Soqotrans were often careful to disguise their opposition to the state, although it seems that this diffidence has waned in recent years as the Yemeni state itself became ever more deeply mired in disaster.[30]

The Soqotrans have had to deal with an official as well as a foreign view of their habitat as remote and inhospitable. They see themselves as the victims of a government that does not appreciate their hospitality toward the state's representatives, which the latter fully understand as a symbolic but meaningful inversion of the bureaucrats' greater power. The Soqotrans are Yemeni citizens; yet they can appeal to an antiquity that both differentiates them from other Yemenis and offers an alternative to the antiquarian claims of the nation-state.

In particular, the Soqotrans' adherence to a patrilineal clan structure was dismissed by their socialist critics as "tribalism." It was later reinstated under the Saleh regime, which also then attempted to build ties of patronage with the clans in what looked distinctly like a reversion to the social values and practices that had been displaced by the modernist-socialist state.[31] In this way, the Soqotrans suddenly found themselves in an unexpectedly advantageous position, having been encouraged by the Saleh regime to join it in strategically deploying tradition against what was left of the modernist establishment. Theirs was thus arguably, at least for a brief while, a case of *successful* subversive archaism. Their clever exploitation of ecological discourse against the state's more conventional environmentalism, moreover, recalls—but also inverts—the views of shepherds in the Sardinian village of Orgosolo; the Orgolesi (people of Orgosolo) challenge state environmentalism while representing their long-standing pastoral practices as an alternative way of respecting nature.[32]

Subversion and Complicity

The Soqotra case represents a middle ground of sorts between the subversive archaism that ultimately invites violent repression and situations in which a state may actively depend on (or at least draw benefit from the presence of) those archaists. Collusion between local outlaws and the state occurs especially when it does not take overtly organized form; unlike political patron-client collaboration, this more diffuse collusion rests on shared ideological interests rather than on reciprocal favor-trading. Notably in this regard, Fiona Greenland has shown how tomb robbers (*tombaroli*) in Italy have been engaged in long-term complicity with the Italian state in claiming that anything that comes out of the Italian soil is by definition part of Italy's heritage.[33]

The tombaroli have one distinct advantage. Unlike the bureaucrats, they can claim an embodied relationship with the very soil of the nation. Their vivid accounts of moist, earthy underground prowling gain an affectionate hearing in the culturally intimate spaces of Italian life.[34] The authorities can arrest individuals for specific offenses, but an all-out onslaught on the tombaroli could easily end in public disgust, undermining the state's popular entitlement to a share of the chthonic authority attached to all antiquities recovered from Italian soil.

State actors have excellent reason to conceal their connivance at technically illegal practices. Early in my fieldwork in the Cretan mountains, I heard from a shepherd, locally notorious for his own sheep-stealing skills, that a distinguished politician was meeting shepherds in the district capital to strategize the acquittal of their kinsmen accused of theft by bribing witnesses to retract their testimony.[35] This same politician was vociferous in his public demands for the suppression of animal theft. In 1993, he called on the Minister of the Interior to ask what measures had been taken against criminal activity in the prefecture. In a letter to a local newspaper, one commentator, after ironically wondering whether the politician and he lived on the same planet and insisting that the criminals were "'local produce' and most of them already known," observed that "no one regards any citizens as *a priori* guilty, because, the way things are now, no individual or official body dares regard anyone as a suspect, since those who are suspected [of crimes] enjoy a well-known and unexceptionable protection."[36]

The politician's distinguished career ended in disgrace when he was betrayed—a very unusual event in the tight and secretive societies of mountain Crete—after performing the same favor for someone accused of cultivating cannabis, by allegedly pressuring two police officers to withdraw their testimony. His fall lent credibility to a widespread assumption that those who publicly

attacked such collusion were often, as in his case, its most culpable practitioners. It also cast an interesting light on the temptations to which such powerful politicians were exposing police officers. It triggered a shift in the balance of political power in western Crete, contributing, together with increasing revulsion against political corruption at the national level, to a general weakening (or at least muting) of local patron-client arrangements.

Subversive archaism plays on discourses of culture rather than on explicit forms of political authority, although relations with patrons may be framed as resting on traditional values. Subversive archaists often emphasize, and sometimes exaggerate, cultural traits now largely obliterated or rendered illegal by modernization. Such traits can take the form of dress codes, speech forms, performances of particular types of music and drama, and rituals associated with vernacular religious practices; they may also include the bearing and use of weapons, ritualized theft, bride abduction, and strict laws of vengeance. Not all such gesticulations of cultural autonomy result in mayhem, and many are ignored as irrelevant to the modern nation-state or are fossilized by the official museum and folklore research machinery. But in a few extreme cases they can be spectacularly represented as unacceptable wrongdoing. This framing can generate a potentially unhealthy or condescending interest on the part of the general public (violence voyeurism and "slum tourism"). It can also lead to spectacular repression.

Subversive archaism does not have a single political color. It is also not usefully conflated with populism, although there are certainly areas of overlap. Subversive archaists do not necessarily reject expertise, as so many populists do; indeed, they often depend on experts—historians, anthropologists, archaeologists—to validate their readings of history. In those readings, they, too, become experts of a kind; again, some of the more articulate tombaroli exemplify this vernacularized expertise.[37] They may deliberately avoid attaching themselves to a currently popular bandwagon or mass movement.[38] Their insubordination is not so much an uprising of disaffected citizens as it is a claim on privileged authenticity—a claim that does not always charm the entire citizen body and certainly does not appeal to its bourgeois leadership.

Historical Continuities and Subversive Archaism in Greece and Thailand

My two principal cases concern communities, one in Greece and the other in Thailand, where I have conducted ethnographic fieldwork over long periods of time. Viewed through the usual lens of area studies, Greece and Thailand seem

decidedly dissimilar. They do, however, share one important feature of political history. Neither country was officially colonized by Western states, but both were constantly under pressure to conform to Western demands, demands that were cultural as well as political and economic. I call the indirect but often humiliating domination of these states "crypto-colonialism." Not all subversive archaism occurs in crypto-colonial states, but the bad odor of colonial interference in those states opens their cultural bureaucracies to criticism as bearers of foreign values and as agents of foreign interference.

All official history involves conceptual airbrushing; Greek and Thai national narratives illustrate this proclivity well. Their common ground is a principle of continuity, carefully constructed against evidence of more complex origins. Greek official historiography emphasizes a principle of "unbroken continuity" (*adhiaspasti sinekhia*) with the classical past, conserved during nearly two millennia of Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman rule. For decades following the Greek War of Independence (1821–43), Greek scholars largely discounted the relevance to modern Greek identity of any cultural elements—Slavic, Turkish, Arab, or Albanian, or even western European—that threatened to disrupt the smooth surface of that paradigm. Their mortal enemy was Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer (1790–1861), a nineteenth-century pan-Germanist ideologue who, fearing that an Orthodox Christian anti-Ottoman alliance led by Russia would threaten German dreams of unity and independence, sought to weaken Greece's international standing. He argued that today's Greeks were largely of Slavic and Albanian stock.[39] An entire ethnological industry was marshaled to counter his claims; for any foreign scholar to be called "a Fallmerayer" remains a mark of Cain to this day. The imposition of a German king (the Bavarian Prince Otto) by the colonial powers in 1832 added to Greek resentment of foreign (especially German) interference.

