



Where The Nation Would Dwell

The Hellenization of Southern Macedonia, 1913-1940

Georgios Vlachos

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization
of the European University Institute

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European University Institute
Department of History and Civilization

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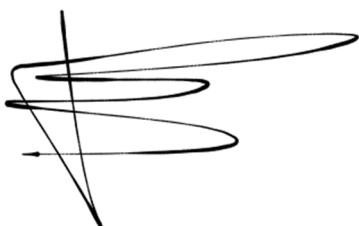
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Introduction

Scope of the research

The idea for this thesis started to be formulated while I was still finishing my Master's degree at Leiden University. The first thought came when, in one of my primary sources at the time (which were comprised of hunting magazines from 1967 to 1990), I stumbled upon an article, a rather offensive one in fact, about the utmost disgust that a Greek hunter felt when he encountered an immigrant from Albania in *his* nature, while out hunting. The bigotry of the Greek author was not what surprised me of course. Such a reaction was to be expected. What was striking in his piece, though, was that he described the environment around him as nationally charged, as an inherently Greek environment; even worse, it was Greek in its banality. There were no landmarks, no toppled marble columns, not a church or even a house in sight, but for some reason it was Greek. It was Greek as if the trees, the stones, the grass and the (uncultivated) soil emitted some kind of unique aura of Greekness that the immigrant was spoiling just by being there.

The article was cited and recorded in my Master's dissertation as an outstanding case of nationalistic fervor. Academic literature aside, the truth is that such statements do not occur very often in real daily life practices and state and civil society policies. What modern literature has defined and labeled as *Nature*, especially wild nature, is rarely implicated in the creation of concrete national identities in the minds of the many. In order to work and to convince, nationalism requires civil achievements, driven by human agents, rather than randomly generated natural settings. Regardless, an embryonic research subject had been problematized: The relationship between nationalism and the natural environment was not something unheard of and was a potentially interesting notion to examine. Heavily influenced by Tim Edensor's excellent book, *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life*, which contains an insightful chapter on the spatialization process of national identities –especially from below- I tried to combine those two elements into the one historiographical framework I was familiar with: Modern Greece.¹ Questions that would help steer me toward a productive direction were set: Had the natural environment played any

¹ Edensor, Tim. *National identity, popular culture and everyday life*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2002.

significant role in the shaping of the Greek nationalist narrative? If yes, when would this be more observable by a historian? And, if so, in which terms was this interplay manifested? Cultural or economic? From the top to the bottom or in a more grassroots fashion, as exemplified by Edensor in his book? Did this process take place from the center outwards or from the periphery inwards? Was there even a discernible center or a discernible periphery, for that matter?

On entering the four-year PhD program, the first solid research subject clearly reflected the pursuit of originality that every fresh candidate is bound to chase. Instead of abiding by the canon of Eric Hobsbawm, Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner, all of whom agree that the birth of the nation-state was forced by modern states rather than primordial nations, the first PhD hypothesis wanted to emphasize how communities use their environment as a *tabula rasa* upon which they project and celebrate their collective identity. This meant that by taking the natural setting of a given region as a starting point, along with the various natural sites of interest and landscapes that were considered important by its people, I would try to build a certain historical narrative. In this, the notions of nature, culture and ideology would come together to weave a net that would, ideally, constitute a local or regional identity, the product of its natural surroundings, without the interference of outside factors. It was a definite attempt at environmental history and its topic echoed what a pioneer of environmental humanities, Carl Sauer, had coined as ‘cultural landscapes’ as far back as 1925:

The cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a cultural group. Culture is the agent, the natural are the medium, the cultural landscape is the result. Under the influence of a given culture, itself changing through time, the landscape undergoes development, passing through phases and probably reaching ultimately the end of its cycle of development. With the introduction of a different, alien culture, a rejuvenation of the cultural landscape sets in, or a new landscape is superimposed on remnants of the old one.²

The only element that was still missing was the area that would feature in the thesis. On this front, there was a finite number of choices, which corresponded to the expansions of the Greek state in 1864 (Ionian Islands), 1881 (Thessaly), 1913 (Macedonia and Crete), 1923 (Thrace) and 1947 (Dodecanese). Certain boxes had to

² Carl O. Sauer, “The Morphology of Landscape”, *University of California Publications in Geography*, vol. 2, no. 2, 1925, 19-53.

be ticked in order for the selection of a province to be viable. The first was the abundance of written sources and local press. This would ensure that the topic could be approached from several points of view, presented by as many agents and actors as possible, thus avoiding the one-sided, blunt narrative of those protagonists who adhered to the state view on the matter. The next requirement that needed to be fulfilled was with regard to the scale of ethnic and/or religious controversy that the annexation of the given province had stirred. The reasoning followed here was that the imposition of Greek national identity upon those who did not identify themselves as Greek would trigger other nationalist or ethnic reflexes, in turn making the annexation and subsequent incorporation of the land much more controversial at the time and therefore much more vivid in the eyes of the present-day historian.

Based on those two requirements, the choice of Macedonia, more precisely Southern or Aegean Macedonia, was an incredibly easy one to make. It was a vast, extremely-multifaceted frontier province, governed by the Ottoman administration, yet claimed by a number of different nation-states while being inhabited by a population that did not have a horse in the race of Grand National aspirations. Even more than that, the arrival of an entirely new population that came to colonize the province on behalf of the Greek state from 1922 onward, pointed at promising results for my investigation into the formation of cultural (or national) landscapes by either the old or the new inhabitants of province.

Before long, I realized that my initial predictions were horribly misguided. While Macedonia in the post-1913 period was no stranger to the construction of cultural landscapes, this effort was by no means taken up from below. No local rural community seemed to take any initiative in demonstrating its own ethnic identity by altering the landscape in which it operated. No monuments to local heroes were erected, no sacred groves were planted³ and no festivities that highlighted the primordial connection of the people to their land were unburied from the past. Similar inactivity was also exhibited by the new residents of Macedonia after 1922, who had set their survival as a priority over the adornment of their new surroundings with familiar imagery. Instead, it was the Greek state, either through its own officials or

³ While the subject of sacred forests may seem somewhat odd for Orthodox Christianity, as sacred groves echo something of Paganism, the work of Kalliopi Stara and her team proves otherwise: Stara, Kalliopi, Rigas Tsiakiris, and Jennifer LG Wong. 'The trees of the sacred natural sites of Zagori, NW Greece.' *Landscape Research* 40, no. 7 (2015): 884-904.

through private societies attached to the state apparatus that had undertaken the job of Hellenizing the landscape across the countryside. In fact, the Hellenization of Macedonia in aesthetic terms, although not forceful, was always present throughout the period that this thesis examines, taking at times different forms, the most prominent of which were the erection of war monuments and the excavation of certain archeological sites. In theory, every such endeavor was intended to revitalize the national spirit of the locals. In the eyes of the most fervent Greek nationalists, all the populations of Macedonia, new and old, apart of course from the Muslim ones, were Greeks who had forgotten or had been made to forget their national identity. However, these projects were mainly vessels of vanity, often related to personal gain, the acquisition of prestige within their intellectual circles and opportunism, rather than loyalty to the nation's magnificence.⁴

To make things even worse, it became apparent that even in the cases where the state actually managed to go through with the creation of cultural landscapes, the local community that was supposed to grow proud of its national heritage was actually indifferent to the plans of the state, at times even becoming actively unwelcoming toward such attempts. This negative disposition, I soon understood, had nothing to do with their cultural or ethnic background. The local peasantry did not oppose monuments and Hellenistic ruins because they opposed their own ethnic identity but because this cultural landscape business meddled with their own economic interests; and it did so not only in an immediate way –for example with the appropriation of land so that archaeological excavations could be done on it - but also in an indirect one, as often the appearance of statues and archeological discoveries in a rural Macedonian town could be the precursor of more state interference within the area.

All of this led me to make a fundamental conceptual distinction between the term *landscape* and the term *ecosystem*, two notions that until then I had been using without much thought. In my case the chasm between the two became easily

⁴ For an essential body of literature on the relationship between Nature and Nationalism see: Armiero, Marco, and Wilko Graf von Hardenberg. "Editorial introduction to special issue: Nature and Nation." *Environment and History* 20, no. 1 (2014): 1-8. Blackbourn, David. *The conquest of nature: water, landscape, and the making of modern Germany*. Random House, 2011. Fiege, Mark. *The republic of nature: An environmental history of the United States*. University of Washington Press, 2012. And Lekan, Thomas M., and Thomas M. Lekan. *Imagining the nation in nature: Landscape preservation and German identity, 1885-1945*. Harvard University Press, 2009.

discernible. In the examples that I had explored, the state approached the Macedonian countryside seeking to construct new landscapes, aesthetic still images that were hypothetically meant to convey the nationalist message across the land. As will be argued in this thesis, this task was taken up mainly by nationalist intellectuals and artists who in some cases naively believed that prolonged exposure to nationalist imagery would bear fruit among the inhabitants. However, the local populace, completely unfazed by this endeavor, perceived its immediate environment as an ecosystem, namely as a field of necessary economic activity utilized for its livelihood. Due to the absence of state interventionism by the Ottoman administration (when compared to the tactics that the Greek state used later) these ecosystems had evolved and developed freely through the decades or even centuries, governed mostly by clusters of rural communities according to the resources they were capable of producing and the resources that the adjacent communities needed.

Before my first hypothesis of how nationalism encroached upon Macedonia in cultural terms had reached an inglorious dead end, I realized that these misguided attempts at cultural assimilation were only an insignificant by-product of the effort to Hellenize Macedonia. Instead, in order to have a clear understanding of how the province was subdued, I needed to take a closer look at the disintegration of those ecosystems and their swift replacement by a system of production that was favored by the Greek state, which basically followed the economic guidelines of Western Europe. Many would call it simply capitalism, while others would describe it as an economic shift toward the commodification of production. Suddenly, the cultural approach that I was meant to follow had turned into an economic one, inevitably adhering to the Marxian *base-superstructure* model. Interestingly, this also entailed that my thesis would no longer be a piece of pure environmental history, although many elements that could classify it as one still remain. Instead, in order to trace more consistently this ‘disciplining’ of the Macedonian communities, I had to examine the organizational changes that the Greek authorities introduced and promoted in Macedonia.

The first ‘reconnaissance’ on behalf of the Greek state was undertaken by a private society, comprised of members of the political, economic and scientific elite of the country. Their main objective was to assess how lucrative Macedonia could become in terms of agricultural production and the first step to achieving this was to

cautiously bring the province into the age of agricultural modernization, hoping that their groundwork would create a solid base upon which the state could then build its fertile vision. When those modest attempts to interfere and loosen the already existing organic ecosystems failed, the Greek state, its experts and nationalist bureaucrats found themselves at a dead end. Very few communities took up the burden that the state had intended, namely to jump on a bandwagon driven by local agents who had had amicable relationships with Greece since the Balkan Wars. The rest -as Pieter Judson puts it, although in a different historical framework⁵- remained nationally indifferent, deciding to stick to their own ecosystems and not allowing the state to alter the coherence of their *modus operandi*. This indifference was met with despair by the Greek agents. Violent incidents against all those who chose not to change were not unusual from 1913 to 1920, as will be demonstrated in the third chapter. A wave of nationalist terrorism started sweeping across the countryside, to which the Greek state mostly turned a blind eye. Its perpetrators assumed that the tenacity that the locals exhibited -manifested in their refusal to learn Greek, sell their goods to the Greek markets and generally to embrace their new government- was tangible evidence of their hatred toward the Greek nation. As such, they were made to face to a dilemma: to conform or fear. The answer to this dilemma was relevant for only a brief period, however.

