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Contested Cultural Heritage (Un)Be/Longings: Sensual, Embodied, and Gendered Stories of Trauma and Healing

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Abstract: This article offers insights into conceptualizing a different angle of cultural heritage in its intangible form and generational inheritance, in relation to migrant community bonds and their impacts on embodied stories of trauma and healing. This article aims to contribute to understanding how cultural and historical knowledge of heritage is passed from one generation to the next, with deep emotional impacts, whether trauma or self-development. While engaging in an interdisciplinary dialogue with Bion's work, we explore nodes of divergence and convergence in how gendered and embodied migrant sexuality/identity stories of trauma and healing exemplify the call for research to engage with perspectives of social and cultural differences. This understanding of contested cultural heritage and how belonging can be achieved links to ethnic–ancestral/national consciousness, as well as the struggle to belong among first- and second-generation migrants. The empirical data draws from extensive ethnographic, multi-method, multi-sited, comparative, and narrative research conducted with first- and second-generation migrants. The analysis is situated within Bion's theory and articulated through an interpretative interdisciplinary framework aiming to unravel the complexity of the phenomena of mobility and identity construction. This analysis exemplifies the power dynamics inherent in migrant inter/intragenerational relations shaped by cultural heritage.

Keywords: migration; cultural heritage; gender; identity; sexuality; trauma; belonging; healing

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1. Introducing Ephemeral and Fluid Livelihoods of Migrancy

One of the most transformative and impactful phenomena in historical and contemporary social life is global migration, as well as various kinds of mobilities. These often leave indelible shades of experiential strains and constraints on how movement across borders shapes relations and livelihoods [1–5]. The benefits accrued have often historically improved livelihoods in such cases in which economic destitution, political exile, and racialized and sexualized exclusions have led to migration. However, subsequent struggles of incorporation into the host society, due to the loss of home cultural values and norms, have also led to estrangement and an unattainable sense of belonging [6–8]. In such cases, struggles over identity are often the costs that individual migrants and groups have to face [9]. Coupled with this complexity, inter- and intra-generational relations are also often challenged, as is the very notion of 'generation' in migrant communities, especially in the case of first- and second-generation migrants, where fragile and fractured identification projects are at stake [10–12]. Yet, it is important not to disregard how cultural heritage impacts migrant identities and generational relations.

This article deals with the latter issues of fragile and fractured selves, along with the entangled interrelationships between first- and second-generation migrants, in under-

standing how cultural heritage and ethnic consciousness shape both gendered identities and family relations, with a focus on intimacy and sexuality. This article addresses these issues by employing an eclectic synthesis of Bionian theory and an interpretative interdisciplinary framework that incorporates migrant life stories and a narrative ethnography of the Greek diaspora.

This article offers insights into conceptualizing a different angle of cultural heritage. More specifically, in its intangible form and generational inheritance in the sense of migrant community bonds and their impacts on embodied stories of trauma and healing. This article aims to contribute to understanding how cultural and historical knowledge of heritage is passed from one generation to the next, with deep emotional impacts, whether trauma or self-development. The analytical lens sheds light on how an interdisciplinary analysis that centers on pathways of resistance to gendered and embodied trauma can become a transformative opportunity for healing, thus embracing cultural heritage as a legacy of empowerment. The article theorizes the concept of 'contested cultural heritage (un)be/longings', endeavoring to contribute to understanding how the generational transmission of cultural heritage is negotiated, adopted, and potentially rejected by certain generations. The contribution of this in-depth analysis of how cultural heritage can be conceptualized in tandem with migrant generations, and how the concept is operationalized in their narratives, offers a theoretical application of cultural heritage in transnational contexts.

The use of narrative extracts offers the voices of migrant participants through an interpretative framework. This is aligned with those approaches that utilize experience as informative of the processes within which social actors are 'engaged and embedded and which involve negotiations with multiple and competing norms and discourses in relation to their diverse social identities' [13]. Alongside interpretations of narratives of sexuality rooted in what participants choose to disclose and the kinds of meaning that narrators give to their individual narratives, narrations become 'at once already an interpretation and also in need of interpretation' [14]. By bridging the psychoanalytic work of Wilfred Bion with critical interdisciplinary feminist analyses of how gendered migrant identities intersect with cultural heritage, sexuality, identity, and family studies, the analysis aims to unravel how temporalities and spatialities of the *ethnic self* shape, constrain, or contain the *suffering self* when love and desire are confronted by tradition and kinship.

The Greek diaspora offers an intriguing case for examining issues of inter- and intra-generational interactions and confrontations regarding issues of intimacy and sexuality. The Greeks, as a classical diaspora, have 'made an off-stage appearance' [15] in historical movements, having also produced the very concept etymologically to connote dispersal from the ancestral homeland and the transplanting of the group into another territory, the hostland. Such movements have been historically characterized by 'the traumatic dispersal from an original homeland and the salience of the homeland in the collective memory of a forcibly dispersed group' [15]. Whereas forcible dispersion may be due to a variety of factors, including politics, poverty, environmental catastrophe, and the search for freedom in relation to sexuality, the trauma of dispersal can often saturate subsequent generations when ethno-cultural consciousness and cultural heritage are in antagonistic opposition to lifestyle and personal identity. Such confrontational clashes were frequent in my studies of the Greek diaspora and their contesting identities [16] (and have been examined to some limited and varying extent in the Greek-Canadian case [17], the Greek-Australian case [18], and the Greek-German case [19]. However, none of these studies utilized a multi-methodological approach with a combination of a psychoanalytic and interpretative focus to provide insight into the embodied, sensual, and emotive landscapes of such generational relations in the diaspora through the prism of cultural heritage.

What this article wishes to highlight is how cultural heritage intersects with the disjuncture between the 'ethnic self' and the 'gendered/sexed self', as well as between the ideals and aspirations of the ethnic family (migrant first generation) and the desire/agency that the offspring (migrant second generation) strive to liberate and enact. While in other published research [20] I have explored the heteronormative hegemonies of the nation as expressed and experienced by diasporic gay men, this article focuses on the 'poiesis of parenting/parenthood' as inculcating a 'poetics of pain' with migrant first-generation fixedness in a role of guardians of virtue when offspring negotiate repressed sexual identities. Such a dramaturgical dyad is grounded in the migrant intergenerational paradigm of ontological sameness of the ethnic (heteronormative/patriarchal) self.