The official model of Thai continuity is starkly different. It is, by contrast, centered on kingship—specifically, the ideal of the virtuous king or *thammarat* (Sanskrit *dharma raja*).[40] Despite variations over time, that concept is underwritten by a total identification of the kingship with Buddhism, a relationship now presented as unchanging but historically often adjusted to meet the demands of a modernized religious establishment.[41] It presents the current (Chakri) dynasty, which begins in 1782, as the culmination of a much longer sweep of time. Where Greek continuity rests on the premise of shared cultural (and implicitly genetic) roots, Thai continuity is retrospectively underwritten instead by a sacralized kingship. Abrupt internal changes in the present dynasty are rendered insignificant by the practice of naming each king "Rama," thereby representing them all as embodying an unchanging divinity.[42]

Official historiography thus airbrushes inconvenient exceptions and ruptures out of the narrative of continuity. In Thailand, that process not only smooths over intradynastic difficulties, sometimes even reversing official pronouncements; it also harmoniously sutures the current dynasty with its predecessors.[43] Few pre-Chakri monarchs are mentioned by name in official narratives (exemplified in the National Museum in Bangkok); the violent royal contests for power never mar the image of serene kingship.[44] Instead, limpid continuity supervenes. Notably, King Taksin, who was killed by the first Chakri ruler in the latter's power grab, is today commemorated in statuary and text as an important precursor. Such violent disruptions of the earthly kingdom in no way perturb the serene cosmology that has long treated usurpers and reprobates as legitimate wielders of power; their legitimacy historically lay, and perhaps still lies, in their status as reincarnations of deity, but could also be rehistoricized by claiming genealogical continuity with those they had overthrown.[45]

In a move to push the continuity still further back, the official narrative credits a thirteenth-century king, Ramkhamhaeng, with the invention of the Thai writing system. When a Thai and a British scholar questioned the authenticity of a stele purporting to represent Ramkhamhaeng's edicts in the earliest surviving example of Thai writing, they narrowly escaped prosecution for offending the monarchy. Such charges are probably the closest Thai equivalent to being called a "Fallmerayer" in Greece.[46]

Most scholarly opinion today views the inscription as probably genuine. Historian David Wyatt remarked that "to forge it would have required the skills of the greatest linguist the world has known [so] it is better to regard it as genuine."[47] But the debate is mainly interesting, as Craig Reynolds notes, for its political implications.[48]

Much was at stake. The stele appeared to confirm the monarchy as the bearer of cultural continuity, backgrounding the multiple ruptures between the older Siamese polity and today's ethnonationalist Thai state. Treating King Taksin as a precursor belongs to the same narrative subterfuge. That strategy, however, has sometimes backfired. During the Red Shirt uprisings, demonstrators made liberal use of the similarity of Taksin's name with that of the fallen populist prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra; some even suggested that Thaksin was Taksin's revenant ghost, seeking revenge for his death at the hands of the Chakri kings—an effective piece of subversive archaism in its own right.[49] Yet the artful removal of conflict from the imagined history of seamless monarchical continuity has been so repressive that as recently as 2015 the Bank of Thailand introduced a new 100-baht note with an image, on the reverse side, of none other than King Taksin.[50]

Sometimes the airbrushing takes dramatic form. While a military revolution in 1932 is officially recognized as the end of the absolute monarchy, the disappearance of a famous commemorative plaque—preceded by the secret removal of closed-circuit cameras by the city authorities—generated a lasting (and unresolved) furor. Even more disturbing, surreptitious moves to overturn the commemoration by substituting the names of loyal royalist officers for those of the putschists serves as a warning to any would-be democratic revolutionaries hiding in today's military.[51]

The king—scion of an indigenous monarchy—is called the "father" (*phaw*) of his people. Tracing this paternalistic metaphor back to the Ramkhamhaeng stele enfolds present-day paternalism within a chronologically deep genealogy, anachronistically associating the early Siamese kingship with twentieth-century visions of Thainess and political monarchism.[52] Measured by the king's Thainess, moreover, all other persons fall short; those who, for reasons of class, language, or personal character, fall too far short are not even considered truly Thai. The centrality of monarchy to the sense of Thai identity presents a sharp contrast to Greece, where the monarchy was always seen as a foreign institution.

In Thailand, the language of the powerful central plains became the mark of polite speech and official action. Despite vast morphological changes, the Ramkhamhaeng stele is treated as its original textual realization. The stele's 1833 discovery by Mongkut, the prince who eventually became King Rama IV in 1851, further enhanced the monarchy's role as guarantor of national continuity. Language thus joins religion and the monarchy as fundamental diagnostics of a supposedly unchanging Thai identity, projected back through a reimagined past. Conversely, minority self-abasement before the symbols of monarchy recurrently enacts the ethnic hierarchy.[53]

The association of monarchy and religion is fundamental. "Buddhism supports and validates the king's role as its patron and protector. In his role as the sustainer of the faith, the king benefits . . . ordinary people because through his efforts they are given the opportunity to make merit."[54] In short, without a king there would be no redemption, no possibility of even slightly improving one's karma. Prince Dhani Nivat, an administrator and scholar, claimed that the monarch could only legislate in accordance with strict Buddhist principles and thus could not invent law not already enshrined in sacred text. Historical evidence nevertheless suggests that long before the capital moved to Bangkok from Ayutthaya in the time of King Taksin, Siamese kings had long been in the habit of freely making laws to suit their rule. As defenders of the Buddhist faith, they were always-already invested with the aura of sanctity. Dhani's energetic

promotion of the concept of the *thammarat* (virtuous king) sealed over the disjuncture between that ideal and the monarchs' legislative activism. Dhani's account of Rama I's revolt against Taksin and ascent to the throne, moreover, omits the new king's command to execute Taksin. Clearly the historiographic ends here justified the editorial means.[55] The scholarly prince—whose influence became especially strong in the early years of Rama IX's reign, when he variously served as regent and president of the Privy Council—thereby enhanced the implied continuity with the pre-Chakri past and legitimized the king's present temporal authority as already embedded in the sacredness of his office.[56] Those who hold political office are expected to defend the monarchy by whatever means are deemed necessary; today, as virulent online threats suggest, they have also incited a loyalist following into echoing that principle with vastly enhanced impact. The consequences are predictable, given a notorious pattern of impunity that persists even during relatively democratic times.[57] Some exiles' criticism of the current royalist-military power elite has ended with their abduction and gangland-style murder abroad.[58]

Historiographical seamlessness is crucial for the Thai state. Thai kingship, thus connected with antiquity, relies on three props: the Buddhist religion, the (central) Thai language with the royal diction (*rachasap*) as its culminating refinement, and the institution of monarchy itself.[59] The comparison with Greece is especially instructive here. The corresponding elements in Greek nationalism are the neoclassical-inflected formal speech of Athens, Greek Orthodox religion, and "blood" as the vehicle for the transmission of national identity. But Greek blood was a badge of Greekness that no Greek king was ever able to claim. In Thailand, kings are considered indigenous, their status firmly yoked to a vague and mythologized antiquity.[60] In Greece, the first king, a Catholic, was baptized into the national Orthodox religion and had to learn to speak Greek. The last king, Constantine II, claimed continuity—on coinage, for example—with the Byzantine emperors under the name Constantine XIII, but this gesture to history impressed no one and did not save the monarchy from abolition in 1974.[61]