As the Greek nationalist/expansionist narrative was drawing its last breath in the battlefields of Asia Minor, after Greece lost the Greco-Turkish war of 1919-1922, the huge population of Orthodox Christians that resided in the whole of that region started to realize that its presence there was becoming untenable. The population exchange of 1923 between Greece and Turkey came to ratify this hunch. From this point onward these Orthodox Christian refugees of Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace – over one million souls – were to become the colonists that the Greek state would use to curb the passive resistance of the local Macedonians.

Every step along the way, from 1923 to 1940, newly-implemented state policies were proven to be detrimental to the local ecosystems of Macedonia and led to the establishment of a national-economic ecosystem instead, supported and imposed by the technocrats and bureaucrats of several government ministries. The economic and

⁵ Judson, Pieter M. *Guardians of the nation: activists on the language frontiers of imperial Austria*. Harvard University Press, 2006.

political elites of Athens saw in this humanitarian debacle an opportunity to create a farming class that would produce cheap surpluses of agricultural products. As Chapters 3.2, 3.4 and 4.1 will argue, this kind of rehabilitation of the refugees demanded the appropriation of enormous swathes of land or the reclaiming of wetlands and lakes. Thus, the state would kill two birds with one stone: It would both weaken the local systems of production *and* at the same time boost the economic stability of the refugees.

This was not enough to turn the tables completely though. The new residents of Macedonia were found to be in dire need of the appropriate infrastructure that could help them solidify their position on the land. This is exactly what will be presented in Chapters 3.3, 4.2 and 4.3. More precisely, Chapter 3.3 focuses on the institution of agricultural cooperatives in Macedonia as a whole. As we shall see, these ground-level organizations, funded entirely by the state provided, almost responsibility-free monetary support to their members –primarily refugees- to help them stand on their own two feet in their new country. Similarly, Chapter 4.2 touches upon the anti-malaria campaigns that took place in a certain area of Southern Macedonia around the same time, which were meant to fortify the working and productive abilities of both the refugee and local populations by protecting their health against a disease that had been described as degenerating to the nation. Finally, the analysis will come to an end in Chapter 4.3 where I examine the urban planning of the (mainly refugee) town of Giannitsa, suggesting that the town planner used it as a tool of social engineering in an effort to create a homogenous society of farmers.

In concluding this brief introduction to the thesis, I will highlight one of its more pertinent aspects. Throughout this thesis I use the term Greek to describe the *de facto* subjects of the Greek state as well as those who adhered to the Greek nationalist doctrine. However, my decision here is one that would annoy both them and their modern counterparts, as Greek nationalists were and are very assertive of the fact that Greece should be called *Hellas* and its citizens *Hellenes*. While personally I do not care at all about this matter of branding, I also decided to allow them to speak in their own voice, which means that the only times that I will refer to Greece as *Hellas* and Greeks as *Hellenes* will be when I cite texts from those primary sources that were written by nationalists.

Chapter 1: The Question that would become Macedonian

Chapter 1.1-The Balkan Jigsaw: From the Treaty of San Stefano to the Macedonian Question

It can occasionally be very hard for historians to put their finger on a certain year, a certain date or a certain moment that marked the major turning point for the subject they are studying. In the case of the Macedonian Question, however, this is not particularly challenging. As this introductory chapter will explain, this was the year 1878, the year when the Treaty of San Stefano was signed. The Macedonian Question should not be seen however as an issue on its own, as it did not exist independently and its resolution was not without greater implications for the European power equilibrium. Instead, it should be thought of as part of the Eastern Question, namely the issue that arose regarding the way in which the European Ottoman Empire was to be disintegrated in a controlled manner, guided by the diplomatic hands and brains of the major European powers.⁶ This handling of Macedonia and its eventual partitioning among several states driven by nationalist aspirations was chronologically the last major crisis of the collapsing European Ottoman Empire. Resolving it was not an easy task. Equally intriguing and bloody in scholarly and humanitarian terms respectively, the Macedonian Question cast a very menacing shadow over the Balkans and showed what nationalist ferventness was capable of.

Before the Macedonian Question, Macedonia had no precise geographical definition. In administrative terms, under Ottoman rule, Macedonia did not exist as a regional unit. Instead, the land that was retrospectively demarcated as Macedonia was divided into three different *vilayets*, an administrative sub-division that was introduced in the Ottoman Empire as late as 1867. These were the *vilayet* of *Selanik*, covering almost the entirety of present-day southern Macedonia; the *vilayet* of *Manastir*, located to the west of *Selanik*; and finally the *vilayet* of *Kosovo*, the

⁶ This statement, however, does not imply that the interests of all the great European powers were always at odds. On the contrary, much of the strife in the Balkans was caused by the wars in which the Balkan states were engaged as loose proxies of the Great Powers.

southern part of which corresponds to present-day northern Macedonia.⁷ The classification of the population in those three *vilayets* as well as in the rest of the empire was not based on ethno-linguistic parameters, which, in any case, were not recognized as valid in the eyes of the state. Instead, the Sublime Porte divided its subjects into confessional communities, each one with different obligations to the state and more importantly, a different judicial treatment. This a-national mentality meant that the people of Macedonia in the 19th century - the same people who in the ensuing decades would arbitrarily be branded with a nationality and were to be seen as brothers and sisters by zealous nationalist activists of all sorts - were defined by nothing else other than the fact that they were Christians and, as such, had to pay a special tithe to the Sultan, unlike their Muslim counterparts.⁸ Macedonia and, consequently, Macedonians did not exist. As Alan Taylor informs us, when the province of Macedonia was first conceived in modern times as a geographical unit that actually meant something and had definite limits, this was done according to a peculiar consideration. This is how.

As the political aspirations of the Russian Empire started to expand in the 18th and 19th centuries, and as each Russian Tsar found in the Balkans fertile ground upon which he could plant his Empire's imperialist growth at the expense of the Ottoman Empire, the latter was increasingly destabilized over the decades. First came the helping hand that the governments of Tsar Alexander I and Nicholas I provided to the insurgent Serbs who were seeking their independence from the Ottomans. This led to Serbia initially being proclaimed a semi-autonomous province of the Empire in 1817.⁹ The meddling in the Sublime Porte's internal affairs continued successfully when Imperial Russia, accompanied this time also by France and by the more reluctant

⁷ To learn more on the subject of the administrative reforms introduced in the Ottoman Empire and the impact they had on the way the state was governed, effectively or less effectively see: Duguid, S. (1970). *Centralization and localism: some aspects of Ottoman policy in eastern Anatolia, 1878-1908*.-- (Doctoral dissertation, Theses (Dept. of History)/Simon Fraser University).

⁸ This was the *millet* system which was consistently established over the 19th century, according to which the non-Muslim religious communities of the Ottoman Empire were distinguished as Armenian, Orthodox Christians and Jews. For more information on the subject, see the classic work: Braude, Benjamin, and Bernard Lewis, eds. *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: the functioning of a plural society*. Vol. 2. Holmes & Meier Pub, 1982.

⁹ For an extensive and intriguing overview of Imperial Russia's foreign policy see the monumental work of Seton-Watson, Hugh. *The Russian Empire, 1801-1917*. Clarendon press, 2004.

United Kingdom, contributed decisively in the establishment in 1831 of the first modern independent Greek Kingdom, after ensuring the continuation of a hopeless rebellion that the Greek rebels had already lost in 1826.¹⁰ The next episode in this series of undermining the Ottoman *status quo* was played during the Crimean War of 1853-1856 when, in an ironic turn of events, both initial combatants, the Ottoman Empire and Imperial Russia, came out of the war largely weakened, only for the British and the French Empires –which had sided with “Europe’s sick man”- to set and impose the peace terms that were signed in Paris in 1856.

After the Russian fiasco, which was followed by an attempt at all-out war, the imperial government of Saint Petersburg realized that it should think carefully before challenging the Ottoman Empire to such open warfare. The moment for war came two decades later, with the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878 which was won by Russia. The pseudo-ideological façade behind which the Russian Empire hid was Pan-Slavism, the imagined joining together of all Slavic nations into one independent state.¹¹ But as this was obviously quite unlikely to happen, the Tsar decided to settle for the next best option, namely the establishment of a Russia-dependent, albeit strong, state which would be carved out of a sizeable portion of the Ottoman Balkans. In this way, the Bulgarian Principality came into existence. At least on paper. The Russian Empire, as the undisputable victor of the 1877-1878 war, forced the Sultan to sign the infamous Treaty of San Stefano in February 1878, a treaty only between the two empires and that provided for the creation of what became known among Bulgarian nationalist circles as “Big Bulgaria”. At the time they saw it as the reinstatement of the medieval Bulgarian Empire, and the new Bulgarian Principality was to occupy lands that did not translate into Ottoman administrative districts. Instead, only purely geographical indicators were used, such as mountains and rivers, outlining a peculiar territory, thankfully accompanied in the Treaty by a comprehensive map (Image 1.1).

¹⁰ For an alternative to revisiting Richard Clogg’s work on the modern history of Greece, although his contribution is indubitable, see: Dakin, Douglas. *The Greek struggle for independence, 1821-1833*. Univ of California Press, 1973.

¹¹ From the extensive bibliography on Pan-Slavism it would be interesting to focus more on recent publications in order to avoid the possibility of stumbling upon essentialist narratives, etc. For this reason, see: Suslov, Mikhail. ‘Geographical Metanarratives in Russia and the European East: Contemporary Pan-Slavism.’ *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 53, no. 5 (2012): 575-595 and Tuminez, Astrid S. *Russian nationalism since 1856: ideology and the making of foreign policy*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.

At the moment of triumph for Russia and infant Bulgaria, along came the British and French Empires to spoil their ambitions. Rightfully fearing the Tsar's omnipotence in the Balkans, as well as his territorial overreach, even through puppet states, the two Great Powers of Western Europe refused to ratify the Treaty, openly exclaiming their dissatisfaction with it. A new round of heated negotiations began, this time between not two but seven sides, each one with a different set of interests and goals, and almost all trying to curb the power that the Russian Empire had acquired, thus aiming to establish again a diplomatic equilibrium over the continent. In a sad turn of events, both the Tsarist government and Bulgarian nationalists saw what they had been fighting for for so long crumble before their eyes when the Treaty of Berlin was signed several months after that of San Stefano.¹²

The new *status quo* could not of course ignore the presence of a strong Bulgarian nationalist movement, nor its struggle for an independent state. The Great Powers however, were not willing to allow such a potent player, as the proposed Bulgarian Principality would have been under the Treaty of San Stefano, to exist so close to the capital of the Ottoman Empire. The attempt to balance those two conflicting currents resulted in a solution -taken up mainly by Britain- that sounded like a bad joke to the Bulgarians. The "Big Bulgaria" of San Stefano was reduced to the one-third of the initially proposed territory and included only a small fragment of what the Bulgarians had envisaged so vividly (Image 1.2). To make things even worse, the Principality of Bulgaria, as described in the Treaty of Berlin, was not an independent state. It was instead a province under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire and, most importantly, devoid of the grandiose aspirations that it had tasted just a few months previously. This, though, was how Macedonia as a regional concept as well as a territory with borders was born. Despite the fact that the territory was never named in the official text of the Treaty of Berlin, Macedonia came to be unofficially defined as the large southwestern part that the Principality of Bulgaria had lost between the two treaties. As A.J. Taylor put it in more blunt terms in 1954:

¹² On the Treaty of Berlin and its implications for the future of the Balkans and the Bulgarian irredentism that it sparked, see: Todorova, Maria. *The Course and Discourses of Bulgarian Nationalism*. BRILL, 2018.