In drawing on a threefold analysis, this article examines instances of what I have conceptualized here as the '*saturated-objectified ethnic self*', the '*shattered-seeking cultural self*', and the '*synthesized-subjective liberating self*'. This analysis is one that allows participants to follow a courageous and compassionate line of narration, but also one with critical insight into the interconnected domains of psychoanalysis and a feminist-driven gender/sexuality/cultural politics/cultural heritage studies approach. This enables the discussion to articulate and give voice to trauma in order to allow a discursive platform for healing. The article aims to offer insight into currently relevant cultural politics and cultural heritage themes that have wider global significance in understanding how micro-sociologies of everyday interaction and agency regarding intimacy, sexuality, and identity are entangled with intersecting structures of the nation, filtered through the power dynamics emerging in family relations. The discussion of these themes is relevant to any migrant, refugee, or displaced individual or group sharing similar stories in connection with cultural heritage.

Between quantitative measuring devices, such as the 'ethnosizer' [21], which is used to measure ethnic identification in relation to host country integration, and the more in-depth qualitative approaches that ethnographically unveil the meanings of belonging and ethnic selfhood [22], the core elements that translate any understanding of nationness as ethnic consciousness are those that define Greekness as an exemplifier *par excellence*. More explicitly, such adherence to Greekness as an ethnic identity is translated in the form of absolute devotion to the cultural, moral, and religious ancestral heritage principles that bind the ethnos; a revered obedience to these ancestral norms, a strict observance of ethnic practices, and a limitless loyalty to kinship, the family, and its (patriarchal) morality.

Stephen Frosh [23] suggests that 'the ambiguities of sexual difference revolve around uncertainty over the content and fixedness of the categories "masculine" and "feminine". Within psychoanalysis, this is expressed by a fascination with gender divergence which has been characteristic of psychoanalytic theory since its inception, accompanied by a playful and ambivalent tradition of transgression'. It is the very act of 'transgression', that dangerous act of dissidence, that is incompatible with the center of all things Greek. Yet, often, transgressive acts loom at the core of its nucleus and threaten its existence. Faithfulness to Greekness is translated in the form of extreme adherence to the ethno-cultural pillars that connect the members of the ethnic group, a revered compliance with such norms, a strict observance of such practices, and an eternal loyalty to the ethnic family.

Yet, some extraordinary ethnographic evidence destabilizes and challenges both gender and sexuality in a performative renegotiation of identity. Elisabeth Kirtsoglou's [24] fascinating and revealing book entitled, *For the love of women: gender, identity and same-sex relations in a Greek provincial town*, introduces us to the mysterious world of the '*parea*', a lesbian secret society based in a small town outside Athens, whose surreptitious existence is unknown to the broader community, even the very customers and owners of the local night-spot where they meet, flirt, dance, drink, and engage in intense sexual inter-

actions. Although many of the women are married with children and lead conventional 'Greek lives', their same-sex desire is not interpreted by any of them as an expression of gay/lesbian sexuality, but rather as a complex double life of love, friendship, passion, relationships, and desire, as well as an idiosyncratic challenge to the heterosexual bias of Greek chauvinism and Greek masculine culture. The parea's gendered performances take place in a highly visible public space, thereby engaging in a performativity of 'concealment and display' [24,25] within a discursive field of identity-making known as the 'poetics of personhood' [26], which places the gendered self in defiance of hegemonic discourse. Thus, Kirtsoglou [24] sees the women protagonists in her work as articulating sophisticated narratives of resistance. These narratives try to negotiate the lived contradictions of Kirtsoglou's informants' daily lives into a meaningful statement about the self and the experience of being, first and foremost, a woman who happens to have a homoerotic sexuality in a largely heterocentric Greek provincial town. As a colloquial term, 'parea' in Greek stands for 'company', and it often refers to a group of friends keeping company. For a detailed account of how 'parea' has been deciphered in the anthropology of Greece literature, refer to Kirtsoglou (4–5) [24].

Coupled with wider social, economic, and political crises over the last decade and a half, a number of shocking scandals have rocked both the Greek Orthodox Church and the Greek State. These range, for instance, from financial and sexual scandals committed by the former Bishop of Attica, who was deposed by the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece amid charges of such financial and sexual scandals, to the imprisonment of an ex-Defence Minister jailed for corruption in what has been viewed as an 'anti-corruption crusade' to appease the debt- and austerity-ridden Greek public. In just two of the most high-profile cases in recent history, the high-rolling, extravagant lifestyles enjoyed by both the former clergyman and the former politician took center stage in the media. Similarly, the populist discourse reflected the outrage expressed by Greeks who felt ridiculed, violated, and betrayed by both the Church and the State. One can only speculate that such devastating blows to the core of the nation can cast some doubt on the sacredness of religion and the ethnos. Nevertheless, caution is necessary in making any definitive claims since such outcomes are beyond the scope of the particular themes tackled in this article; however, they are core nodes in the cultural heritage assemblage.

2. Methodological Notes and Literature Frames

This article draws on two particular samples of study data for its empirical basis. These particular samples comprise Greek-American and Greek-Danish participants, including both first- and second-generation migrants. Each sample comprises a total of 40 life stories, with ages ranging between 20 and 85 years old.

While my investigation of the Greek diaspora has involved studies of first- and second-generation migrants and return migrants with multi-sited, multi-method qualitative and ethnographic research in Greece, Cyprus, Germany, Denmark, and the United States, this article draws on two specific study samples of data that I have gathered. These comprise Greek-American and Greek-Danish migrant participants. More specifically, the Greek-American sample consists of 40 life stories of migrants aged 20–70, and the Greek-Danish sample consists of 40 life stories of migrants aged 25–85. All participant names used in this article are pseudonyms.