Despite these differences, the principal effect of the Cold War on both countries was to solidify institutional ethnonationalism, marked in both by an explicit contrast of local religiosity with the alleged amorality of neighboring countries. It is nevertheless not coincidental that in Greece the extremes of ethnonationalism have lost political ground, whereas in Thailand they remain dominant. In Greece, especially after the fall of the military junta and the abolition of monarchy in 1974, national identity was increasingly associated with parliamentary democracy (symbolized as the resurrection of an

ancient Greek tradition), while church influence gradually weakened. Greece still does not recognize ethnic minorities as such, but for the most part adopts an increasingly laissez-faire attitude toward them.[62] Thailand, by contrast, has resisted granting many minority groups citizenship and has developed an extraordinarily complex set of bureaucratic practices that affects the rights and mobility of both minority persons and migrants from neighboring countries; meanwhile, and concomitantly, the mutual institutional entailment of king, nation, and religion has steadily intensified.[63]

Common to both countries, however, is the assumption of a unified, unique, and essentialized national culture. In both, during the Cold War, minorities were seen as potential fifth columnists for the communists next door, and as a threat to the integrity of national culture. In Thailand, during Rama VI's reign, the intellectual Luang Wichit Wathakan—strongly if indirectly influenced by Italian fascism—had proclaimed the doctrine of "Thainess" (*khwam pen thai*). The dictator Phibun Plaeksongkhram (in power 1938–44 and 1948–57) assiduously cultivated the concept through the official regulation of everything from dress to music, representing as quintessentially Thai the adoption of a palpably Western aesthetic in all public appearances and performances. This unambiguously crypto-colonial precept is still invoked in most claims of adherence to tradition and heritage.[64]

Concomitantly, the monarchy came to be identified with concepts of orderly, polite self-presentation (*khwam riap roi*), which was paradoxically symbolized by the adoption of largely Western-style clothing and Western models of bodily propriety as marks of true Thainess. Indeed, a point of similarity between Thailand and Greece was this conceptual indigenization of hierarchically gendered Victorian models of sexual and personal modesty.[65] Whereas nineteenth-century Greek intellectuals fetishized the ideal democratic *polis* of classical antiquity as the origin of the modern state and as the political expression of true Hellenism, however, and consequently never evinced much sympathy for the foreign-imposed monarch, most twentieth-century Thai leaders, while modifying the existing polity in ways that brought it into line with Western models of governance, sought political and cultural continuity in the institution of kingship.

This brief foray into the two countries' respective historiographic modalities is the context for the more ethnographic perspective that follows. The two principal cases explored in this book share, each in its distinctive manner and setting, a claim to represent tradition against a nationally "authorized" version.[66] The comparison of these cases, each of which draws on the national peculiarities just discussed, animates and instantiates the concept of subversive

archaism. The Thai story is of an explicitly royalist community struggling to maintain its existence even as the orchestrated national adulation for the palace had begun to fray. The Greek tale concerns a rambunctious society in the heart of the country's most consistently antimonarchist region. The comparison will lead, in the final chapter, to a larger consideration of how "national" heritage, in the post–Cold War and globalized world, has become the ground of contestation between nation-states and communities of highly varied political complexion. To understand that "vertical" articulation, we must now shift the focus from national to local cultural politics and to the challenge archaists pose to state authority.

Humiliation in the Mountains

Zoniana, a predominantly pastoral village in the west-central Cretan mountains, has long been maligned as the home of goat thieves and the site of dramatic vendettas. With a population currently estimated at between 450 and 1200, it has long been viewed as a place of resistance against and refuge from foreign invaders, whether Venetian, Ottoman, or, in the last century, German.[67] Its people harbor deep suspicions of both foreign powers and national politicians. They often see bureaucrats and politicians as traitors to an idealized, egalitarian vision of Greek life—a vision that fits foreign tourists' images of amiably freewheeling Greek rogues (Zorba the Greek comes to mind) more than it does the state's pedantic historiography. The villagers are quite capable of playing up to official discourses about history and heritage, but their renditions are often parodic and irreverent.

Tension between community and state has long rumbled below the surface. The village disposes of an impressive armory of guns. Some are a legacy of resistance to the Nazis during World War II, but the authorities allege that the villagers' performances of masculine heroism mask a less attractive engagement with traders in narcotics and weapons. There are also, however, credible suspicions that such illegal expansions of traditional activities happened only because of political encouragement and bureaucratic indifference. The police, for example, rarely conduct genuinely exhaustive searches, a dereliction that local observers interpret as evidence of official collusion. Villagers prefer to settle disputes internally and regard reporting to the police as betrayal; they especially emphasize their ability to end conflicts through a traditional conciliation ritual called *sasmos*. They also value civility. The grave courtesy with which Cretan highlanders greet visitors was already noted by the English traveler Robert Pashley in the nineteenth century and still persists, along with

lavish hospitality and quick-witted engagement in political debate.[68] Zoniana is emphatically not, its reputation notwithstanding, a lair of uncouth ruffians and reprobates.

In 2007, the fragile accommodation with the authorities collapsed in violence, the trigger a police raid of which someone, presumably a police officer, had secretly warned village contacts. A group of young hotheads, vaunting their male pride in defiance of their elders' more sedate tradition of accommodation and restraint, decided to ambush part of the anticipated patrol. In the fracas that followed, a police officer was gravely wounded, eventually succumbing to his injuries several years later.[69]

The response to the ambush was immediate and crushingly disproportionate. A heavily armed and masked police detachment, a miniature army, descended on the village.[70] The team searched almost every house in the village. I was told that they arbitrarily made individual men grovel, lie on the ground, or even dance at gunpoint; berated some women for the possession of simple kitchen knives; and locked down the entire community for a month, harassing anyone with an identifiably local name who was unlucky enough to chance upon a patrol on the nearby roads.

While the initial confrontation was about the cultivation of cannabis, still illegal in Greece, the more humiliating aspects of this attack appeared to have all the elements of revenge for the villagers' defiance. Having provoked the community into collective self-defense, the police treated all Zoniani indiscriminately as criminals, ignoring most villagers' disapproval of the hotheads' actions. Villagers freely admitted that there were *some* delinquents among them; some accused these youths of betraying village values but blamed that betrayal on the temptations of sudden wealth.[71] The village survived, chastened and resentful, but with increasing recognition that the state's new attention has led to a more sustained investment in its physical, educational, and recreational resources and the hope that this, in turn, would curtail criminal activity altogether. Some, indeed, claim that today Zoniana is the *only* village in the area that is now not engaged in cannabis cultivation. Viewing Zoniana collectively as a criminal community is certainly a gross distortion.

Reputation, however, has material effects. The events of 2007 (in Greek *ta yeghonota*, the happenings) dramatically reoriented a hitherto obscure village's relationship with the nation, the state, and the world at large. They also disclosed the workings of state power, even if the exact linkages remain somewhat obscure and the police have been exonerated of complicity—an outcome that does not surprise the villagers, with their cynical understanding of how the state operates.[72] The village's fearsome reputation, pruriently cultivated by the media,

still festers in the urban middle-class imagination. One woman, told by the American anthropologist Richard Grinker that I was living in Zoniana where he and his family planned to visit me, reacted with horror and demanded, "But he doesn't actually stay there overnight, does he?" A car rental agent in the coastal town of Chania first pretended to Grinker that he had never heard of the village; then, reminded that it was often in the news, claimed that it would be impossible to get there; and finally indicated with dramatic gestures and throaty exclamations that the villagers would be fierce and dangerous. Grinker, fortunately, was undeterred, and he and his family were made warmly welcome.