Yavuz, M. Hakan, and Peter Sluglett. *War and diplomacy: the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878 and the treaty of Berlin*. University of Utah Press, 2011.

The frontier they drew corresponded to the best ethnological knowledge of the time. The territory of which Bulgaria was deprived by the congress of Berlin was called 'Macedonia' simply as a matter of administrative convenience. It had no national character of its own, though it developed one in the following half-century. Now there is a Macedonian nationality; historically a Macedonian is simply a Bulgarian who was put back under the Turkish rule in 1878.

The Treaty of Berlin was a terrible blow for Bulgarian nationalists. More than that though, the arbitrariness with which the Great Powers had handled the situation ensured that there would be a rise in aggressive irredentism in the newly established principality. And indeed there was, as nationalism, harmoniously coupled with rampant militarism, was the driving force behind the county's pursuits for the next three decades. The reference point always was the realization of "Big Bulgaria". In fact, the first step toward that vision came quite quickly, only seven years after the Treaty of Berlin. Then, in 1885 the Bulgarian Principality, although still under the nominal control of the Ottoman Empire, annexed the province of Eastern Rumelia, a completely artificial name given during the negotiations of the Treaty of Berlin to an area that was known by its inhabitants as Northern Thracian. The news of Eastern Rumelia's annexation did not sit well with the Greek government at the time. Despite the fact that the two states did not share borders over which they could have proper disputes, both powers were riding the wave of territorial expansion. Greece had been ceded the province of Thessaly, south of Macedonia, back in 1881 which meant that in 1885 Bulgaria and Greece had expanded territorially to such an extent that having their eye on Macedonia was quite natural for both of them. The situation was not improved by the ambitions of Serbia, which had also started claiming the northern part of Macedonia and insisting that the Slavs who lived there were nothing but true Serbs. With such attitudes the conflict that was yet to come at the dawn of the 20th century seemed, and was, inevitable.

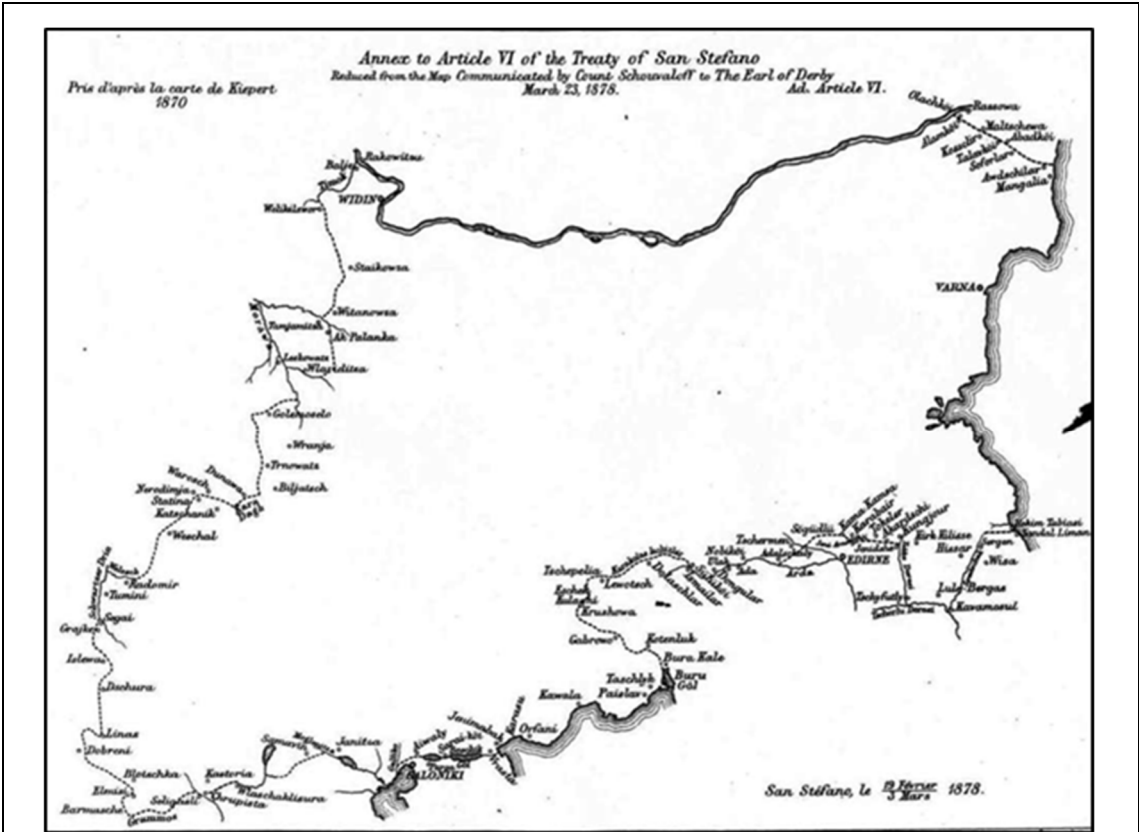


Image 1.1: The Principality of Bulgaria as described in the Treaty of San Stefano, official annex included in the text of the Treaty.

Chapter 1.2-Stirring Up the Demons: The rise of nationalist struggles and the fall of the Ottoman Empire

But irrespective of race the eyes of all Macedonians are fixed upon Europe. Every family has its own gods. On the walls of one house you will find the portrait of the Russian Tsar. Another displays the English Royal family. A third honours the King of Greece or the King of Servia. A fourth puts its trust in the sovereigns of all the Great Powers, and one judges of its wealth by noting whether it has replaced President Faure and Queen Victoria by their successors.¹³

This was what the left-wing journalist and author Henry Joel Brailsford reported after a relief mission to Macedonia, where he had been sent to evaluate the situation of the enmities the different ethnicities –‘races’ as he called them – that had exacerbated over the course of the last decade. What he described in the above excerpt was the result of only a few years of expectations, nationalist agitation and mixed alliances in an area that was openly disputed by three states and officially controlled by a fourth one. In order, however, to see how Brailsford reached the above conclusion the narration of some past events is in order.

By 1903 the competing pieces that were about to be played over control of Macedonia had fallen into place. Bulgaria was clearly in the most advantageous position. The autocephalous Bulgarian Orthodox Church –the Exarchate- had unilaterally declared its independence from the Greek Patriarchate of Constantinople after it had been allowed to do so by the Sultan Abdulaziz, as early as 1870 and had subsequently succeeded in expanding over much of what was about to become known as Macedonia.¹⁴ This expansion was made tangible in the Exarchist churches of the region, where overt nationalist propaganda, of course favoring the Bulgarian cause, was encroaching upon the peasants’ everyday lives. Although it is very difficult to calculate the effectiveness of such attempts to convince the locals to join a race in which they did not have a horse to bet on, the eyes and ears of the Bulgarian priests in the province were still very valuable assets to the struggle that the nationalist

¹³ Brailsford, Henry Noel. *Macedonia: Its races and their future*. Methuen, 1906, 24-25

¹⁴ For an engaging journalistic report on the matter of the Bulgarian Exarchate and the implications that its presence had for power relations within Ottoman society, written in fact by a contemporary commentator, see: Von Mach, Richard. *The Bulgarian Exarchate: Its History and the Extent of Its Authority in Turkey*. TF Unwin, 1907. Alternatively, for a more recent look at the matter: Kofos, Evangelos. ‘Patriarch Joachim III (1878-1884) and the Irredentist Policy of the Greek State.’ *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 4, no. 2 (1986): 107-120 and Trayanovski, Aleksandar. ‘The Bulgarian Exarchate and the Macedonian Liberation Movement.’ *Macedonian Review* 22, no. 1 (1992): 41-46.

warbands were about to unleash. Even more than that, the Exarchists had received permission from the Ottoman state to found their own schools, schools that mostly functioned as philanthropic institutions doubling in nationalist proselytization, rather than actual educational facilities.¹⁵ As the administrative head of the vilayet of Selanik once confided to Brailsford:

In these nests of vice the sons of the peasants are maintained for a number of years in idleness and luxury. Indeed they actually sleep on beds. And then they go back to their villages. There are no beds in their father's cottages and these young gentlemen are much too fine to sleep on the floor. They try the life for a little, and then they go off and join the revolutionary bands. What they want is a fat Government appointment.¹⁶

While the matter was not so simple as to be boiled down to the availability of beds in Macedonia, by 1903 the number of people who had become convinced of the necessity for an armed insurgency by Bulgarian nationalists was high enough to cause problems for the Ottoman administration. The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (henceforth IMRO), an umbrella organization established in 1897, steered the joint operations that were about to take place in several towns all over Macedonia and Thrace. The IMRO's initial position did not demand the unification of Macedonia with Bulgaria. Unlike the Greek irregulars that were later sent into Macedonia, and who only adhered to a nationalist reasoning of what should become of the province, the IMRO hosted several individuals and groups with very different opinions. Some of them were indeed as nationalist as their Greek counterparts, carrying with them a similar irredentist vision. Others, however, had socialist or liberal origins. It was they who chose a supposedly more moderate path for IMRO seeking the declaration of Macedonia as an autonomous state within the Ottoman Empire, and hoping that the Bulgarian state would eventually be able to annex it, as it had Eastern Rumelia.

The first move toward that end was made in the summer of 1903, when a large number of armed revolutionaries attacked the Ottoman gendarmerie of Krusevo in

¹⁵ For further aspects of nationalist propaganda in the Exarchist schools of Macedonia, even in Thessaloniki, see: Carabott, Philip. 'Aspects of the Hellenization of Greek Macedonia ca. 1912–ca. 1959.' *Kambos: Cambridge Papers in Modern Greek* 13 (2005): 21-61.

Konortas, Paraskevas. 'Nationalist infiltrations in Ottoman Thrace (ca. 1870–1912): the case of the Kaza of Gumuljina.' In *State-Nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and Turkey*, pp. 85-112. Routledge, 2012.

Tousimis, Giorgos. 'The Bulgarian High School in Thessalonikii.' *Balkan studies* 42, no. 1 (2001): 69-77.