The methodological tools used to analyze the selected data draw from a new method of qualitative data analysis that builds on the central role that themes play and is guided by their development. This method, advanced by Morgan and Nica [27], is called *Iterative Thematic Inquiry* (ITI), and as its most notable features, the scholars underscore the early development of themes through an initial stage of assessing preconceptions and reliance

on writing rather than coding, thus continually revising tentative results to generate the final set of themes. My encounter with ITI, when I discovered this new method, was a revelation in combining reflexive practices and being able to re-assess a bulk of data from different projects and timeframes. This process took place in combination with my analytical distillation of fieldnotes from long periods of ethnographic fieldwork in multi-site and translocal/transnational spaces across several countries.

This approach enabled me to focus on identifying themes at the start, but also continuing throughout, thereby refining the analysis. These were useful tools to confront any preconceptions, as Morgan and Nica [27] rightly suggest, and to continue revising them while driving forward analytical activities. This process was also meaningful in identifying how expressing the themes through narrative extracts was selected as a means of communicating the results, which is in line with ITI principles.

Thus, in this final third phase, with the listing of tentative themes, a coding system was also developed based on the revised set of themes that was distilled in phase two, and this system was then applied in phase four, in which final coding generated items for the codebook. These items included the role of cultural heritage in shaping migrant identity; the impact of gender on experiences of understanding and forming a sense of identity and sexuality; and the impact of family and generational dynamics on experiences of belonging, trauma, and healing. In the fourth and final step, these codings were used to identify and mark the corresponding segments of the transcriptions; hence, the extracts selected for this article are based on the evaluation from this last step.

Following this methodological note, I will now briefly mention the key literature framings that have contextualized the bodies of work that inform the analysis.

Intergenerational trauma generally refers to the ways in which trauma experienced in one generation affects the health and well-being of future generations [28]. Taking into consideration intergenerational trauma in the analysis would have shifted the focus to first-generation data, which are not part of this article; instead it is the second generation's interpretations, shared meanings, and experiences that this article focuses on. While this article focuses on the internal dynamics of the Greek diaspora community, it is also important to acknowledge the external dynamics in the context of the 'host' country for the first generation and the country of birth for second-generation migrants [9]. Even in cases in which the Greek diaspora has achieved upward mobility and other kinds of 'success' with the majority population, there will inevitably be elements of family histories where experiences and memories of trauma, war, loss, and exile exacerbate gendered and other ethno-cultural norms [29]. As diasporas and generationally, these communities constitute complex historicized entities shaped by movement and history, where 'roots and routes' position them in how they socially construct their sense of identity and belonging [30,31]. This is where the core argument of the article unfolds. Namely, cultural heritage can be conceptualized in relation to migrant community generational relations, which shape a notion of cultural heritage through emotional impacts, whether trauma or self-development. This article links the psychoanalytical work of Bion with migrant narratives that focus specifically on identity and sexuality stories to understand how un/belonging emerges. Power dynamics are at the center of these relations and are shaped by cultural heritage.

Cultural heritage is an outcome of the values that either an entire community or a number of distinct groupings within communities hold, which by extension, are bonded in projecting cultural practices, customs, and the memorialization of sites and places that hold particular meaning in relation to the past. Hence, these groups aim to preserve and maintain cultural heritage values in the present and for the future. At the same time, heritage values are subject to intergenerational change, as they are mutable and susceptible to a sense of belonging/identity/place and the wider impacts of emotional well-being,

conviviality, or exclusion. In the varying uses of heritage [32], there exists a complex environment where cultural heritage values are multiple and frequently incommensurable or even in conflict [33], highlighting the potential dissonance between their value and what different generations consider relevant to retain, pass on, and maintain [34].

Cultural heritage plays a central role in terms of preserving a sense of community and addressing social needs when other development trends can erode and destroy the social fabric of community cohesion [35]. As such, heritage becomes a construct of social relations and processes that signify value, worth, and meaning in what counts as part of those communities. Cultural heritage is central in the very creation of a sense of community, although the concept of 'community' is not always straightforward [36]. By extension, cultural heritage is very relevant to community identity, well-being, and a sense of place, and its importance is widely acknowledged in that it fosters both social and economic progress. Yet, as the final HERIWELL report [37] indicates, 'how to measure the impacts of cultural heritage on individual and societal wellbeing remains a challenge'. HERIWELL adopts the Faro Convention definition of cultural heritage, considering heritage as the 'cultural capital' inherited from the past, which people consider an expression of their evolving values, beliefs, knowledge, and traditions. Moreover, by viewing intangible knowledge as cultural heritage, the definition of cultural heritage is expanded [32,38,39]. At the same time, well-being encompasses both individual and societal well-being. The HERIWELL definition of societal well-being includes three main dimensions: quality of life, focusing on the personal, individual sphere of life; societal cohesion, focusing on a more collective dimension; and material conditions, focusing on the economic dimension at both the individual and community levels. I concur with Byrne [40] that heritage practice is characterized by a nation-centric lens when it comes to the heritage of migration and propose the concept of 'heritage corridor' to move away from the nation-state frame and any kind of methodological nationalism [41,42]. Here, methodological nationalism is seen as the assumption that the nation/state/society is the natural social and political form of the modern world. I, too, reject this anchoring and see instead that cultural heritage is negotiated, constructed, experienced, and shaped by the intergenerational and intragenerational experiences of migrants as active agents, and their subjectivities resist any essentialized meanings of heritage shaping their identities. Drawing on cultural heritage knowledge and resources can have significant potential if deployed to address wider social and societal migration issues [43], but we should not overlook the role of individual agency in how this knowledge is adapted and adopted by migrants.