Destruction in the City

In the second case, this one in Thailand, the tiny urban enclave at Pom Mahakan in the heart of old Bangkok started out in the reign of Rama III (reigned 1824–51) as a royally sanctioned settlement of bureaucrats. Its origins were thus impeccable. By the early twenty-first century, however, its original denizens and most of their descendants long since deceased or departed, its image much more closely resembled that of Zoniana. It had acquired the reputation, assiduously nurtured by hostile municipal officials, of being a nest of drug addicts, wife beaters, and prostitutes. When I began working there, the city clerk, who had expressed warm support for my doing research in the city, advised me not to spend any time in that community. She consistently refused to make her own inspection, even though she passed by every day on her way to and from work. Willful ignorance thus fed the flames of calumny.[73]

The community leadership worked hard to deflect its dangerous reputation. Technically squatters—occupiers of real estate that did not legally belong to them—the residents mounted a public relations campaign to claim the moral and cultural rights appropriate to the guardians of an older vision of national identity. Their relative unity stood out in notable contrast with the squabbling of middle-class communities facing similar dislocation but apparently unable or unwilling to do much about it. Like the Zoniani, the people of Pom Mahakan saw in their very rejection by the state authorities the clearest evidence for their superior moral claims to represent national identity in its purest and most venerable form.

The residents never claimed legal possession of the site. They argued, however, that they had already demonstrated their capacity for good stewardship, protecting the site's monumental and architectural attractions from disrepair and dirt and ensuring that it did not become a lair of drug addicts and pushers. They also pursued a vision of social responsibility and community

self-development. As late as December 2009, the Pom Mahakan work committee formally submitted to the entire community a budget of 10,000 baht (approximately $285) for celebrating national Children's Day (*wan dek*) that January as they had done for several years, with the specific goal of encouraging the children and youths of the community to "amuse themselves creatively far away from drugs and other such miseries."

The event, in addition to encouraging the young to grow up to be "good adults on the basis of the principles of love and attentiveness to their families (*khrawp khrua*)," was also intended to remind both local youth and the people of neighboring communities of the historical and cultural significance of Pom Mahakan. The community leaders were resolutely pedagogical, intending to inculcate into the young knowledge of their roots (*rahk*) and identity (*tua ton*) as Chao Pom.[74] In so doing, they were trying to guide their youth out of the damning category of "slum children," and to do so in a way that garnered public attention and drew legitimacy from the royal associations of this national event; the day, marked by a major speech by the prime minister, was timed to coincide with Queen Sirikit's birthday.[75] In another document issued for the same event, local pride was explicitly harnessed to official historiography: "The Pom Mahakan community is a community that has a historical background of considerable depth. It has houses that are over 200 years old that go back to the Rattanakosin era, and its long history invests it with a significant quality that is a source of pride for the residents."[76]

The Rattanakosin era is the period from the establishment of the Chakri dynasty in 1782, the construction date of the wall into which the Mahakan fortress was inserted, until the so-called democratic revolution of 1932 that ended the absolute monarchy. By invoking this resonant name, the Chao Pom were also coopting the airbrushing tactics of official historiography, absorbing into a single, undifferentiated historical period the older mandala-based polity and the radically different bureaucratic state that emerged in full under Rama V, and implicitly aligning themselves with the soon-to-open Rattanakosin museum a short distance away. In a state where continuity was defined by royal succession, the Chao Pom knew how to talk the talk.

They could also point to an impressive array of traditional crafts and skills. Some of these cultural skills, notably Thai massage and kickboxing, faded from memory with the death of their main exponents; but others—birdcage building, the raising of fighting cocks, crafting ceramic ritual objects, and selling homemade foods—continued to flourish. Some residents participated as extras in a film about pre–Rama V Siam, and continued to wear period clothing for some time thereafter; they also participated in a traditional dance drama

(*likae*) that was first performed in Bangkok on the Pom Mahakan site.[77] Many also learned useful building skills, displayed in the construction and ornamentation of new houses designed to harmonize with the antique buildings. They celebrated the site's historical importance with religious rituals and well-organized photographic and documentary displays. They had also successfully collaborated with the police in eradicating drug use, without violence, during an internationally notorious time of extra-judicial killings in the name of a war on narcotics. And they had steadfastly repeated their desire to serve as official guardians of the site while continuing to live there at the city authorities' pleasure. One Bangkok governor, Apirak Kosayodhin, had even signed off on such a plan in 2004, but his sudden exit from office, apparently engineered by political enemies, left Pom Mahakan once again at the mercy of more intransigent actors in the city bureaucracy.

While the city bureaucrats repeatedly agreed to meet with the residents, it was clear from their condescending mien that most of them saw the Chao Pom as inferior rabble. They did not question whether these supposed reprobates would be evicted; the only uncertainty was when it would happen. The military assumption of full control of Thai political and civic life through the coups of 2006 and 2014 hastened an endgame that not only saw the residents scattered to other parts of the city but also destroyed outstanding examples of wooden architecture linking community life with the history of city and nation. In 2018 a quarter-century-long cat-and-mouse game ended with terminal destruction, carried out in several phases (fig. 1.1). Under the stern gaze of a group of soldiers who had established themselves on the site for a month for what seemed to be the sole purpose of intimidating the locals, a team of municipal workers grimly trudged through the remnants of the community. They carted off recognizable pieces of homes, some of which were historically and aesthetically significant examples of vernacular architecture. Reluctant recruits to this cultural vandalism against a population of poor Thais so like themselves, they glumly paraded from demolition site to garbage truck carrying pieces of timber walls past signage that ironically pointed to the community's heritage museum—itself perhaps the most explicit marker of subversive archaism—while the residents watched in grim silence or helpless tears, their lives and history disappearing in the mounting detritus.

The demolition of several fine examples of older vernacular architecture on the site looked suspiciously like an act of wanton revenge. A violation of internationally recognized norms for the protection of architectural heritage, it followed a long-standing tendency in Thailand to privilege temples and palaces over ordinary dwellings and so to conflate national with royal history.[78]

FIGURE 1.1. Dreams Destroyed: The End of the Pom Mahakan Youth Club. Photograph by author.

The failure of even the prestigious Association of Siamese Architects to save the most interesting buildings suggests that plebeian posterity was the last thing the city bureaucrats wanted to assure. On the contrary, the protracted negotiations about which buildings to select for preservation seem to have served a policy of attrition rather than of compromise. In the end, the authorities did not so much airbrush the site's despised plebeian past out of the city map as firebomb it to extinction.

Lessons from a Comparison

These two case histories, with their common experience of a traditionalism rejected by the officially constituted nation-state, but also with their significantly different outcomes, together provide perspective on the role of the state in shaping ideas about culture and heritage.[79] In both instances, under radically different political conditions, official authorities invoked national law over the residents' cultural claims.[80] Instead of accepting the communities' self-ascription as bearers of national cultural values, they treated them as dangerous sites of lawlessness and immorality. The label became a libel; the libel became a pretext.[81]

Exasperated officials and the sensationalist media alike then prepared the public for what would retrospectively appear to be justly severe responses. In Zoniana, after the raids, tourists—mostly from Greece and Cyprus, and some-

times in organized busloads—sought the thrill of seeing vast fields of cannabis and meeting the fearsome bandits in their mountain fastness, only, inevitably, to be disappointed.[82] Pom Mahakan was the target of at least one explicit attempt to engage it in "slum tourism."[83] Such activities sometimes afford residents the chance to showcase virtues such as hospitality and care for tradition.[84] But in both places they demanded tremendous demonstrations of injured dignity to counter the media sensationalism that had constituted these communities as objects of voyeuristic fascination.