¹⁶ Brailsford, Henry Noel. *Macedonia: Its races and their future*. Methuen, 1906, 42.

northern Macedonia, subsequently occupying the town and even managing to set up a rudimentary independent local administration. Their example was very soon followed by other revolutionary bands in Smilevo and Kleisoura while guerilla bands in the area started harassing the Ottoman army that had arrived in Macedonia to retaliate. Despite the short-lived victories of the revolutionaries, the Illinden Uprising as it was known could not withstand the ferocity of the punitive campaigns that were organized by the Ottomans. The response of the army was savage and the atrocities that were committed against civilians caused an international outcry.¹⁷

Amidst the turbulence, the Greek government closely observed the uprising with some anxiety. Even though many populations that were considered Greek were among the insurgents and lived in the areas that had been affected by the uprising, especially in Kleisoura, the Greek government sent an ultimatum to Sofia, asserting that if the Bulgarian government assisted the rebels, then Athens would support the efforts of the Sublime Porte to suppress them. The same went for Serbia. The reason why the Greek government threatened to align with its “primordial enemy” had to do with its effort to keep Bulgaria and Serbia away from Macedonia. Having faced a very embarrassing defeat in 1897 by the Ottoman Empire, however, the Greek armed forces were in no position to threaten Bulgaria with war. When the Illinden Uprising came to a bloody end, the remaining Bulgarian warbands, commanded by war-hardened chiefs, scattered all over southern Macedonia, this time having a double task. Firstly, to cover their tracks and survive the wrath of the Ottoman authorities and, secondly, to continue the spread of pro-Bulgarian propaganda in an area that had been left relatively tranquil during the previous years.

With Bulgarian nationalist agitators at his doorstep, the Greek consul in Thessaloniki, Lambros Koromilas,¹⁸ saw the danger to the Greek state if they were to be allowed to continue their work unchallenged. Declaring war was, of course, out of the question as long as the warbands did not represent the Bulgarian state in any official way. Pressing the Ottoman Empire to hunt them down was a logical path, one

¹⁷ Very interesting information concerning the primary sources on the Illinden Uprising can be found in: Gounarēs, Vasilēs K. *The events of 1903 in Macedonia as presented in European diplomatic correspondence*. Vol. 3. Museum of Macedonian Struggle, 1993.

¹⁸ One of the unfortunately very few papers written in English that touches upon the personality and political prowess of Koromilas, is: Gounaris, Basil C. ‘IX. National Claims, Conflicts and Developments in Macedonia, 1870-1912.’

however that the Sultan showed absolutely no interest in following, as the bilateral fighting between two enemies of the Ottomans reinforced the Empire's *divide et impera* strategy in the area. Thus began what in Greek historiography became known as the Macedonian Struggle, namely the undeclared war between Greece and Bulgaria that was conducted in secret by guerilla proxies mainly in Central and Eastern Macedonia. This series of violent skirmishes, which were not without what today would be described as war crimes against unarmed civilians, went on for five years, and produced little more than nationalist martyrs for each camp and very intense anti-Greek or anti-Bulgarian feelings among Bulgarian and Greek public opinion respectively.¹⁹

The Macedonian Struggle came to an end only with the rise of the Young Turk movement and the revolution of 1908 it orchestrated against the rule of Sultan Abdul-Hamid II. Being nationalist themselves, the Young Turks were not so enthusiastic about the presence of foreign nationalist agents and fighters in areas that were still under Ottoman control. Thus, the Ottoman gendarmerie of Macedonia –now suddenly much more vigilant than before- chased the warbands out of the province, while the movement also pressed the Sublime Porte to expel several officials who had been actively involved with the coordination and execution of the operations of the Macedonian Struggle, such as the Greek Consul Lambros Koromilas. In the meantime, and because of the chaos caused by the Young Turk revolution, the government of the Principality of Bulgaria took the opportunity to at last declare its full and official independence from the Ottoman Empire, upgrading the title of the state to a Kingdom and the status of the state's head from Prince (Knyaz) to King (Tsar).²⁰

Given that the British and French governments were no longer such eager supporters of the Ottoman Empire's integrity as they had been in the last century, regarding it instead as a lost cause not worth fighting for, the two European Powers of

¹⁹ Two primary sources, coming from the exact opposite camps, constitute perhaps the most exciting readings on the matter. The first is by the ruthless Greek Metropolitan of Kastoria, Karavagelis Germanos. *Apomnimoneumata Germanou Karavageli: O Makedonikos Agon*. Barbounaki, 1980. The second comes from an American journalist who travelled all the way to Macedonia to join a Bulgarian guerilla party and document their lives: Sonnichsen, Albert. *Confessions of a Macedonian bandit*. Duffield, 1909.

²⁰ Anderson, Frank Maloy, and Amos Shartle Hershey. *Handbook for the diplomatic history of Europe, Asia, and Africa, 1870-1914*. US Government Printing Office, 1918, 380-382

Austria-Hungary and Italy now pushed for territorial gains. First, only days after the Bulgarian declaration of independence, the Austro-Hungarian Empire openly declared the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a province that it had occupied since 1878. Three years later, in 1911, while the Ottoman Empire was once more in a deplorable political state, the Kingdom of Italy grabbed the opportunity to occupy the Ottoman province of Libya. After an intense, albeit short, war that lasted one year and again involved a considerable amount of atrocities against civilians, the surprisingly unprepared Italian forces managed nevertheless to establish their presence in the area, leading to the official ceding of the province to Italy in 1912.²¹

These Ottoman defeats proved to the Balkan states, each still trying to realize its nationalist vision, that the empire was indeed crumbling. A coordinated offensive was the final nudge that would send the Ottomans off the cliff edge. The Balkan League was thus born, an opportunistic military alliance between four countries that found themselves united for once, only in order to fight their common Ottoman enemy. The League included Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia and Montenegro. As soon as the alliance was established, and while the Ottoman Empire was licking its open wounds from the humiliating defeat by the Kingdom of Italy, a new war broke out: the First Balkan War declared initially by Montenegro, with the rest following suit against the empire. This war saw the complete disintegration of the Ottoman Empire in Europe. Fierce battles took place all over Macedonia. The Serbian army marched southwards, occupying northern Macedonia. The Greek army, under the command of Crown Prince Constantine, pushed northward and, after a heated debate with Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos, Constantine moved to 'liberate' the southwestern part of Macedonia, including the city of Thessaloniki. The Bulgarian forces, seeking to restore the status of the San Stefano Treaty, focused on marching through eastern Macedonia and Thrace, in fact going as far as to bringing their army close to the capital city of Istanbul.²² This peculiar triple partition of Macedonia proved even more problematic.

²¹ Absolutely everything that needs to be known, in terms of the diplomacy and facts relating to the Italo-Turkish war of 1911 can be found in: Childs, Timothy Winston. *Italo-Turkish Diplomacy and the War Over Libya: 1911-1912*. Brill, 1990.

²² The alliance between Russia and Bulgaria, one that had supposedly been established in 1878 due to Russia being the champion of Pan Slavism, broke down during the Balkan Wars, as the megalomania of

Although Greece and Serbia had agreed upon the territories that each would claim after the war, the Bulgarian Tsar, Ferdinand I, was fixated upon reinstating a Bulgarian Empire. Detached from reality and overestimating the military expertise of the Bulgarian war machine, the Tsar convinced his government to continue the war. Not against the Ottomans this time, but against his former allies Serbia and Greece. The Bulgarian offensive against Serbia in northern Macedonia stalled. The much smaller force that was sent against the Greek forces in southern Macedonia was promptly defeated while at the same time Romanian forces marched towards Sofia and Ottoman forces retook the southernmost Bulgarian stronghold, Edirne. The complete defeat of Bulgaria was ratified in the Treaty of London in 1913, where Greece and Serbia held onto their acquisitions from the First Balkan War. Macedonia was split between the two victors of the war, while a much smaller third part of the province remained under the control of the Bulgarian state (Image 1.3).

What both Balkan Wars demonstrated very painfully was that systematic violence against ethnic minorities, or what were regarded as ethnic minorities, was to become a horrific and common practice over the course of the next decades. The Balkan states did not tolerate other narratives, other customs, other productive systems or other religions apart from what their own states dictated. Everything that did not fit the description, which often was simply formulated in some bureau located in the capital, could very easily be declared as anti-national. What that entailed can be seen in an extensive and detailed report, written by an international commission that was sent to Macedonia to trace the causes that had led to the Balkan Wars as well as the way the belligerents had conducted themselves. This report, which became known as the “Carnegie Report”, taking its name from the foundation that published and commissioned it, described to the world how terrorizing, maiming and murdering civilians while setting their villages ablaze was not simply the work of an army thirsty for revenge but the first step toward the nationalization of the conquered area.²³

One year after the Treaty of London (and to a certain degree also *because* of the new circumstances created by the same treaty) Europe as well as the rest of the globe

the Bulgarian Tsar resulted in him ignoring the warnings he had been given by the Russian Empire not to disturb the status of the Istanbul straits.

²³ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Division of Intercourse and Education. *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1914.

entered the First World War. For the Balkans however this war was a prolongation of the last war. Serbia -a nationalist citizen of which had caused the first spark of the war- aligned with the Triple Entente, namely Britain, France and Russia. Bulgaria, having already lost its traditional alliance with the Russian Empire some years previously and thanks to the recent war against Serbia, sided with the alliance of the Central Powers, which also came to include Bulgaria's former sworn enemy, the Ottoman Empire. Greece on the other hand entered the war only in 1917.

An internal crisis kept the country out of the war for so long. On the one side was King Constantine I, who insisted on remaining neutral (a stance that would favor the Central Powers as they would have one less front to defend) and on the other stood the Greek prime minister Eleftherios Venizelos, who asserted that siding with the Entente would help Greece's expansionist efforts. The disagreement between the king and the prime minister led to the resignation of the Venizelos government in February 1915. In the May elections that year, Venizelos was re-elected and he interpreted the result as an approval of his foreign policy, reiterating the commitment that Greece had taken as an ally towards Serbia, if she was ever attacked by Bulgaria. In September, 1915, Bulgaria mobilized its forces and Greece was forced to do the same. King Constantine I insisted on his position of neutrality. In the end, he accepted the deployment of a considerable number of reservists as a precaution against the possibility of a Bulgarian attack.

Meanwhile, British and French troops had landed in Thessaloniki and Macedonia, with the consent of Venizelos. Seeing as the heat was getting closer to their allies, Germany in September 1915 proposed "de facto neutrality" to Greece promising, in the event that the Central Powers won the war, several significant territorial concessions. Venizelos boldly declined, angering King Constantine I. Venizelos resigned for a second time. Elections were held again, only this time Venizelos' party abstained from them, proclaiming the king's actions unconstitutional and thus allowing the Royalists to win. Shortly after, the now Royalist government in Athens granted military access to German and Bulgarian forces in Eastern Macedonia, at the same time surrendering one major stronghold along the Greco-Bulgarian borders. A secret pro-Venizelist military organization based in Thessaloniki, called *National Defense*, decided that Greece had sustained enough national humiliations. Proceeding into a regional coup-de-tat, the organization broke Macedonia away from

the rest of Greece at the same time inviting Venizelos to take over, which he eventually did in September 1916.