Place-based attachments foster attachment through a sense of place linked to cultural heritage, serving as an important place-making process. These processes acknowledge cultural values, elements of local history, and cultural traditions through memories and ritualized social practices [44]. As Csurgó and Smith [45] suggest, 'a sense of place cannot be considered in isolation from cultural heritage. Social and intangible aspects of cultural heritage are the most important for place-making, especially authentic local tradition'. It has been well documented that, unaligned unlike modernity and the industrialization of Western Europe, with its developmental pathway impacting social geographies of 'western' nation-states, Greece straddles the periphery of East and West and engages with the cultural geographies of the Balkans, the Mediterranean, and Southern Europe as it negotiates its modern identity and place [46–48]. Indeed, it has been strongly suggested 'that Greece's history and cultural background have not been commensurable with that of the rest of Europe given the socio-historical impacts of the Ottoman period and political upheavals through the twentieth century, leading to areas of cultural misapprehension on both sides', identified as 'cultural mismatches', such as culturally specific aspects of Greek notions of time and personal identity, and attitudes toward authority [49].

Emotional geographies are integral to mobilities and diasporic lives [50]. As Beatty [51] contends, for their empirical investigation, we must realize that they are tailor-made and interwoven with intimate circumstances, biographies, the dramas of everyday life, and framing contexts, and they can only make sense if we analyze, observe, and account for them within the histories of relations that define us as people. It is the social, and not the private, that goes beyond the personal, thereby transforming such experiences from the level of individual particularity to the collective. This is a critical point when it comes to analyzing trauma, and there is seminal work in this respect: 'Trauma is both the product of an experience of inhumanity and the proof of the humanity of those who have endured it' [52]. The prevalence of the concept of trauma and its moral economy in contemporary society is due to its new relations to time and memory, mourning and obligations, as well as the psychological concept of trauma that has enabled us to give a name to all these relationships. While the subjective experiences of trauma might remain unknown to us, it is the political processes of subjectification that provide an anthropology extending from the individual to a broader understanding of the common sense of things (ibid).

One of the earliest studies regarding the Greek diaspora on issues of migrancy, refugees, memories, and feelings of un/belonging is the work of Hirschon [53], and before that, an exploration of gender relations in Greece [54]. Hirschon, in her fieldwork and research findings, observed a clear division of gender roles that was apparent in all aspects of life in the location of her fieldwork, Kokkinia, Pireus. One of the several paradoxical findings, according to Hirschon, was the complementarity of female and male roles, as well as the existence of pronounced religious activity and sentiment, despite or in spite of an overall leftist political tendency and the gender structure and organization of social life alongside gender roles. In the rural and island context of the Greek community in Crete, other social constructions, for instance, of masculinities, also point to more aggressive and hegemonic forms, which have historically been used to gain small victories. However, as anthropologically observed, these forms have, over time, become a source of political marginality [55]. These works by Hirschon and Herzfeld are important anthropological works that have guided generations of ethnographers in the several decades that followed, similar to those who developed robust analyses of the 'honour and shame' schema underpinning Greek family, social, cultural, and political relations.

The 'honour and shame' discourse is an important part of a major body of works in the anthropology of Greece studies that has accumulated over the past decades. This body of work also includes studies on Cyprus and the wider Mediterranean studies of culture [56–59]. Here are some key themes concerning 'honour and shame' that emerged in these works: It is quite a pervasive notion and a system of values that has penetrated Mediterranean societies for generations. The 'honour and shame' discourse has remnants that can even be seen today in particular behaviors, although it is not exclusive to this geographic region, given the concept and practice of 'honour killings' [60]. Honor has been almost universally regarded as an invaluable asset for individuals and collectivities, while shame is seen as a detrimental deficit to reputation and social standing. From antiquity to modernity, an important objective in life within this discourse is for the individual and their family to be seen as honorable and to avoid, at all costs, any public sense of shame. These are all quite gendered processes, so social anthropologists have studied them in particular communities and societies, including Greece (as above), to understand their wider representations, practices, limitations, variations, and impacts. As a binary paired concept, 'honour and shame' extends to how social respect is gained and lost through transgressions and forbidden behaviors, especially in the control of women's modesty through a respectable appearance, avoiding anything too revealing and sexual behaviors, either explicit or implicit. While primarily focusing on heteronormative behaviors, it also

includes the shaming of alternative lifestyles and non-heteronormative sexualities and identities. In this respect, gender is an important category for analyzing conflict [61], and such conflictual relationships can emerge within and between generations. These are some of the core framings that contextualize the discussion of the empirical material that follows.

In the two sections that follow, this article draws from migrant participant narrative accounts to address issues of embodied and performative gendered trauma and healing regarding what Muriel Dimen [62] terms 'owning sexual intentionality'. The section on suffering and healing selves examines how time and space are integral in shaping migrant identities through the strains and negotiations of intergenerational relations and the construction of social roles, which are key ingredients in preserving normative elements of cultural heritage. The section on gendered and sexualized ethnicities traces how mobilities intersect in the un/making of traumatic experiences regarding migrant identities. Finally, the concluding section reflects on the boundaries and bridging of Bionian theories with psychosocial migrant research in understanding gendered and sexualized diasporic identities. The conclusion synthesizes some central highlights and offers suggestions for future research in this domain of expanding work on cultural heritage in combination with mobilities studies.

3. Temporalities and Spatialities of Suffering and Healing Selves

According to Thomas Ogden, 'in Bion's hands, the word "container" with its benign connotations of a stable, sturdy delineating function-becomes a word that denotes the full spectrum of ways of processing experience from the most destructive and deadening to the most creative and growth-promoting' [63]. Bion's [64–66] *container-contained* conceptualization exemplifies one of his most salient contributions to psychoanalytic thinking. The conceptual framework of 'container-contained' is fundamental to Bionian thinking and grounds discussions of the psychoanalytic function of the personality, thus suggesting that 'the human personality is constitutionally equipped with the potential for a set of mental operations that serves the function of doing conscious and unconscious psychological work on emotional experience (a process that issues in psychicgrowth)' [63]. Thus, 'the idea of the container-contained addresses not what we think, but the way we think, that is, how we process lived experience and what occurs psychically when we are unable to do psychological work with that experience' (ibid: 1354).