In the Greek example, much of the vilification came from the media. News outlets gleefully capitalized on the idea that there was a part of the country where even the intrepid representatives of law and order feared to tread. They likened the village and its upland pastures to the alleged no-go zones in the seedier parts of Athens. While from the villagers' point of view the journalists were doing the bureaucrats' dirty work for them, the journalists' stance also suggests a generous helping of Schadenfreude at the state's embarrassment by a small village.

The initial raid, the one in which an officer was fatally wounded, took place one morning in early November 2007. About twenty armed villagers fired on a team of forty-three police officers who had come to break up a narcotics gang alleged to be based in the village. A reputable Athens newspaper, *To Vima*, with a sarcastic sprinkling of ironic ellipses and scare quotes, commented that "the 'Zoniana state' attacked the . . . weak Greek Police," adding that this was the fifth mass attack against police officers in the Milopotamos district "with the goal of making the area . . . inaccessible [*avato*] and to ensure there would be no control over the hashish cultivators."[85] But in perhaps the most significant comment in this report, the writer pointed an accusing finger at higher police officials: "Indicative of the 'autonomization' of the . . . state of Zoniana is the fact that, according to police union members, before the police operation there had been confabulations of officers with local leaders in Milopotamos in order to secure the immunity of the police from being fired on"—an agreement that the village hotheads then either ignored or subverted.[86]

The tone of this report is representative of the way in which the general public was led to understand the situation. The term *avato* provides a constant refrain throughout all the reportage, and it is clearly not intended to be more complimentary to the police than to the villagers.[87] Under the sarcastic heading "Zoniana—inaccessible for the police," another journalist described a second raid: "that [raid] also ended in fiasco. And a fiasco, what's more, that yet again exposes the district police to ridicule. The errors—as some policemen have complained—were childish, the omissions criminal." The writer describes

how the cannabis had all been uprooted in advance. And despite a violent confrontation with one armed villager, who tried to ram a police car and run over two police guards with his truck, there was "not a single arrest made by the 50 policemen who were in the village!" It also appears from this report that two senior police officers quarreled because one of them deliberately intervened to prevent anyone from being arrested.[88]

We do not know—although the villagers have their suspicions—why the police would avoid arresting anyone who deliberately attacked an officer. Local politicians, with powerful connections in other communities in the area, may have pushed government and bureaucracy into a confrontation from which the state could not afford to back down. The media created the image of a massive, if very localized, conspiracy, one that deserved to be quashed—and would have been suppressed had it not been for the perhaps deliberate incompetence of the police.

In the Thai example, by contrast, the media were largely sympathetic to the residents' plight even after the military coups of 2006 and 2014—perhaps even more so, since it was probably safer to criticize the municipal rather than the national government. It is not entirely clear which of the various forces both competing and cooperating in the exercise of power—government, military, or palace—was driving the drift toward the community's total elimination. Lately, fueled by a series of top-down reallocations of urban land use in Bangkok's oldest areas, suspicion has increasingly fallen on the last of these three elements. But it was the city authorities who bore the brunt of immediate responsibility. The journalists seemed genuinely sympathetic to the community; the vilification campaign that preceded the final act mostly took place outside the mainstream media, although reporting on official accusations of community malfeasance may also have contributed to the intimation of justice served. It is clear, however, that the vilification began from official sources, as in the city official's warnings to me. The moral panic was carefully crafted, producing a misleadingly negative impression much like the claim that Zoniana was too dangerous a place to spend the night.

That members of both communities had violated specific laws is beyond contestation, but it does not render either community comprehensively illegal. Rather, well-publicized infractions furnished easy pretexts for drastic official action. The Zoniani had long engaged in reciprocal sheep and goat rustling—a ritual of masculinity that sophisticated Greek urbanites found repulsive, incomprehensible, and absurd but that for centuries had been the basis on which shepherds achieved mutual social recognition for their masculine prowess.[89] The arrival of a cash economy subverted this system and introduced new elements,

including the drug trade, but many villagers remained resistant to the new temptations. As early as the 1970s, traditionally minded shepherds banded together to suppress reciprocal animal theft as it morphed into a largely commercial enterprise. Traditionalist villagers do not confuse local morality with indiscriminate profiteering.[90]

Similarly intentional misapprehensions afflict the reputation of the Chao Pom. Otherwise law-abiding to a fault, they were accused of squatting. While admitting the technical illegality of their continuing presence, however, they countered that the advance compensation for losing their homes had proved inadequate. Moreover, they had already demonstrated their ability to maintain the site far more effectively than the authorities; until the very end of their struggle they maintained a clean and tidy environment that offered a stark contrast to the litter-strewn, muddy area already under the authorities' control. Not only did the elected community president (*phrathahn chumchon*) participate in everyday sweeping and maintenance of the common areas, but section heads, in charge of clusters of households, saw to it that their areas were kept clear of unsightly garbage. Signage enjoined respect for cleanliness and forbade smoking in the vicinity of one of the most precious wooden houses.

Although the Chao Pom claimed total loyalty to the nation, they challenged the moral authority of state-codified law and criticized its inability to redress the evils of inequality and poverty. In a country with a long history of political interference with the independence of the judiciary, however, a clear distinction between moral right and legal prescription invited trouble. Judges, seeing their role as the implementation of royal virtue, were ill-disposed—as became clear in the rulings of the Administrative Court against the community—to recognize such lowly commoners' stance as a moral right. How dare such riffraff defy a municipally planned park in honor of Queen Sirikit, spouse of Rama IX? How dare they presume to construct their own floral garden in its place? (It was apparently to be quite a different matter, some years later and after the demolition of the community and the failure to generate much enthusiasm for the characterless park that replaced it, for the Bangkok municipal authorities to disguise their failure by mounting a massive floral exhibition there.)[91] The judges' further argument that a public park could not also contain private dwellings reflects the formalism with which Thai judges, as Duncan McCargo has noted, have generally viewed their role as "epitomizing virtuous rule"; that view of their duties requires judges to serve the monarchy, the exemplar of all true virtue, rather than the polity at large.[92] The vision of a regenerated Rattanakosin rumored to be favored by Queen Sirikit's son, Rama X, would especially have increased the pressure to clear the space after the 2014 coup. Royalists

the residents may have been; but the insistence of such karmically inferior citizens on honoring the queen in their own way could be, and evidently was, interpreted as insolent.[93] After 2016, the residents' continuing presence became, quite simply, a nuisance to those in power at every significant level.

The residents nevertheless clung consistently to the moral high ground. They insisted, for example, that no resident should act violently against city officials or workers carrying out the officials' orders. They had also always rejected social, cultural, or religious exclusion; in response to the tsunami that hit the South in 2004 and despite their own poverty, they mounted a voluntary project to bring aid to the region's predominantly Malay-speaking and Muslim population. That stance may have subtly enhanced rather than lessened official hostility, since it challenged the perceptible historical shift to the current ethnonationalist exclusivism of the military leadership. The Chao Pom also had to contend with official skepticism about their own status as a community. The authorities regarded them as a ragtag crew of mixed backgrounds hailing from several provinces; from their own perspective, that complex origin made them a microcosm of the Thai nation—but such a pluralistic vision of Thai history and culture was increasingly unpalatable to the ever more harshly ethnonationalistic state.