Following a period of clashes between forces of the Entente, Venizelist military detachments in the Greek army and supporters of Venizelos on the one side and Royalist forces on the other for the control of southern Greece, King Constantine I was forced to leave Greece, without however abdicating the throne and leaving his son in his place. With his opponents temporarily beaten, Venizelos was now free to wage the war he wished. Greece officially declared war on the Central Powers in 1917.²⁴

Venizelos' bid was indeed successful. For its participation -albeit belated- in the war, the Treaty of *Neuilly-sur-Seine* in 1919 awarded the Greek state the province of western Thrace. Only one year later Greece's zone of control expanded significantly, this time with the Treaty of *Sèvres*. Now Eastern Thrace was ceded to Greece as well – although not the city of Istanbul – along with the city of Izmir and its surrounding countryside. But despite the fact that Greece had become a power whose borders now extended beyond the Aegean Sea and although the country's archenemy, the Ottoman Empire was crumbling, the war-exhausted Greek electorate decided in 1920 to reject Venizelos' war-mongering path. Instead, the election was won by the “United Opposition” faction, comprised of all the other parties that were represented in the Greek parliament (apart from the Socialist Labor Party) and which together sported as their emblem an olive branch, signifying the popular demand for peace.

One of the main priorities of the new government was to restore King Constantine I, who had abdicated the throne back in 1917, forced to do so by the Entente. Contrary to what the political leaders who brought him back had promised, King Constantine I, a war-monger himself, only not such a competent one, continued the war against the dying Ottoman Empire, expanding the Asia Minor front, allegedly to liberate all his enslaved Greek brothers. His plan backfired spectacularly though. The Ottoman (very soon to become Turkish) forces, commanded by the Young Turk leader Kemal Atatürk, initiated a solid counter attack across the overextended forces

²⁴ This conflict between the Crown and the elected Greek government of Eleftherios Venizelos became known as the “National Schism”. For more on the subject, see: Leon, George B. ‘Greece and the Central Powers, 1913-1914: the Origins of the National Schism.’ *Südost Forschungen* 39 (1980): 116-167.

of the Greek front, which very soon collapsed. Ataturk's onslaught drove the disorderly Greek army back to the Aegean Sea, accompanied by tens of thousands of refugees who were left to their own devices after the collapse of the front and who were fleeing for their lives because of the atrocities of the Ottoman Army. The epilogue to the Greek defeat was written in Izmir where the Greek quarter of the city was put to the torch, thus signifying the complete triumph of Ataturk's counter-offensive.

Much of what happened next regarding the fate of Macedonia *vis-à-vis* the fate of the refugees from this last catastrophic campaign will be covered in the pages of this thesis. What remains to be said here is that the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 ended the Greco-Turkish War and dictated that the Ottoman Empire would no longer exist. In its stead, the Turkish Republic was born. Additionally, Greece lost the provinces that she had acquired back in 1920, leaving the country in the same territorial situation it is in today (although with the addition of the Dodecanese Islands in 1946). Even more importantly, Greek nationalist circles had finally lost their appetite for further expansion. Besides, after the agreed-upon population exchange of the Lausanne Treaty, Greece hardly had any other enslaved brothers to liberate. Now all Greeks had supposedly been corralled within the borders of a single Greek state.



Image 1.3: The map shows the triple partition of Macedonia at the end of the Second Balkan War.

Chapter 2: The Construction of the National Landscape

Chapter 2.1-Irredenta Illustrated: Greek discursive representations of Macedonia

Georgios Hadjikyriakou was not an ordinary person. Born in Thessaloniki in 1863 to a family of humble origins, he succeeded in obtaining his doctoral degree in Mathematics and Physics at a time when only a handful of individuals were able to do so. At the same time, he seems to have been quickly captivated by the dynamic presence of the Greek nationalist activists in his bustling city. After internalizing the nationalist doctrine in his early youth, he decided also to become a man of action. It was not long before he became a typical nationalist of his time, constantly acting on behalf and in the interest of the nation he served. In addition to that, in a shining example of how the collective consciousness could also boost one's personal advancement, Hadjikyriakou succeeded in cashing in on these precious qualities of his, by occupying many administrative positions throughout his lifetime.

In the early 1900's, during a very tumultuous time for Macedonia, Hadjikyriakou was appointed General Inspector of the Greek schools in the province. This entailed two things. Firstly, his job required him to travel all over the province. The reason for this was that he was under instruction to attend to crucial matters regarding the Greek educational institutions, even those in the most desolate villages of the countryside. Secondly, he became an important agent of the network that ran the underground nationalist operations in the region. In this position he answered only to Lambros Koromilas, the resourceful Greek Consul General in Thessaloniki and thus the top executive of the Macedonian Struggle.

When not on one of his many tours, Hadjikyriakou was a prolific writer. From 1906 to 1929 he published a considerable number of books, ranging from university textbooks to a manual for detecting impurities in everyday goods. But, as far as the subject of this thesis is concerned, his first book is by far the most interesting one. After a long tour -which probably took place somewhere between 1904 and 1905 and on which he had the chance to closely survey every corner of Macedonia –

Hadjikyriakou wrote a travelogue that was eventually published in 1906 by an Athenian publisher, titled *Thoughts and Impressions of the Tour in Macedonia with Topographical, Historical and Archaeological Notes*.²⁵ It is hard to imagine this book becoming a best-seller among the readership of the day, which was anyway limited in numbers and probably disinterested in “topographical, historical and archeological notes”. There are many reasons to believe this. For one, it was written in the elaborate *Katharevousa* form of Greek and was destined to be read mostly within the highly-educated intellectual circles that had embraced nationalism.²⁶ Secondly, it was not a pleasant read in terms of the subjects it touched upon. Detailed descriptions of Byzantine churches and meticulous analyses of ancient Greek tombstones were hardly crowd pleasers. But, if there was ever a chance for this book to have some kind of impact on a section of the public, it was then. Greece was in the thick of the Macedonian Struggle and the daily newspapers were reporting on alleged atrocities committed by the IMRO’s *comitadjis*, guerilla chieftains and their warbands (at the same time concealing or even excusing similar actions done by the Greek nationalist activists), who were targeting Greek priests and teachers, sent there as agents and propagandists of Consul Koromilas in Thessaloniki. The feelings of fear and terror generated among many Greek subjects were a natural consequence, even if they were situated hundreds of kilometers away from the bloody incidents.

In light of this, Hadjikyriakou’s geographical expedition was more of a mission in the national interest than simple fieldwork. Above all, his travelogue was intended to highlight the Byzantine and ancient Greek antiquities of the places that he visited in order to counter the spread of Bulgarian propaganda in Macedonia, which maintained that the province was principally Slavic rather than Greek. One can, therefore, understand that this kind of publication could potentially function as an important tool for generating convincing arguments about Macedonia and agitating nationalist zeal. In his book we clearly see the politicization of two disciplines: Geography and Archeology. It becomes apparent right away in the prologue, where Hadjikyriakou

²⁵ Georgios Hadjikyriakou, *Thoughts and Impressions of the Tour in Macedonia with Topographical, Historical and Archaeological Notes (Skepseis kai Entyposeis ek Periodeias ana tin Makedonia meta Topografikon, Istorikon kai Archaialogikon Simeioseon)* (Athens: Konstantinidou Bros, 1906).

²⁶ *Katharevousa* was the “purist” or “purified” form of Greek. In reality, it was an 18th- and 19th-century constructed language that was quite close to ancient Greek and which was used intently to overstate the uninterrupted continuity of Greek civilization, the nationalist narrative at the time. However, the simple “demotic” vernacular language was a vastly more popular form among the people.

asserts that it was the patriotic duty of every Greek to become aware of “his” Macedonian land:

Out of all the provinces of European Turkey [Ottoman Europe], the fatherland of Alexander the Great is the most important one and the one that deserves to be studied thoroughly and carefully from every point of view. It would be superfluous to note this here, if we, Hellenes, were all well-informed about her [Macedonia]. Unfortunately, though, only few of us know her and that only a little.²⁷

As was common at the time for every intellectual and activist who had embraced nationalism, Hadjikyriakou’s main task was to prove the undisputable Greekness of Macedonia. In his book however, he did not merely narrate the history of the places to which he went. Much more than that, he attempted to spatialize Greek national identity. Even if he was above everything else a man of science, we can often discern his more romanticist and idealist side slipping through the cracks. On one such occasion, amidst an explosion of national pride, he described the ruins of *Pella*, the capital city of the ancient Macedonian Kingdom. However, what he did not know at the time was that the actual ruins were completely unexcavated and the excavations were not to start until 1914. But he was not discouraged by that. What he saw and described as the “ruins of *Pella*” were the remnants of a Roman settlement, a little further away from the site where the actual ancient Greek city of *Pella* was situated:

Sacred excitement runs through my body at the sight of the ruins of *Pella* as we stand speechless for some moments, as if in front of a terrific painting or an exquisite statue. “It is here then, where the throne was erected and from where it shone to the ends of Asia and Africa!” we cried. This soil that today is so common and desolate and unwelcoming, hides the power of producing the bright king Phillip and the crafty and grandiose marshal Alexander.²⁸

What is more striking though, not to mention ironic, apart from the author’s failure to identify the hometown of Alexander the Great, was the utmost abjection that Hadjikyriakou showed for the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, the ones who he himself had declared his enslaved brothers only a few pages before. One village in particular caused him to express both pity and loathing, the nearby village of *Agioi Apostoloi*. As the author was describing a wonderful underground ancient (again Roman) aqueduct he noticed some peasant women who were doing their washing there:

²⁷Hadjikyriakou, *Thoughts and Impressions*, 3.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 28.

The fact that this aqueduct still stands is remarkable; also with its water flowing, which is used these days by the women of the village of *Agioi Apostoloi* who come here to wash their clothes. Alas, the change of times. These glorious and majestic ruins that saw the brightest royal greatness in the world, have become today the washstand for boorish peasants!²⁹

During his trip, Hadjikyriakou visited all the main sites that maintained symbolic interest for the Greek nationalists. The old capital city of the ancient Macedonian Kingdom *Aigais*, the city of *Philippoi*, the Macedonian royal burial ground of *Amphipolis* and a large number of Byzantine churches. Each time, his reaction was as though he was a disciple of nationalism visiting sacred sites on a pilgrimage. Throughout this pilgrimage, he also expressed strong opinions concerning the allegedly civilizing effect of Hellenism,³⁰ at one point even establishing in his mind a convenient and imaginative connection for the much-discussed contradiction between the pagan past of ancient Greece and the country's Orthodox present:

Hellenism as a whole, as an idea, as a force, diffused civilization to the vast territories of those two continents [Asia and Africa]. Since then, an amazed and grateful humankind has acknowledged the luminescent power of Hellenism; it admitted [...] the power of the Divine, the dew of heavenly Grace, because it was this force of Hellenism that prepared for the spreading of Christianity.³¹

Moving on from the ancient Greek sites, another crucial part of Hadjikyriakou's mission, was to find and inform his readers about inscriptions in the province. He states explicitly that: "Inscriptions vitalize the past while interpreting the present and the future".³² However, it was not any kind of inscription that was to prove valuable on this front. In order to fulfill his strict national guidelines, the inscriptions should be written in Greek in order to constitute hard evidence -literally set in stone- that Macedonia had always been Greek. Roman inscriptions, of which there were plenty in this area as well, received significantly less attention. This side quest of his did not bring the anticipated results. Although his primary targets were inscriptions dating to classical or Hellenistic times, he mainly stumbled upon Byzantine ones. A substantial find nevertheless, but not the one nationalist propagandists needed in order to fortify their narrative. In this, he succeeded only occasionally; and he did not curb his enthusiasm. At one point, his wanderings brought him to an inscription carved onto a

²⁹Ibid., 29.