At the same time, by linking insights from feminist/cultural politics/cultural heritage studies [67] (with Bionian thinking, we are able to deepen our understanding of the affective communications of familial relations through the concept of the 'container/contained' relationship in kin interactions. Crociani-Windlanda and Paul Hoggett [68] indicate in their reading (as social scientists) of Bion that 'the container/contained relationship can be parasitic as well as symbiotic, with the former leading to mental impoverishment rather than mental growth. In other words, the symbolic resources available to an individual or group can be used for better or worse, something illustrated by populist parties and leaders', as they demonstrated in their work. In a similar vein, this work grounds the psychosocial as an illuminating research approach to migration research, emphasizing that the social/societal analytical framing is inextricably relational to casting light on social relations, while concentrating on how transformations that occur in participants' internal worlds are, by extension, constituted through the experiential unfolding of intimate personal and family relations. The focus on understanding identities and sexualities in the context of social action is a dynamic context in which to use a combined feminist/psychosocial approach, and the offspring–parental relationship is perhaps the most relational of all societal interactions, with intersubjective effects that ripple out into all other relationships and identities [69].

This becomes robustly coherent when considering Wendy Holloway's observation that 'Bion's concept of the container-contained relationship not only affords a powerful tool for understanding the tension and mobilization of intersubjectivity and individuality . . ., it also provides a radical foundation for a psycho-social research epistemology. We learn through identifications with objects. This is at the core of the idea that researchers can use their subjectivity as an instrument of knowing. Applied thus, it is . . . about researchers identifying with the . . . participating in the research. . . . Thinking in this paradigm is based in intersubjective not intrapsychic processes; moreover, it does not split the cognitive and affective (for Bion, the capacity to think depends on the processing of emotions). Bion's phrase "learning by experience refers to this kind of thinking"' [69].

Bion uses the approach of 'projective identification', which describes a mechanism that enables unconscious communication of meaning and emotion within the container and contained dynamic. Bion introduced the notion of 'the mother acting as a container for the infant/child's projections' and how she provides emotional containment when these projections are processed by the mother and the experience is returned to the infant in a nurturing way, helping them feel contained. This is the primary reason that I have operationalized Bion's 'container-contained' schema, as it speaks to how first-generation migrants do or do not harness cultural heritage to convey nurturing and soothing elements for their offspring, and, in turn, how the second generation processes what they receive from this generational transmission. These processes link generations with cultural heritage and also offer opportunities to see how 'homing' manifests through everyday social experiences. These are interconnected experiences and aspirations of relational, cultural, and material features of what it means to feel at home, as both 'an existential struggle toward a good-enough state of being at home' and 'as a visible manifestation of group, societal and existential inequalities' [70].

The richness of emotions in the migrant narrative accounts (coupled with moments of saturation of intensity/emotivity in the actual research experience) was exemplified in stories of how identities and sexualities intersected with family dynamics, cultural heritage, and ethnic norms. It is revealing to note that with research into diasporic, translocal, transnational, and return migrant Greek communities, explorations of gender and sexual identities were not only shaped by such mobilities but also performed, signified, mirrored, negotiated, and articulated through acts/causes/outcomes of movement grounded in the ethnic/cultural/generational signification of the phenomenon.

One of the most momentous aspects of suffering articulated by the study participants has been that of exclusionary behavior and exclusion as experiential trauma, whether in resisting cultural norms or expressing alternative lifestyles and sexualities that are non-conformist to the ethno-cultural values of the first generation. As Archagelo notes through a Bionian approach in her research with socially excluded children, such an experience reflects 'a parasitic container–contained relationship and, consequently, a catastrophic experience on the subjects' [71]. One participant in the study, Emile, stated the following:

> Greeks are racists. And, I am even more shocked when I think about my comrades on the Left because we were always repressed and I did not expect that we would be worse than all other Europeans. But Greeks never sever their ties with their children when they grow up, they desperately try to keep their kids at home, as much as they can, even in their forties or fifties which sounds ridiculous but the Danes do the opposite, they try to let them leave the parental house as young as possible so they can become autonomous and independent. I know the Greeks say that they have stronger family ties but in reality, they are tyrants and make their kids suffocate by controlling them all the time. (Emile, 50 years old, Greek-Danish/GD)

Parental control in the Greek diasporic context acts as an insulator, a protective shield for the morality of the second generation, as among the essential parental responsibilities is that of maintaining 'ethnic values and morals'. The latter includes all aspects of lifestyle and dress code that conform to 'respectability' [72], which is instilled through a Greek (Orthodox) upbringing. Given the restrictions that religiosity imposes by rejecting particular lifestyles/dress codes (and most importantly, sexuality as pleasure, sexuality outside of religious matrimony, and diversity in sexual identities and practices), the implementation of these values in parenting can also involve (emotional and physical) aggressive acts to instill Greek values.

Here are some extracts on how trauma stemming from family relations has impacted participants. The words and descriptions of these experiences are quite raw and powerful. They are preceded by the arguments that Bion advances, linking his thoughts with the participants' voices as follows:

What does have a lasting effect? Anything that stimulates, mobilizes, creates feelings belonging to the love–hate spectrum [73]. [The binary of 'love-hate' is aligned with the 'container-contained' and 'honour-shame' configurations. Here it is also time that is delineated by its 'lasting effect', and so are the emotional impacts of these power dynamics, which can stimulate as much as they can mobilize and create a resurfacing of feelings. Memory is central to how all these affective experiences emerge as trauma is remembered].