Ethnonationalists reject cultural difference as much as political dissidence. Their deployment of stereotypes is insidious; the successful projection of a negative generalization can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Nevertheless, long-sustained official harassment was less successful in marshaling public opinion against the Chao Pom than in uniting the residents and stiffening their resolve, much as frontal police aggression brought the Zoniani out in unified protest. State violence often sows the seeds of subversion, generating solidarities that themselves have a long local history and belong to the armory of archaisms the communities oppose to the cultural authority of the state. These solidarities also, as we shall see in the next chapter, frequently resemble the forms of cooperative resistance that originally made possible the emergence of the independent nation-state itself—an irony of which subversive archaists are often productively aware. We now turn to that historical backdrop.

Notes

Preface and Acknowledgments

1. An intermediate presentation of the main argument appeared as Herzfeld 2019.
2. See Herzfeld 1991a (on Rethimno [locally called Rethemnos], Crete) and 2009b (on Rome).
3. "When karma takes on this ontological quality—a proposition of how things are rather than a guide to how to look at the world—it can present a barrier to the identification of both the proximate and root causes of social inequity" (Aulino 2019: 116; see also Bolotta 2021). By extension, those who actively oppose the monarchy have no rights because they "do not register as members of the polity or as human beings" (Haberkorn 2016: 244).
4. It is also true that the regime is not as discontinuous with Thaksin's legacy as it would prefer the world to believe. It pursued and even strengthened at least two of the major innovations of the Thaksin premiership: universal health coverage (the "30-baht scheme") and, with some modifications, the "One Tambon, One Product" (OTOP) scheme for the projection of local crafts and products. It has also continued Thaksin's assault on the homeless and on squatters in provincial cities (see Elinoff 2017, 2021) as well as in Bangkok.
5. For more detail, see Herzfeld 1985. For more information on neighboring villages with similar social institutions, see Astrinaki 2002; Saulnier 1980; Tsandiropoulos 2004.
6. Interview conducted by Yorghos Sakhinis, Kriti TV, for the program *Antithesis*, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMrBXnbkHjo (accessed 5 August 2016). The interview was very briefly reported, without discussion of the Zoniana material, at https://www.neakriti.gr/article/eidiseis/1013418/0-maikl-xertsfelnt-stin-ekpompi-antitheseis-/ (accessed 5 August 2016). The first two comments to be attached to the YouTube URL are both favorable; neither was written by a person with a Zoniana name. One of them, self-named as Mitsosa Mitsos, praises the journalist for "understanding what journalism should be today especially as citizens need substantive information and not the little parrotings of [those in] power." The other, Voula Arapli, congratulates me on discovering "the human being" here (in the village? or in Crete?). These comments, especially in view of the fact that during the interview I was critical of the Greek government's refusal to acknowledge the presence of ethnic minorities, lead me to suspect that what I subsequently found as the political template in Zoniana might have a geographically and politically much broader resonance than anyone in the bureaucracy suspects.
7. I conducted the new fieldwork in the summers of 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019, for a total of a little over two months in total. While I would not recommend such quick

encounters as the basis of starting up an ethnographic engagement, my long-standing relationship with the villagers made it possible to learn a great deal in the very short time permitted by other obligations. My earlier fieldwork in Thailand is documented in Herzfeld 2016c; I received new information about Pom Mahakan while conducting research in a nearby community between 2016 and 2020.

8. The transliteration of Greek and Thai, which I know from previous experience to be a politically fraught operation for both languages, has necessarily been inconsistent. I have generally opted for decent phonetic approximations but have respected existing conventions for specific names. No reader will be completely satisfied; I can only hope that no one will be deeply offended by my choices.

Chapter 1. The Nation-State Outraged

1. See Evans-Pritchard 1949; cf. J. Davis 1988; Hutchinson and Pendle 2015; Shryock 1997. Jordan has enjoyed relative peace, but the threat of fission is ever-present at multiple levels. Libya and South Sudan have been much less fortunate. For an earlier discussion of the segmentary structures underlying the modern nation-state, see Herzfeld 1987a: 158–66.
2. Herzfeld 2016a: 8.
3. This argument is spelled out in Herzfeld 2016a.
4. Steinmüller (2013) offers an especially insightful ethnographic account of such accommodations in China.
5. L. Smith 2006: 54.
6. Ferguson's (1994) critique of the politics of development is germane here.
7. For major critiques of this universalism and other aspects of official heritage discourse, see especially Meskell 2018; L. Smith 2006.
8. Tambiah 1990.
9. See Weber 1930; cf. Baehr 2001.
10. Nation-states are themselves far from uniform. Here, for example, we will focus on a very robust democracy in one country and a thinly disguised military dictatorship in another. That contrast makes what they have in common all the more striking.
11. Anderson 1991.
12. See Scott 2009, who cites Clastres (1987) approvingly in an epigraph. These are romantic interpretations of resistance and freedom from state control. Far more tenable anthropologically is Kapferer's (1988) ethnographically grounded demonstration that even the most benign ideologies can be transformed into their violent antitheses.
13. For a highly relevant discussion of how such emergent state-like entities can be damagingly misunderstood, see Ong 2018.
14. Scott 2009: 30, 48, citing Braudel 1973. Crete, with its contrasted coastal wealth and harsh mountain eyries, would seem to qualify for such treatment. See also Sorge 2015: 24, 49–53, on Sardinia.
15. See Abu-Lughod 1990. For other relevant critiques of Scott, see Reed-Danahay 1993; Gutmann 1993. For a nuanced critique of Clastres, see Wolf and Heidemann 2014: 5.

16. Fabian 1983; Danforth (1984) has shown that the states themselves commit allochronic categorizations.
17. Holston 2008, 2009.
18. It is to Maple Razsa (2015: 17) that we owe this apt description of anarchists. Scott (2009) uses the term "anarchism" to describe local rejection of the state in Southeast Asia. Razsa's ethnography vividly captures a particular local (Serbian) and global moment of anarchist activism. On Greek anarchism, see Vradis and Dalakgolou 2011. Subversive archaists do not fit the anarchist label because they seek accommodation with the state and mimic its heritage rhetoric.
19. As Hans Baer (2018: 175) notes, some reactionary social movements achieved enormous impact by disguising their goals in the rhetoric of very different ideologies; Nazism, for example, masqueraded as a genuinely socialist movement through adroit symbolic and rhetorical manipulation. See also Kertzer's (1980) insights into the communist adoption of Catholic symbolism in Italy.
20. Durrell 1957: 159.
21. Rakopoulos 2015b: 63; see also Schneider and Schneider 1994, 2003: 109, 163–64.
22. See especially Di Bella 2008; Rakopoulos 2018. Both authors demonstrate that there are many tactical and strategic variations on the ideology and practice of silence in Sicily, indicating a broader social basis for the supposed code than a simple correlation with mafia activity.
23. See Herzfeld 2009b: 181.
24. On the antimafia movement, see Rakopoulos 2017; Schneider and Schneider 2005.
25. See especially Belew 2018: 206–8.
26. On Gush Emunim, see especially MacGillivray 2016. After the electoral triumph of rightist parties under Benjamin Netanyahu and the inclusion of religious movements in the government, the group's influence on Israeli politics increased substantially, and its settlements were legalized. If its members are subversive archaists, it is the sense of being opposed to the secular state against which they have forged numerous pragmatic alliances with rightist politicians. If the Israeli right remains in power, Gush Emunim may eventually represent a rare instance of *successful* subversive archaism.
27. Brownell 1995; on Falun Gong, see especially Palmer 2003.
28. See especially Chun 2017: 35.
29. Peutz 2018.
30. See Peutz 2018: 49.
31. Peutz 2018: 64, 94. On the role of patronage in other instances of subversive archaism, see especially chapters 2, 3, and 4.
32. Peutz (2018: 128) suggests that the state's attribution of ecological damage to the depredations of goats may be inaccurate. In this regard, her remarks recall the many other critiques of allegedly environmentalist arguments against both pastoralists and swidden agriculturalists. For an insightful treatment of the conflict between state environmentalism and traditional practices, see especially Heatherington 2010.
33. Greenland 2021: 179–80.
34. Greenland 2021: 184, 190–91.