³⁰Ibid., 38, 118, 140, 98.

³¹Ibid., 41.

³²Ibid., 146.

fountain that was situated outside an old church near *Pella*. The inscription, as he had hoped, had two Greek names written on it, causing him to wonder in triumph: “Could the counterfeiters of the ethnological and historical character of this country ever erase those two Hellenic names?”³³

Hadjikyriakou’s endeavor might be perhaps the most definite case where an intellectual was hired in order to spatialize a national identity on behalf of the Greek state, conveniently in a province politically claimed by all the surrounding powers. However, similar efforts carried out long before Hadjikyriakou’s travelogue by independent scholars, geographers and simple enthusiasts should not be downplayed. The majority of them were not affiliated in any way with the state; and there were many. In fact, not serving the hand that was feeding them, meant that these intellectuals were free to deviate from the beaten path of state nationalist imperatives.

In some cases it was natural not to correlate Greece with Macedonia, because the province was as yet well beyond the grasp of the Greek state. One such geographical study, a rather peculiar one, dates to 1870. It was written by a novelist and playwright, Ioannis Drakiotis, who at the time was well-known among literary circles. The ‘study’ was written in the form of a satirical poem, bearing an equally satirical title: “The mosquito of Olympus and Macedonia”.³⁴ Drakiotis visited the southern rural parts of the province, going north to Mount Olympus, probably in the 1860’s. His initial goal was to write a celebratory piece about the mountain that was the home of the Gods of the ancient Greeks. While touring the land in search for inspiration, to his discomfort, local peasants would appear on the scene, abruptly pulling him back to reality. The opinion he shaped of them can only be described as straightforward aversion. The reason is indirectly given in the bizarre title of the book. As the author explained, the “Mosquito” of the title did not refer to the detestable insect. For Drakiotis, it symbolized the complete ignorance and indifference of the peasants toward the high nationalistic ideals he represented. As he wrote in the prologue of the book:

³³Ibid., 31.

³⁴Ioannis Drakiotis, *The Mosquito of Olympus and Macedonia* (Athens: Publishing House of Lakonia, 1870).

Just as the mosquito drains the lion, this is how ignorance –from which these lands suffer- is capable of draining the noblest and bravest feelings or turning the natural benefits of humankind into impairing deficiencies.³⁵

In fact, when Drakiotis visited the town of *Litochoro*, the largest town in the area, his elitist annoyance peaked quickly due to the almost complete lack of a sewage system. As he put it, the excrement from all the houses in the town was simply dropped outside in the open, from where, mixed with rainwater and mud, the unappealing blend covered every nook and cranny of the cobblestone or dirt streets. The author became even more furious toward the peasants after he demanded an explanation for this squalor and a good reason why no one did anything to prevent it. As it turned out, some of them replied that it simply did not bother them, a response that led to Drakiotis' immediate departure from the town, as he was unable to believe the degree of barbarism that existed beneath the shadow of Mount Olympus and he emphatically exclaimed that they deserved to be ruled by their savage Ottoman overlords.³⁶

This deep disgust might be the reason why he did not even imply that these people were Greeks or that they both belonged in the bosom of the same motherland. In fact, the words *Hellas* or *Hellenes* never appeared in his one-hundred-page poem. Thus, this novel should be read as a satirical travelogue concerning a distant land where brutes lived in an unspoiled landscape, both sacred and natural, to which they showed no respect at all. To go a little deeper, it would not be unfair to claim that in Drakiotis' book, the only Greek element we encounter is the landscape. Dominated by Olympus, one of the most crucial reference points for *Philhellenes* everywhere – especially the western European sort- Olympus was considered a sacred ground for romantics and nationalists alike. The same applied to Drakiotis. Olympus was, indeed, a sacred ground in his narrative but it had been tainted by the presence of ignorant and filthy peasants; or in other words peasants who did not reach the minimum standards of national belonging.³⁷

From 1870 to 1910 much had changed in terms of the status of Greece. The country had acquired Thessaly in 1881 and the nationalist dream of reinstating the old

³⁵ Drakiotis, *The Mosquito of Olympus and Macedonia*, 10.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 15-17.

³⁷ For a thorough overview of the significance of Mount Olympus in the romantic imagination of both westerners and locals, see Sakis Kourouzidis, *Olympus: Two Centuries of Texts and Pictures* (Athens: Prefecture of Pieria, 2010).

glory of the Byzantine Empire became almost attainable in the minds of many, especially at the turn of the century when Greece put forward its claim on Macedonia. The constant struggle of nationalist publicists to make the province visible to those who cared enough to seek it did not end. Repeatedly retelling stories of Alexander the Great or the Byzantine emperor Basil the Bulgar-Slayer (*Vasileios Vulgaroktonos*) was one way to achieve this end. Situating these national histories in the actual landscapes in which they took place was another – a much more elaborate one in fact.³⁸ Many educated individuals tried consciously to revitalize national memories of long lost greatness and universal power.³⁹ Each one of them brought something new to the discussion, in a strenuous collective attempt to boost the national self-esteem of the people, through a conceptual process called *patridognosia* (roughly translated as know-your-fatherland).⁴⁰

Inconsistencies and contradictions occurred in these discourses on many occasions. But such elements seem to be inherent in every national ideology that demanded exclusive taxonomies. Such is the case of an elementary school teacher of Geography in *Korytsa* (in present-day southeastern Albania). His name was Karmitis and, after the Greek Ministry of Education in 1888 granted him permission, he published a Geography textbook intended for the Greek school of his hometown. It is unclear whether his book was actually used in the classrooms of *Korytsa*, but it contained, among other things, the archeological locations of the Byzantine cities of the area as well as a peculiar statement that blurs clear-cut national categorizations.⁴¹ Right at the beginning of the book, a book written in Greek, intended for Greek-speaking students in an area that was situated within the Greek irredentist maps, Karmitis asserted that: “Korytsa numbers 10,000 inhabitants in all its suburbs and

³⁸ Emperor Basil the Bulgar-Slayer had also become the central character of a novel written by Penelope Delta, one of the most ardent admirers of nationalism in literary circles. The novel was first published serially in the newspaper *Macedonia* during 1914.

³⁹ I was able to find more than 50 books published from 1860 to 1910 that are directly related to Macedonia, written by people serving all sorts of disciplines and sciences: geographers, topographers, military engineers, foresters and geologists. Some of them are strictly scientific and approach Macedonia as a province totally unknown to them. However, others, just like the ones cited in the thesis, went for a narrative of memory-construction in order to serve their nationalist goals.

⁴⁰ Interestingly enough, from 1913 on *Patridognosia* became an official course in elementary schools throughout Greece, taught together with Geography.

⁴¹ Charalambos Karmitis, *Geography of Korytsa and its surroundings (Geografia tis Korytsas kai tis perioikidos)* (Thessaloniki: Publishing house Macedonia, 1888).

almost all of them speak the same language. This language is called *Albanian*, because we, *Albanians*, speak it.” [Emphasis in the original].⁴²

Those who in particular served as direct appointees of the Greek state in Macedonia, like Hadjikyriakou, had a definite vision for the future of the province. This was also the case for Margaritis Dimitsas, who in 1896 set the discursive foundations for treating Macedonia as a Greek *irredenta* through a formidable study that he published. It bore the lyrical title of “Macedonia Discussed in Stones, Salvaged in Monuments” and it was the guide through which archeologists and philologists came to see the province as an irrevocably Greek land. Besides, the author himself was a member of the Archeological Society (the deeds of which we will see in the next chapter), a professor in many Greek-speaking schools in Macedonia as well as a devoted nationalist. What is more surprising about Dimitsas’ endeavor is the sheer effort that must have been put into his research. The final product is a two-volume book -1050 pages long- containing, as its subtitle states, “1409 Greek and 189 Latin inscriptions and the depiction of the most important artistic monuments”.⁴³

By any standard, this treatise was the most solid and scientifically consistent attempt on the matter. In fact, Hadjikyriakou’s book, published ten years after that of Dimitsas, was probably a reworking of the subject, updated for the new political circumstances of the Macedonian Struggle. This does not at all mean that Dimitsas wrote a neutral text to frame his scientific findings. He was well aware that it could be and should be used as a propaganda device, and most probably this was his intention in the first place. This in fact becomes apparent in the introductory note, where the author stated that his motive for pursuing this monumental study, was to place Macedonia in front of the eyes of the people of Greece who did not know anything about it, in a similar manner as his imitators who came after him:

And the numerous inscriptions, coins and monuments [...] are proof of the diffusion of classical civilization within Macedonians, who were considered barbarians and their land savage and non-Hellenic! And they would still be thought of as such without this knowledge. In order to refute this false and erroneous statement and in order to show Macedonia is Hellenic, absolutely Hellenic [...]

⁴² Karmitsis, *Geography of Korytsa*, 11.

⁴³ Margaritis Dimitsas, *Macedonia Discussed in Stones, Salvaged in Monuments, namely Intellectual and Archeological Representation of Macedonia (He Makedonia en lithois fthegomenois kai mnimeiois sozomenois hetoi Pneumatiki kai Archeologiki parastasis tis Makedonias)* (Athens: Ferris Bros. Publishing House) 1896.

these lifeless stones stand before us, as live witnesses and fiery heralds, [...] talking Greek to those who can listen and see [...].⁴⁴

It would be futile –not to mention space-consuming- to point out all the passages in the book where Dimitzas adopts a similar nationalist and politicized approach to archeology. The book is full of them. Even when he described the Roman inscriptions he stumbled upon, he did not cease to remind us that the Romans were merely conquerors of the land. This meant, as he explicitly stated several times, that Macedonia had never lost its inherent Greek character under the Roman yoke, an implicit suggestion that neither could five centuries of Ottoman conquest also wipe out “Hellenism”. These passages aside, the gratitude of the author toward European archeologists and the detailed descriptions of their contributions, are in fact, the only elements in his book that remind us that this is, after all, a product of scholarly research, rather than a nationalist publication.

There is only one more thing that Dimitzas accomplished that should be mentioned, apart from cataloguing antiquities. Throughout his book, on dozens of occasions, Dimitzas asserts that what he saw and informs us about in Macedonia was only the tip of the iceberg. It is important to note here that the phrase “the rest of them lie covered by Mother Nature, waiting in vain for an archeological spade”⁴⁵, is one of the most commonly repeated phrases in the book, as well as a veiled attempt to incite the excitement and wanderlust of intellectual nationalists to do their own digging and to reveal the true Macedonia to their compatriots.