> Well, how can I forget? It's still very painful. My entire life is one big trauma wrapped into one big lie I tell myself and others to disguise my family's hypocrisy and hatred for anything progressive. Very conservative, extremely traditional, frozen in time, peasant-like values of honour and shame. But one-sided, patriarchal and oppressive for the women only, the good, pure, obedient, subservient Greek daughters, mothers, wives, sisters. They have to all be virgins, perfect housewives and domestic goddesses serving the men, never to rest or complain. Yes, that encapsulates the gist of the fairy tale but there is a lot more detail of blood, sweat and tears. Overprotective, strict, aggressive, unyielding, rigid and unreasonable, thinking still to this day that because they gave birth to you then they own you and you owe them for life. Both parents, but mostly the monster father. Yes, I'll hate them to the day I die because they stole my life, they crushed my dreams, they destroyed my soul. Why wouldn't I be bitter and toxic, years of poison seeping through my skin and psyche. (Kassandra, 33 years old, Greek American/GA)

> I will despise them forever. They have devoured my past, present and future. My mother would accompany me to the corner store if I wanted to get fucking gum! And then she would have my father drop me off and pick me up from fucking University! They claim it was to protect me because they love me, they care about me and the world out there is bad and dangerous. Well now they are stuck with me. Since my nervous breakdown I had to quit work and abandon my career. I just stay home with them for decades now. Of course, they are not happy. They are miserable because now they are old and feeble, but I am ill and helpless and they are now forced to take care of me and watch me around the clock in case I did something stupid. I bet they regret it now being so overprotective and stuck with me for good. (Korina, 41 years old, GA)

The emotional intensity of the extracts above reveals very powerful feelings, including resentment and anger toward the parental, possibly coercive, control and rigid behaviors that have led to traumatic experiences, even to mental health-related illnesses. These represent failures in manifesting a 'container-contained' relationship of experiences that would

lead to nurturing strong and independent lives for resilient and self-reliant individuals. They illustrate chronic trauma that has led to regimented behaviors that do not provide autonomy and independence but rather indicate co-dependency and enmeshed lives filled with unfulfilled goals and ambitions.

How does the person know of pain so impalpable that its intensity, pure intensity, is so intense that it cannot be tolerated but must be destroyed even if it involves the murder of the 'anatomical' individual? [73] [There are layers of symbolism here in viewing the migrant self as a 'self-hating ethnic-self' where the loathing and despising of how cultural heritage can bring pain can only be obliterated by erasing the very thing that mirrors those traits. Hence it is achieved by destroying that very self and symbolically healing, like the Phoenix rising from its ashes, leading to a rebirth and renewal of a new self and a new embeddedness of only the constructive elements of cultural heritage as healing].

> I have plenty of regrets. I have encountered numerous difficulties in adjusting to having Greek parents and they are far too multifarious to list here. To be brief, Greece is a poor, backward nation and one of my greatest masturbatory fantasies is to see their beloved homeland evaporate, although I firmly expect to die in this stinking cesspool. Calling Greece a nation that I would feel at home in is an insult to my education and sense of self. Suffice it to say that I come from a degenerate race of miserable, self-serving troglodytes. I have had many, many opportunities to learn more about my debased race. I have very little pride on the gigantic accomplishments of the Hellenes since the birth of Jesus. The outstanding (or salient) elements of the Greek character are: a sense of ignorance; an amazing ability to lie to oneself; a desire to relax and do little or nothing. I would rather kill myself than think of myself as one of these miserable barbarians. We speak Greek when we talk about simple, everyday matters. If I had my way, we would drop Greek in favour of a civilized tongue. I would like to demur on this point of loving, caring parents who sacrifice their lives for their children. The most challenging part of our relationship (for them) must be that I hate them and this place (Greece) and everything it stands for. For me, I would like to be less angry, and I wish I didn't let them see it sometimes. If I could, I would stand time and nature on their respective heads, murder God and Jesus, and live through even such an experience to escape and survive. (Andrew, 43 years old, GA)

All extracts above exhibit a degree of intense emotionality that captures a range of emotions that include extensive rage, regret, pain, trauma, sadness, and fear, as well as many other feelings of powerlessness, but also resistance. There is a discussion of cultural heritage here as a signifier of backwardness, control, coercion, violence, hypocrisy, and misery. The narrative extracts above are saturated with images of lost childhoods and a language that signifies exile in a context of 'existential migration' [74] that resemble existential liminality in the realm of trauma. The excerpts powerfully and emotively articulate extreme parental behavior that leads to suffering and what is described as oppressive, repressive, and unbearable acts, translated as the raison d'être of ethnic (Greek) parenting. In articulating pain and mapping experiences of trauma, participants challenge normative orders of identity in disorienting singular spatio-temporal narratives that valorize the kind of ethno-cultural values that perpetuate patriarchal, sexist, and heteronormative cultures and lifestyles.

In the next section, the narrative optic for exploring trauma and healing in gendered and sexualized ethnic lives is one that explores the relationship between these emplaced, grounded, lived ethnic experiences and intimacy, domesticity, and homing, where they unfold, thus blurring a multi-scalar, co-constitutive account of mobilities and social modalities. This multi-scalar trajectory unravels the micro-spaces of inner personal narratives, the

meso-spaces of home/domestic interactions, and the macro-spaces of globalized mobility and migrant lives.

4. Trauma and Trajectory in Gendered and Sexualized Ethnicities

The narrative context illuminates the 'personal perspective' as an analytical concept; however, this extends beyond the actual thoughts, reflections, and storied accounts [75] to the 'meaning-making' that participants engage in within a therapeutic context, where ongoing contextualized social impact and social processes can be situated and understood. Thus, the conceptualization becomes a bridging framework from the personal/therapeutic to the socially mediated/collective ascription of such trajectories of gendering and sexing migrant experiences. The complexity of psychoanalytic constellations, combined with the discursive potential of storied selves, can produce connected critical analyses. These analyses embrace psychosocial experiences of traumatizing narratives as situated within wider sociocultural phenomena and entities, such as migration and the nation. By situating these phenomena within the context of cultural heritage, we can further problematize their utility in how identities are constructed or constrained by these norms.

There are also psychological differences between different kinds of memory, especially regarding migrants. Various episodic memories from different life events that express violence are connected to the kinds of trauma that migrant groups experience, whether from long-standing exclusion and racism or from all kinds of discrimination and structural or institutional violence. An exemplary analysis of these semantic forms of structural violence and how they become part of migrant identity and memory of different experiences of conflict is what Linstroth [76] terms 'diachronic' vs. 'synchronic' trauma: 'Long-term trauma of this kind experienced through discrimination, social segregation and oppression, I will call here "diachronic trauma". Such forms of trauma are not limited to one generation but may affect subsequent generations, and may form structural aspects of violence in society'. . . .'In relating to episodic forms of memory, we may view them as synchronic structures, episodes of trauma in an individual's life. These are episodes I will call "synchronic trauma", because they structure the political refugee experience as recalling the time of forced migration and the episodes of witnessed violence and/or experienced violence which defined their lives and that of their parents and their ethnic groups. Such synchronic episodes of trauma have significant claims upon the identity of a particular individual'.