35. Herzfeld 1985: 107.
36. Apostolakis 1993.
37. On comparable instances of local archaeological knowledge and cultural management, see Hodges 2013; Odermatt 1996.
38. I am deliberately restricting the term "movements" here because not all rebellious impulses or resurgences of older models are fully developed social movements in the strict sense of the term. They often follow the appearance of those inchoate "blank banners" that Edwin Ardener (1971: xliv) identified as emergent forms of political awareness, but they may remain in a relatively passive form that nevertheless does give state authorities cause for concern.
39. Fallmerayer 1830, 1836. See Danforth 1984; Herzfeld 2020b: 71–82 for extended discussions.
40. See Heine-Geldern 1956; Jory 2016; Tambiah 1976.
41. See Charnvit 2019; Jory 2016: 20, 107–26.
42. This allusion to the god Ram also suggests continuity with a high-prestige, Sanskritic tradition that is not formally part of Buddhism. I have mostly adopted this convention (e.g., "Rama I") precisely because, in the context of a more critical historiography, it highlights the tense disjuncture between the official narrative and a more complex historical reality.
43. In recent years, the most dramatic instance was the reinstatement of the previously disgraced royal consort with this pronouncement: "Henceforth, it will be as if she had never been stripped of her military ranks or royal decorations" (*The Guardian* 2020).
44. See, e.g., Anderson 2014: 155.
45. Heine-Geldern 1956: 9–10. In Laos, the erection of statues of long-deceased kings may represent a similar process in a culturally related but ideologically very different context; see "Facts and Details" 2014.
46. A more generic alternative to calling someone a Fallmerayer is the label *anthellinas*, "anti-Hellene." In Thailand, the relevant charge is that of *lèse-majesté*; unlike accusations of Fallmerayerism, however, it has the force of law and conviction can bring heavy prison sentences.
47. Wyatt 2003: 43.
48. Reynolds 2006: vii–viii.
49. Horn 2010; Ünaldi 2014: 395–98.
50. Barrow 2015; but cf. Ünaldi 2014: 397.
51. Suppression, however, does not guarantee silence: the plaque has widely reappeared—as a fashionable clothing emblem. For useful coverage, see Ruiz 2017; Khaosod English 2020a, 2020c; for a more comprehensive and scholarly treatment, see Subrahmanyan 2020. Furthermore, the statues of the 1932 revolutionaries were quietly removed from a military base in Lopburi (Pravit 2020a). One of these leaders was Phibun Plaeksongkhram, whose doctrine of "Thainess," discussed elsewhere here, has nevertheless been heartily endorsed by the military-controlled government (with some tweaks aimed at foreign and especially tourist consumption; see Farrelly 2016). This

is yet another example of how official Thai historiography airbrushes inconvenient dissonance out of the narrative of national unity.

52. Dhani (1947: 93–94) more generally traces the father metaphor back to the Sukhothai period (1238–1438); on p. 91, the prince invokes Malinowski's metaphor of tradition as a collective treasure, thus demonstrating the functionalist implications of state traditionalism. On the persistence of royal paternalism as the legitimating model for the "despotic paternalism" of even the 1932 putschists as well as loyalist military leaders, see Thak 2007: 2–3. This schema also fits the karmic explanation of royal charisma and its refraction through the lesser orders; see especially chapter 2.

    Further changes in the status of the monarchy are carefully orchestrated. The tight control of public ceremony surrounding the funeral rites for Rama IX illustrates, as Isaacs and Renwick (n.d.) point out, how a "unifying aesthetic . . . was structured within a larger system of surveillance, cementing political hierarchy and re-fashioning post-democratic authority." They also note the particular emphasis placed on requiring mourners to be *riap roi*, or appropriately self-disciplined in their appearance. The entire performance, which (in their carefully observed analysis) disguises shifts in the power structure of modern Thailand attendant on the passing of Rama IX while emphasizing continuity of style and symbolism, contributed to the process I have identified here as historiographic airbrushing.
53. On ethnic hierarchy, see especially Denes 2015.
54. Englehart 2001: 32 discusses the writing of laws affirming this relationship in the reign of Rama I.
55. Dhani 1955: 23–24.
56. See Baker and Pasuk 2016: 31. The prince's views are laid out in Dhani 1947.
57. On the long history of impunity in Thailand, see Haberkorn 2018.
58. See, e.g., Ellis-Petersen 2019; Panu and Patpicha 2019.
59. On rachasap, see Diller 2006. Thai is in this sense diglossic, like modern Greek, but instructively for my argument the Greek "high" register (*katharevousa*), unlike the Thai royal language, was technically available to all citizens—though it was used to exclude the masses—and symbolized *cultural*, not monarchical, continuity. On the fate of purist Greek (*katharevousa*) after its formal abolition (which followed that of the monarchy some two years later), see Moschonas's (2004) provocative discussion; see also Kazazis 1982. Because rachasap is specifically tied to the institution of monarchy, it does not directly affect the ordinary language, and would be unlikely to do so in any postmonarchic scenario. Katharevousa forms are often still used ironically; ironizing rachasap would be dangerous.
60. The fact that some kings were of partly Chinese ancestry gave their critics useful propaganda material but made no real difference to how they were popularly perceived or represented.
61. Constantine I (reigned 1913–17, 1920–22) had similarly been formally considered Constantine XII in the Byzantine line of succession. Greek monarchs were not "kings of Greece" but "kings of the Hellenes," a name both intended to assert continuity with the ancient past and suggestive of irredentist designs on Greek-speaking populations still living outside Greek territory.