Finally, no discussion on spatializing Greek national identity in Macedonia would be complete without at least briefly examining the crucial contribution of Penelope Delta to the nationalist cause through her attempt to indoctrinate her readers, mostly Greek children with the ideals of nationhood and race. Penelope Delta was a novelist, in fact one of the best-known in Greece even to this day. She was born to the Benaki family, a prominent bourgeois family that originated in Crete and was scattered across the coasts of the eastern Mediterranean. While other family members focused on gaining political influence and economic prestige, Penelope Delta became one of the instruments through which her father tried to achieve both, as he married her off to Stephanos Deltas, a rich Phanariot who would later find himself among the

⁴⁴ Dimitzas, *Macedonia Discussed in Stones*, 11.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, ζ’.

co-founders of the Agricultural Bank. Instead of remaining an inactive housewife, however, Delta dedicated her life to writing historical novels that sought to introduce Greek youth to the notion of national belonging. Many of her works are written in a belligerent tone, where Greekness is exalted only by portraying the enemies of the nation as savages and barbarians. Considering that her first patriotic book was published in 1909, just when the Macedonian Struggle was coming to an end, and was set in 995 AD when the Byzantine Empire was (again) engaged in military conflict with the Bulgarian Kingdom, it is not hard to speculate who these enemies were.

Among Delta's novels, commentators have singled out several that take place in Macedonia, her "Macedonian Cycle" as it has been called.⁴⁶ In these, Delta did an excellent job of vividly putting history on the Macedonian map. By giving detailed descriptions of popular places and developing historical dramas, the novelist successfully constructed recognizable "historyscapes" for her readers, who, it was hoped, would come to recognize Macedonia solely as a realm that had always been defined by the presence of Hellenism. To her credit, she even went out of her way to achieve this, emphasizing Macedonia's Byzantine past rather than its ancient one. Even if this was not at all something new to the Greek nationalist narrative, which highlighted the alleged continuous presence of Hellenism in the area for the last five thousand years, structuring a story around the Byzantine past that featured the cities and landscapes of the Macedonian countryside was a bold move, both in political and literary terms.

Two of her most successful and well-received novels -titled *For the fatherland* and *In the Heroic Age of Basil II: Emperor of Byzantium* (although the original title in Greek was *In the age of the Bulgar-Slayer*, the nickname of Basil II)- follow the lives of Greek-minded actors in Byzantine Macedonia, which at the time was under constant threat from the Bulgarian "scourge".⁴⁷ As Delta herself put it, she did not try to depict the era in a historically correct way:

⁴⁶ Alexandra Ioannidou, "Glosses kai Ethnikes Omades tis Makedonias sto ergo tis P.S. Delta" ["Languages and Ethnic Groups of Macedonia in the works of P.S. Delta"], *Balkanika Symmeikta*, vol.7, 147-158.

⁴⁷ Penelope Delta, *Gia tin Patrida [For the Fatherland]*, Athens, Estia, 1961 [1909], Penelope Delta, *In the Heroic Age of Basil II of Byzantium*, New Hampshire, Peter E. Randall Publisher, 2006 [1911].

I know that I describe contemporary life more than the Byzantine one –but I did this on purpose because I address contemporary children and I do not seek to write a scholarly work. [...] My goal is not to reproduce the image of a dead era, but to urge present-day Greek children to think, and if possible, to awaken fair and great ideals in them.⁴⁸

What she wanted was to underline the eternal enmity between Greeks and Bulgarians that, in her eyes, was inescapable. Of course, she did all that to imply that the same enmity had been rekindled at the turn of the 20th century and to present Bulgarians as an out-of-place race, both in Byzantine and contemporary times. Furthermore, in her most popular novel, *The secrets of the swamp*,⁴⁹ published in 1937, the tale of which unfolds during the Macedonian Struggle, she recounted the heroic history of a Greek warband that had taken refuge in the Giannitsa Swamp (already drained by the time the novel was published; see Chapter 4) and she went so far as to present the malaria-spewing marshland in a favorable light, only to later assert that the Bulgarians had once more tainted the Greek landscape, when an enemy warband occupied strategic positions in the swamp. This is in fact the novel in which Delta lets her resentment against the Bulgarians loose, calling them “pig-nosed”⁵⁰ and “uncivilized savages”⁵¹ who “reek of Bulgarianess”.⁵² She exhibited her nationalist zeal in such a way that military officials congratulated her and literary figures scorned her. For example, Ioannis Demestichas, a former guerilla fighter in Macedonia, wrote to her about *The secrets of the swamp*, praising her for having provided Greek youth with “a lesson and an incentive” through this book.⁵³ Stratis Mirivilis, a celebrated novelist, however, commented:

I fear that you sacrificed many of your capabilities in favor of your objective goal, to deliver a book of convictions mainly for boys. I respect your beliefs but I do not subscribe to them. I think that they spoil your art.⁵⁴

Delta, Hadjikyriakou and Dimitzas all strived for the same thing in using the power of their pens, hoping that their words would be read and their opinions would

⁴⁸ Vasileios Laourdas, ‘I Pinelopi Delta kai I Makedonia’ [‘Penelope Delta and Macedonia’], *Idryma Meleton Chersonisou tou Aimou*, vol.20, 1958, p. 48.

⁴⁹ Penelope Delta, *Sta mystika tou valtou [The Secrets of the swamp]*, Athens, Estia, 1974 [1937].

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 183, 326.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 76.

⁵³ Penelope Delta, *Allilografia [Correspondence]*, Athens, Estia, 1997, p. 454.

⁵⁴ Giota Kougiali, *To vioma kai i martiria sto sygxrono mythistorima [Experience and testimony in contemporary fiction novel]*, Athens, Sygchronoi Orizontes, 2003, p. 117.

be spread, along with their truth about the superiority of the Greek nation. Were their hopes and ambitions for recognition justified? The question is simpler than it appears. The fact that nationalist intellectuals strived to produce something that we today regard as valuable does not necessarily mean that their work was widely circulated or even known at the time. One insuperable obstacle that contributed to that fact was, of course, illiteracy. In his discussion of children's literature both in and outside of school curricula in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Theodore Zervas acknowledges that illiteracy in Greece was high and school attendance was low.⁵⁵ George Mavrogordatos similarly notes that even as late as 1928 almost half the Greek population was not able to read and write.⁵⁶ A quick look at the censuses that were produced by the Greek state at the time confirms these claims. A revealing piece of information on the subject of illiteracy in Greece comes from the population census of 1907, and thus before the annexation of Macedonia, which clearly states that 66% of the population of the kingdom at the time was illiterate.⁵⁷

Once Macedonia was ceded to Greece in 1913, a logical thing to happen with this intellectual output would have been for nationalists to travel to the new land and contribute to indoctrinating the local populace with the new nationhood that they had *de facto* acquired as subjects of the Greek state. After all, a new Hellenic Macedonia had to be reinvented in the minds of Macedonians as well. But this was not possible. In the census of 1928, which contains a side-by-side comparison with the census of 1920, the majority of Macedonia's population was also found to be illiterate. More precisely, the 1920 census states that in one of the most heavily populated prefectures of the province –the prefecture of *Pella*- close to 80% of the population was illiterate, while in 1928 this disheartening number had been reduced to 60%.⁵⁸ Moreover, to make things even worse, it is left unclear in the censuses to what extent “literacy” itself simply meant signature-literacy, namely the ability to merely sign

⁵⁵ Theodore G. Zervas, 'Informal Learning in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century Greece: Greek children's literature in historical and political contexts, *American Educational History Journal*, vol. 40 (1), 2013, p. 207-219.

⁵⁶ George Th. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1983, p.292-294.

⁵⁷ *Statistical Results of the General Population Census, vol.1 (Statistika apotelesmata tis genikis apografis plithismou, t.1* (Athens: Ministry of National Finance,1907), 122.

⁵⁸ *Statistical Results Greece's Population Census, vol. 2, Age-Marital Status-Education (Statistika apotelesmata tis apografis plithismou tis Ellados, t.2, Ilikia-Oikogeneiaki Katastasis- Paideusis)* (Athens: Ministry of National Finance, 1935), 48.

one's own name for legal and administrative reasons.⁵⁹ It was, then, probably a gesture of gentlemanly courtesy rather than an actual fact, when Delmouzos, an army official stationed in Macedonia, reassured Delta in 1910 that the soldiers of his battalion, "all peasants" as he wrote, had supposedly pressed him into ordering three hundred copies of her novel *For the Fatherland* in order for them to read as well as send to their relatives.⁶⁰

Provided that these percentages are correct, and they probably are since similar findings are reported by historians for the rest of southern and Eastern Europe,⁶¹ one can only wonder: If *the people* were unable to interact with written texts, then for the benefit of whom did these authors write? For those who could read, is one obvious answer. However, claiming that the whole literate populace was indeed capable of engaging with highly-cultured readings, the majority of which was written even in elaborate *Katharevousa*, would probably be overly optimistic. Literacy did not automatically include the scholarly capabilities that were needed in order to comprehend or even care about the writings of Dimitsas or Hadjikiakou. In the light of this, the pool of those who could possibly discover Macedonia through the pages of specialized travelogues and historical novels was rather small and probably restricted to a finite circle of people who had already internalized Greek nationalist narratives. It can be asserted, therefore, that the written works of these intellectuals could hardly have been effective in the proselytization of the Greek public -let alone the Macedonian one- for the nationalist cause. It seems that they functioned more as a unifying element for the privileged inhabitants of their ivory tower, rather than as an ideological apparatus that aimed to lure the masses into accepting nationalist narratives.

Bearing in mind these shortcomings of the novels and travelogues to inspire the nationally ignorant population of Macedonia, the next two subchapters will examine

⁵⁹ Barry Reay, *The Context and Meaning of Popular Literacy: Some Evidence from Nineteenth-Century Rural England*, *Past & Present*, v. 131 (1991): 89-129.

⁶⁰ Penelope Delta, *Allilografia [Correspondence]*, Athens, Estia, 1997, p. 202.

⁶¹ For a quick overview on the subject of illiteracy in eastern and southern Europe see: Sabrina Petra Ramet, *Nationalism and the 'idiocy' of the countryside: The case of Serbia*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, v. 19 (1996): 70-87.

Richard Hiscocks, *Education in Poland*, *International Journal*, v. 14 (1959): 259-271.

Eric Storm, *The problems of the Spanish nation-building process around 1900*, *National Identities*, v. 6:2 (2004): 143-156.

what happened when nationalism came to them, in the form of politicized archeological excavations and the erection of nationalist commemorative monuments.

Chapter 2.2-Chiseled Memories: The construction of commemorative monuments and national consciousness

The following ritualistic unveiling was reported in the newspaper *Makedonia* on October 21, 1929:

Verroia 17- Our city celebrated yesterday, with grandeur and splendor, the 17th anniversary of her liberation.

Crowds started flooding the church of Agios Antonios and in about an hour it was full along with its surrounding courtyard. An infantry squad was lined up in front of the church and up to the gate of the courtyard, accompanied by the army band of the Division responsible for doing the honors.

From 9 o'clock onwards the Mayor, the Town Council, representatives of the local Israelite community, the Department Heads of local Unions and Associations and all the Officers of the local gendarmerie turned up. At 9.30, General G. Mavroskitis arrived and immediately the litany started, at the end of which the Metropolitan of Verroia and Naousa, Polykarpos, delivered a speech, briefly narrating the liberation of the town by the Greek Army, the torments of the past slavery and the benefits of freedom.

Once the supplication ended, the whole crowd moved to the local barracks of the 16th Infantry Division, where the unveiling of the erected Herōon of the Division took place, in memory of the fallen officers and soldiers from 1912-1922.