Some participant extracts that illustrate these links between personal trauma and societal expectations are as follows:

> Not easy to reconcile my identity with my sexuality. To be gay and to be Greek is a burden. (George, 40 years old, GA)

> For a long time, I thought I was an alcoholic, always drinking at parties, I always sneaked it from the store. There was a period when I did but luckily, I didn't kill anybody and end up like them depressed, schizophrenic, crazy. . . stuck in whatever kind of deal, you know? Years with a bunch of idiots and assholes that are depressed, basically suicidal but don't have the courage to pull the trigger so they do it slowly by drink. That is a hell of a way to grow up especially in the violent atmosphere of the Greek migrant family. Conflict. Yeah. That I am a superhero here to do something but it is a long time that I have been afraid to do that because I am afraid of the consequences—what I think it might be. So yeah just to find myself on each of the ways like I've changed names in different places, used that name to work on something else on my personality and I don't know, growth, I mean. . . yeah I was raised by Greeks. My blood is Greek, my temperament. . . First of all I would have to wait until after my mom passes away otherwise it would kill her! Yeah. She has asked me a couple of times why don't

> you write a book and I say: 'Mom, because I don't think you want to know some of the stuff I have done!' You know, and, we talked a bit about that. Her biggest fear was drugs and I said well you know I smoke grass. I smoke every day, more than I should, but you know most people that know me know that I am not one of the... I just smoke. It is an addiction, whatever and with, I've tried coke and I've tried... drinking a lot, whatever and I explained her that, that was in my first-year traveling, that was coke, that was in the bathroom at work, double shift, doing that to keep going and I realized that, wait a minute I am using this to live now instead of just living. (Harry, 37 years old, GD)

> It is so closed and inhibited and closeted and so, you know with my family they ask about me: 'Are you dating a girl?' and things like that and yeah I just don't bring to my local family my partners, you know, my mom, my aunt, my mom's first cousin, their children that ... 'Oh yeah I met somebody'. I guess I have adapted. I have adopted the Greek. I have adopted the Greek mentality of kind of you know of how to deny my sexuality around my family. It is hard being gay in a Greek family. (Leo, 35 years old, GA)

> Very old-fashioned and conservative behavior, especially with their daughters. They don't let them be free and independent. They police the girls but they don't mind if their boys fuck every woman in sight, and they don't even make the connection that those girls are somebody's daughters, instead they are proud of their sons and they don't care about the daughters of others as long as their daughter is a virgin. Such stereotypical morality of hypocrisy, very old-fashioned, honour and morality, idiotic and it really bothers me that sons have more value than daughters even today and I see it loud and clear in my own family. Pure inequality, and they don't want to admit it as hypocritical Greeks but as a Greek-Danish woman, I can see it, they do it in my own family, my aunts, uncles, everybody. (Nicole, 38 years old, GD)

Underpinning the exploration of how sexualities are shaped by cultural heritage, I situate the discussion of the extracts within Foucault's [77] key question that guided his own examination of the historical dynamics in Greek and Greco-Roman culture, as unpacked in Vol. 2 of The History of Sexuality: 'how, why, and in what forms was sexuality constituted as a moral domain? Why this ethical concern that was so persistent despite its varying forms and intensity? Why this "problematization"? But, after all, this was the proper task of a history of thought, as against a history of behaviors or representations: to define the conditions in which human beings "problematize" what they are, what they do, and the world in which they live'.

Some of the experiences vividly described by participants above underscore egregiously insidious acts that they appear to attribute to a violent ethnic family upbringing, and within that background, alluding to 'Greekness' and 'Greek values' as the cultural heritage that has shaped such behaviors. Participants also elaborated on very conservative and old-fashioned parental behavior that explicitly exemplified patriarchal and homophobic exclusions within the family context. While patriarchal assumptions have shaped concepts of fatherhood in the psychoanalytic discipline, the founding principle of patriarchy in the symbolic power of the father has been met with an extensive and lengthy silence regarding the cultures of men's parental roles, relationships, and experiential interactions [78]. The contradictory tensions between the symbolic presence and substantive absence of migrant fathering and migrant mothering practices require critical insight into the intimacies and interactions of these tensions, especially regarding gendered and sexual identities, most sharply through a feminist critique [20].

Sexuality in the Greek family is subject to 'negotiation' regarding its conformity to what is considered 'natural', and, by extension, the voices of participants in this and other studies [79] suggest that contemporary (Greek/diasporic) homo/sexualities are inevitably perceived as threatening to the 'nation' [20] because the regulating mechanism of 'honour' (and 'shame') is transgressed. Such ethno-cultural spaces of control also capture, more negatively, the perception that same-sex couples are driven by hedonistic, individualistic, and selfish pleasure-seeking principles that undermine traditional family values [80] and any commitment to the ethnic community.

As narrated by participants and demonstrated by the empirical evidence, family structures in the ethnic context do not appear to embrace a diversity of sexualities. Imposed cultural heritage expectations seem to define the roles of family members and the socialization of offspring. As articulated forcefully by the participants and evidenced in their narrative extracts above, such ethnic family values have a distinctive, often oppressive hold on extended kinship, their networks, and family member well-being. Migrant Greek families are persistent and even relentless in safeguarding a firm cultural heritage nucleus as their core of family socialization and as a shield of protection against wider social trends in the 'host' country that could risk diluting the cultural authenticity of offspring upbringing within strict cultural values. These cultural values, deeply embedded in both ethnic and religious practices, appear to deeply influence the second generation at various stages of their development.