62. See, e.g., Triandafyllidou and Kokkali 2010 for an overview. Danforth (1997) offers one of several anthropological accounts of the origins and effects of this policy on specific groups.
63. See especially Pinkaew 2014; Reddy 2015.
64. See Barmé 1993; Farrelly 2016; Kammales and Patcharin 2018; Saichon 2002: 134–48.
65. On Greece, see Bakalaki 1994; on Thailand, Porranee 2018; Woodhouse 2012; see also fig. 7.1.
66. The term *authorized heritage discourse* (AHD) was coined by L. Smith (2006: 29–34). It suggests the reduction of heritage (or tradition) to a predictable routine in the Weberian sense suggested by Niezen's (2003: 141) comment that "it is in the nature of bureaucracy to challenge the arbitrariness of tradition and dim the luster of charisma." Bureaucracy responds to local tradition by attempting to nationalize and routinize it through the exercise of AHD.
67. Summer visits by people of local descent and election laws that require voters to cast their ballots in their registered domicile (which is often not where they currently live) complicate the calculation of population size.
68. Pashley 1837: 82–83 (especially note 2).
69. Tsandiropoulos (2007: 171) correctly notes that villagers often invoke tradition to justify such acts of bellicosity. The temptations of sudden wealth, invoked by the more law-abiding villagers and helpfully analyzed in Tsandiropoulos's important article, are a major contributory cause of the new lawlessness. But neither explanation exhausts the complex of causes fueling the involvement of some villagers in organized crime, and Tsandiropoulos provides persuasive evidence of the role of external sources of wealth as well. The social organization of the village, which remains an important element in the maintenance of its distinctive sense of collective identity, also sustains the ideology of aggressive masculinity that underlies the villagers' invocation of tradition, and leads to a defensive—if often reluctant—solidarity with the miscreants in the face of official over-reaction.
70. These police officers are known as EKAMites, from the formal name of their elite division (EKAM, or Ειδική Κατασταλτική Αντιτρομακτική Μονάδα [Idhiki Katastalktiki Anditromaktiki Omadha, Special Suppressive Antiterrorist Unit]).
71. This summary of village perceptions is based on both what I have heard in Zoniana and a relatively balanced newspaper account (Lambropoulos 2008a).
72. I use the word "real" advisedly, as also in the subtitle of the third edition of *Cultural Intimacy* (Herzfeld 2016a; see also Herzfeld 2018b); the hidden realities of political practice rest on the mutual dependency of local villagers and national politicians. Official discourse is designed to conceal such realities, and it is so designed by those who most stand to profit from it. That observation, often paraded as an excuse for the replacement of parliamentary democracy by military dictatorship, is equally (and perhaps even more) applicable to the dictators themselves, particularly as they dispose of vast means to conceal their own corruption. See, for example, a remarkably courageous critique of the Thai military dictatorship by an (anthropologically trained) journalist (Pravit 2018).

73. For an account of my original fieldwork there, see Herzfeld 2016c.
74. The name specifically means "the people of the fort [*pom*]."
75. On the inculcation of hierarchy and morality in "slum children" (*dek salam*), see Bolotta 2021; Mahony 2018.
76. The quotations in this and the preceding paragraph are from internal documents obtained from the community.
77. See Lipat-Chesler 2010; Suchit 2003. Apparently a retired palace policeman who had once been a community member and continued to visit it and maintained a private museum was the first to discover this information in an older newspaper report.
78. See especially Chatri 2012. Thongchai 2001 and Reynolds 2006 provide some important historiographical context. See also Sirinya's (2018) scathing critique of the prevalent attitude to vernacular culture in the specific context of the destruction of Pom Mahakan.
79. In listening to the residents' views, we are not thereby, condescendingly, giving the Other a voice. We must, however, listen to the multiple other voices that the generalized and top-down focus of our sibling disciplines has blurred or silenced. I make this plea with a strong sense of the responsibility that stems from the role of Lewis Henry Morgan's own ethnographic observations in reshaping the Western world's understanding of society, both in his own influence here in the United States and through the writings of Friedrich Engels. It is a heavy charge, and I am deeply appreciative of the trust and honor implied in the invitation to deliver the Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures—all the more so because, when Bob Foster asked me to give them something of a retrospective slant in terms of my research history, he and his colleagues also graciously agreed to an extra year of preparation so that I could conduct new fieldwork in Greece for the express purposes of this event.
80. Zoniana (for which I then used the pseudonym Glendi) is described in Herzfeld 1985, a monograph that appeared in Greek (with Alexandria Publications) in 2012. After discussion with the villagers, I decided to abandon the pseudonym, as the villagers apparently now prefer to see their village named in work that they understand to be sympathetic to their perspectives. Pom Mahakan no longer exists as a physical community; before its destruction, which I recount here, its central location, symbolic significance, and increasing visibility would have rendered the use of a pseudonym pointless.
81. John Osburg (personal communication, 2018) has usefully suggested that these libels operate very much like conspiracy theories in modern populist politics.
82. For a comparable and geographically close example ("Where are your guns?"), see Kalantzis 2020: 63.
83. "The growing attraction of the Pom Mahakam [*sic*] community is, however, indicative of the potential of tourism to highlight the value of 'alternative' heritage. While we consider that the community has a right to its place regardless of its ability to generate tourism revenue, this is clearly an important bargaining tool in the ongoing conflict with the BMA [Bangkok city hall]" (Kisnaphol 2012: 213). The well-meaning attempt to project community life onto the white citadel wall on the street side clearly engaged the community members and a local NGO, but such efforts—and

there were others—may also have stiffened the authorities' resistance to compromise. King and Dovey (2012) focus, with hope rather than optimism, on the effect of slum tourism on international awareness of the inhabitants' problems.

84. On voyeurism in "slum tourism," see, variously, Dürr and Jaffe 2012; Frenzel, Koens, and Steinbrink 2012; Kieti and Magio 2013; Nisbett 2017; on "dark tourism" and crime, see Robb 2009. Robb's (2009: 58) remark that "dark tourism occupies a tense intermediary zone between voyeurism and social justice" also applies to slum tourism.
85. The substitution of the name of a drug (hashish) for the plant (cannabis) from which it is produced exemplifies the orientalism and sensationalism of media, official, and bourgeois discourses about these mountain villagers.
86. These quotations are taken from Lambropoulos 2008b; the ellipses are in the original Greek. This report suggested that the police command had already taken a decision not to use locally stationed officers when raiding the village for fear that these officers were already engaged in profitable arrangements with the miscreants.
87. Kalantzis (2019: 59–63), discussing media representations of the raid and its aftermath from the perspective of his own fieldwork further west, detects a more general ambiguity in the public response: a discreetly growing sympathy for actions that defied not specifically the police but the government and the foreign powers to which it was beholden. This accords with the villagers' own resentment of the way in which the European Union has, through its local political and bureaucratic representatives, extended the country's humiliatingly crypto-colonial condition.
88. See *Newsbomb* 2011.
89. Kalantzis (2019: 61–63) usefully discusses the ambivalent response of urban Greeks. On the social dimensions of animal theft in Zoniana, see Herzfeld 1985: 163–205.
90. This is also sometimes understood by celebrities and others reaching a broader public; see Kalantzis 2019: 61.
91. See *The Nation* (Thailand) 2020.
92. McCargo (2019: 212–13) sees the judiciary as restricted in imagination and agency by its role as the representatives of royal authority rather than as independent arbiters of justice. While he is writing mainly of the Constitutional Court, his analysis pertains to the Thai judicial situation more generally.
93. Claiming too much familiarity with royal personages, for example, can be considered subversive. Handley (2006: 439; see also 455n14) noted that a predecessor's book (Stevenson 1999) had been attacked for excessive familiarity—specifically for using Rama IX's nickname; Stevenson's book and Handley's own account of the late monarch's life and political attitudes were both suppressed in Thailand. Handley (2006: 439) describes Stevenson as "liberal with style and careless with facts to the point of embarrassing the palace," while Stevenson (1999: 3, 125) questions the accuracy of *The King and I*, which is also banned in Thailand. I well remember during one of my earliest visits to Thailand that Stevenson's book was in clandestine circulation and a source of great interest to political activists despite their apparent loyalty to the throne. Successive attempts to suppress these works have clearly failed. Stevenson's (1999: 3) account of the humble origins of Rama IX's mother would also have been seen as a direct act of defiance against the presumed karmic order of Thai society.