Some aspects of that development highlight both explicitly and implicitly the vast pain and trauma that participants have experienced and then relive when reflecting on their upbringing and more extensive family interactions. More alarmingly, elements of self-destructive behavior appear to be quite frequent, as do efforts to balance their lives against the trauma of the past or the continued surveillance, control, and oppression looming in the background in the present. While the subjectivities of participants offer illuminating accounts as instruments of knowing, it is nevertheless imperative that we consider the ethics involved in data collection, data production, and data analysis. Parallel to this is the positionality of the researcher and how they construe the research experience, along with questions of fairness and respect in deeply knowing intimate aspects of participants' lives. This consideration is clearly incorporated into the institutional processes of ethics approval prior to commencing research, but nevertheless is an integral part of the subsequent analysis and writing stages. This is particularly pertinent here, with participants sharing intense feelings and frequently using swear words to encapsulate some of the pain and trauma they have felt when experiencing oppressive forms of cultural heritage that shape their lives and identities.

It is well-known in the social sciences that research involving human participants is ethically acceptable only when the scientific benefits of the study justify any potential risks involved in participating in the project. While ethical approval at the institutional level scrutinizes all these matters, it was also important for me, as the researcher, to constantly identify and assess any unfolding risks in order to manage, mitigate, and minimize them. Such risks primarily included the potential for psychological and cultural harm, discomfort with feelings of distress or anxiety in relation to disclosing sensitive information, the possibility of reliving past traumas by remembering and narrating them, and any possible cultural harm through misunderstanding or misrepresenting cultural beliefs, customs, and practices. As a trained and experienced senior researcher, I made extensive efforts to minimize risks and ensure that any potential risks would be outweighed by the benefits of sharing stories. This was confirmed by participants who found disclosure to be an avenue for healing and validation and perceived me as an 'insider' with similar levels of cultural understanding. In addition to being prepared to pause any interviews when

distress emerged and to direct participants to independent, qualified, and free services to receive support from trained professionals, I embedded mechanisms to identify and manage any harms that might have occurred at any time during the research. Apart from painstakingly explaining the research and its purpose, participants were given the verbatim transcripts and a lengthy timeframe to make corrections or deletions, or even to declare withdrawal of their informed consent to the study. Additionally, I made certain to avoid any secondary trauma by speaking with trained professionals about the impacts on my wellbeing from listening to the stories, re-reading them, and writing about them. Throughout these processes, strict confidentiality and anonymity were applied at every stage of the project.

5. Conclusions: On Bionian Boundaries and Toward Critically Connected Accounts in Psychosocial Research

Cultural heritage in this article has been conceptualized in relation to migrant community generational relations. Family relations, in particular, shape a notion of cultural heritage through emotional impacts, whether that be trauma or self-development, including empowerment through healing from trauma. By linking the psychoanalytical work of Bion with migrant narratives that focus specifically on identity and sexuality stories, the discussion of these narrative extracts demonstrates an understanding of how un/belonging emerges. It has been revealed that power dynamics are at the center of these relations and how, in turn, identities and sexualities are impacted and shaped by cultural heritage. It is critical to underscore that issues of cultural heritage and community involvement should also incorporate discussions about the necessity for more democratic, bottom-up, and inclusive approaches in their engagement [81]. More nuanced analyses of gender are needed in which social conflict emerges because of progressive gender values vs. traditional gender values, such as in the work of Linstroth [82], which distinguishes that the collective imagination of gender norms is malleable and constructed through local/regional/national contexts, but also further shaped by memory and historical narration. In this direction, spatio-temporal dynamics are what continually contest and even reaffirm both expressions of identity and the collective imaginary.

The German critical theorist Theodor Adorno declared that 'in psychoanalysis nothing is true except the exaggerations' [83] to indicate that core insights into contemporary social and political realities are replete in individual storied accounts of personal and social relationships. Personal narratives that tackle deeply stored (traumatic) experiences, beliefs, and values that reconsider how cultural heritage shapes participants' ethnic and cultural lives, along with emotional events and conflicts of intimacy and subjectivity, serve as channels for renegotiating the self. The analysis of diasporic subjectivity gives us insight into the traumatic domains of how self, gender, and sexual identities are understood as emotional constructions of personhood. While issues of desire, conflict, passion, hatred, and love destabilize the self in different ways, they also act as strategies for attaining an unmasked self, one that is 'synthesized' through experiential and agentic acts, having transitioned from the saturated and seeking selves to one of catharsis.

While the participants in this study experienced and narrated deeply traumatic stages in their life course, unfolding through the power entanglements in the migrant family context, mostly in relation to their sense of gender and sexual identities, they also proffered this pathway as an awareness trajectory, moving from their ethnically saturated life stories to their own agentic resistance in reaching a cathartic resolution. This is an empowering stance. In the context of psychoanalytic inquiry, intense interrelationships formed through slow-paced conversations and established trust open up layers of self-disclosure that contribute to knowledge production in understanding the self and the social world. If we apply

a broader acknowledgement of the need for a more dialogic synthesis of psychotherapeutic conceptualizations linked to the temporalities of narratives [84], where the relationship of the researcher in the co-construction of knowledge is mirrored in the analytic process [85], we can make more holistic sense of lived experiences and identities.

Indeed, as Frost [86] suggests, some of the current cross-disciplinary developments integrating scholars concerned with theory, research, and practices from sociology, psychoanalysis, and other social sciences with the academic and practice discipline of psychosocial studies offer a fresh way forward. That is, the theory generated allows for a renewed analysis of previous impasses and bridges traditional academic/practice divides, such as the role of the 'knower' in relation to the 'known'. This heuristic approach elucidates an agenda for research practices and methodologies that harness feminist approaches through a psychoanalytic lens that is attentive to theorizing social subjects and their lived experiences at the ontological center of social theory. This is fully encapsulated in the conceptualization of 'subjects whose inner worlds cannot be understood without knowledge of their experiences in the world, and whose experiences of the world cannot be understood without knowledge of the way in which their inner worlds allow them to experience the outer world' [87].

Such an analysis applied in this article offers the opportunity to understand migrant participants as not only having multiple strands to their identities, some of which may be in conflict, but also understanding that some of those strands are molded as the products of internal battles and ambiguities stemming from how cultural heritage produces ethnonational power entanglements.

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