The Herōon was veiled under the cyan-white [the Greek flag] and at its base stood in pairs, two machine guns and heavy machine guns and two pyramid-shaped piles of arms. The whole of the surrounding yard was appropriately decorated with laurels and the Hellenic colors, while boards naming the battles in which the 16th Infantry Division participated were hung up on pedestals.

Two long speeches later -given by decorated Generals – and an additional memorial service, the unveiling continued:

Consequently, the trumpeter signaled "Attention!" and the whole crowd held a minute's silence, during which nearby machine guns and heavy machine guns were fired, imitating the battle for a moment, while some grenades were also thrown. After that, there followed the announcement of the absent Officers and soldiers of the 16th Division, who had fallen fighting heroically in various battles, as the Adjutant exclaimed.

[...]

In the evening all the public buildings remained illuminated while army and youth marched by torchlight.⁶²

Much ado was clearly about something. Or this was what the Greek officials in Verroia believed. This long excerpt illustrates that the local authorities intended to present the unveiling of a monument celebrating the fallen soldiers who had liberated Verroia, an important town west of Thessaloniki, as a major event. Representatives of all the state apparatuses that administered both the town and the prefecture were present: The Greek Orthodox Church, the Army, the police force, probably standing proudly along with delegates of the local agricultural cooperatives and other official associations. Even the heads of the local Jewish community were present, probably in their effort not to be branded as enemies of Hellenism. The ritual included unmistakable nationalistic imagery and propaganda, as did the monument itself. It consisted of a central column that depicted a wounded soldier crowned with a laurel wreath and carried by the goddess Victory, framed by two lower pillars carved into the shape of double-headed eagles. The monument was destroyed in 1943, during the Second World War, and was never rebuilt. Nevertheless, it stood tall until then. But why? What purpose did this and other commemorative monuments, accompanied by similar or even more extravagant rituals, serve in Macedonia, the population of which had been drastically reshuffled in the span of only fifteen years from 1913 onward? To answer such a challenging question, it would be useful to turn our gaze to another commemorative monument that was erected in the frontier city of Bolzano.

Bolzano, the capital of South Tyrol, had been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. When World War I erupted, the province was promised to the Kingdom of Italy in a *quid pro quo* arrangement with the Entente, according to which the Italian Army was to assist their war efforts against the Central Powers. This turned out to be a good move. Once it became obvious that the war was coming to an end with Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire overwhelmed, King Vittorio Emanuel made his move by occupying the city of Bolzano, thus claiming South Tyrol for Italy in November 1918. As a predominantly German-speaking city, Bolzano had to undergo a process of ‘Italianization’ in order to fit the description of what being a liberated Italian city entailed. No one was more eager to implement such a process than Benito Mussolini. His program for the nationalization of the city consisted of the

⁶² Makedonia [Macedonia], *I teleti ton apokaliptirion* [The inauguration ceremony], 24/7/1928, 3-4.

usual policies that any state employed whenever it wanted to oppress a population into subjugation. German schools were closed down, local bureaucrats and officials were replaced with devoted Italian subjects, and the government attempted to use an influx of immigrants from other parts of the country to render the German-speaking majority of the city a powerless minority. Along with such policies, which were too real and effective, at least to a certain degree, the authorities also attempted to ‘Italianize’ the realm of symbols. The Fascist state decided in 1927 to erect a Monument to the Fallen Soldier right on the spot where the Austro-Hungarian Empire had planned to do so before 1918, only a few hundred meters outside the city center. The new government appropriated the land and demolished the half-finished Austro-Hungarian monument, in order to subsequently erect what came to be known as the Monument of Victory (*Monumento alla Vittoria*).

Not so much a typical commemoration of the fallen soldier as a triumphal arch, the monument dominated the space around it with its presence and constantly reminded the inhabitants whose subjects they were. It becomes an even greater reminder when the provocative inscription that was engraved on the façade of the arch is taken into account. It reads: “Here are the borders of the fatherland; set the banner down! From this point on we educated others on language, law and the arts” [*“Hic fines patriae siste signia/ Hinc ceteros excoluimus lingua legibus artibus”*]. As if this was not enough, as Hökerberg informs us, the original phrase, which originated from a fictional dialogue between a Roman Legionary and a soldier, included the word *barbaros* instead of the word *ceteros* (others), but it was replaced so as not to be gratuitously offensive to the local population. King Vittorio Emanuel himself inaugurated the monument in July 1928, confirming that, in terms of symbolism at least, its erection was crucial, as Bolzano was meant to be an irrevocably Italian city guarding the frontiers against the enemies of the nation.⁶³

It is apparent that the politics of monument-erection were seen as a reasonable way of signifying the consolidation of state control over a city in the early 20th century. Even though these two cases are completely unrelated to each other, back in the town of Verroia, the circumstances were not that much different from those in

⁶³ For more on the subject of Bolzano’s *Monumento alla Vittoria*, see: Håkan Hökerberg, The Monument to Victory in Bolzano: desacralization of a fascist relic, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 23:8, 759-774 and Malcolm Angelucci and Stefano Kerschbamer, One Monument, One Town, Two Ideologies: The Monument to the Victory of Bolzano-Bozen, *Public History Review*, 24:1, 54-75.

Bolzano. In fact, the similarities between the two are uncanny, although with less theatricality and drama involved. Certainly, Verroia was not strictly speaking a border town, as it was not located at all close to the Greek borders. It was, however, a frontier town, in the sense that all of northern Greece, both Southern Macedonia and Thrace, were seen as frontiers, principally because of the potent presence of both the linguistic and religious minorities that they maintained, as well as the fact that the fear of their secession from Greece was always (presented as) tangible.

The logical point of departure for Verroia's commemorative monument and the subsequent analysis is the composition of its population. According to General Nikolaos Schinas, perhaps the first individual to take meticulous notes on Macedonia's anthropogeography back in 1886, 1200 families resided in Verroia. Around half of them were Muslim, the other approximate half were loyal to the Greek Patriarchate -as opposed to the Bulgarian Exarchate- while some fifty families were Jewish and thirty more of Roma descent. At the same time, Verroia's population was seasonally boosted by a substantial number of nomadic shepherds of Wallachian (Vlach) origins who used the winter pastures that surrounded the town for their sheep herds.⁶⁴ By 1913, when Southern Macedonia was ceded to Greece, these numbers had not changed much. It was the undeclared and tacit persecution of both the nationally different and indifferent that gradually shaped the new demographics of Verroia during the next couple of decades.

Many Muslims departed from the town immediately after the advent of the Greek state while when the treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine was signed in 1919, which enabled their voluntary immigration to Bulgaria, some Slavophones followed them. The treaty of Lausanne of 1923 and the consequent obligatory population exchange between Greece and the young Turkish Republic was even more critical, though. The entire Muslim population of Verroia was expelled to Turkey, while at the same time an even larger number of refugees came to occupy the abandoned houses and plots that the Muslims and Slavophones had left behind. It would be safe to say that by 1927, when the resettlement of the last Orthodox refugees had been completed, Verroia was, once again, a settlement without any solid ethnological coherence. Its

⁶⁴ Nikolaos Theologos Schinas, *Odoiporikes simeioseis Makedonias Ipirou, Neas Orothetikis Grammis kai Thessalias B'* [Travelogue Notes of Macedonia and Epirus, of the new borderline and Thessaly B'], Athens, Messager D' Athenes, 1886, 104-105.

population now comprised of local Greeks, local Slavophones⁶⁵, a considerable number of Roma families, Orthodox refugees from Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace as well as the Jewish community of the town, representatives of which we saw at the inaugurating ceremony of the monument. The presence of Vlach nomadic shepherds was still significant but had started to wane due to the economic strangulation that the Greek state had imposed on them (see Chapter 3.4). Among this mishmash, only the local tested-for-their-loyalty Greeks were above any suspicion regarding their devotion to the nation. Orthodox refugees were a close second, although the fact that many of them did not speak a word of Greek meant that they were not likely to champion nationalism so fervently, not to mention that their complete destitution did not place them in an advantageous position.

The historical context of the erection of Verroia's Heroon is crucial. The monument came at a time when nationalist paranoia of losing Macedonia to Bulgaria was very high. These fears were not entirely unfounded. In 1924, the Greek and Bulgarian governments came to an agreement that supplemented the Neuilly-sur-Seine Treaty. According to this new agreement, the Kalvov-Politis Protocol as it was named, the Greek government was forced to recognize that a Slav-speaking minority indeed existed in Macedonia. Despite the fact that the Protocol was never validated and was eventually annulled by the League of Nations in the same year it was signed, the terrible realization that Macedonia was still an unresolved matter gave sleepless nights to nationalists all over Greece. It was at this point that the monument erection campaign in Macedonia started and was intensified over the course of the next few years. During the period 1926-1932, many Macedonian towns acquired their own commemorative monument. Apart from Verroia, as we have already seen, Giannitsa, Axioupolis, Koulakia, Siastista, Serres, Nigrita, Drama, Kavvala, and Kilkis were all adorned with public works of art that were supposed to cast both a patronizing and warning shadow upon certain groups among the local residents. Verroia was not even close to being an extreme case in terms of its ambiguous inhabitants. The town of Kilkis, however, was.

⁶⁵ Although the Neuilly-sur-Seine Treaty of 1919 allowed all Slavophones to immigrate freely to Bulgaria, Mavrogordatos notes that a very large number of them remained in Macedonia. The ties of some of them with IMRO were not severed, which kept the Greek authorities on constant alert and contributed to the Slavophones being despised *en masse*. George Th. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, California, University of California Press, 1983.

Kilkis or *Kukuš* as the locals called it at the time, was located close to the Greco-Serbian and Greco-Bulgarian borders. What is known about the town, in relation to the events of the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, comes from a report that was composed by a group of intellectuals and philanthropists known as *The International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars*.⁶⁶ The commission was comprised of individuals from Great Britain, the USA, France and Russia and it had been given the task by the Carnegie Foundation to survey the province in order to ascertain the atrocities and destruction that the warring factions wrought upon the populace. After many stops, some members of the Commission arrived at what was once the town of *Kukuš*. Instead of a settlement, however, they now had in front of them a scorched pile of rubble. As they discovered after questioning the remaining locals, the Greek army had sacked and burned the town to the ground in the aftermath of the battle of Kilkis-Lachanas which had been a very costly victory for the Greeks. The terror and fury that the Greek soldiers had unleashed could only be explained by the fact that *Kukuš* was, as the Commission described, a ‘town of 13,000 inhabitants, the center of a purely Bulgarian district’.⁶⁷ The entire Bulgarian population left before the advance of the Greeks. Atrocities aside, what matters in our narrative is how the Greek government essentially re-invented Kilkis, the Hellenized name of the town, literally from the ashes of the Slavic *Kukuš*.

Once the Greek authorities had occupied the town, they instructed a number of Greek refugees from the Bulgarian town of Strumica, who had been expelled by the Bulgarian army, to settle in the few houses of Kilkis that still remained standing. As the Commission reported, however, these ‘Greek’ refugees ‘are not, in point of fact Greeks at all but Slavs, bi-lingual for the most part, who belonged to the Greek party and the Patriarchist Church. One woman had a husband still serving in the Bulgarian army’.⁶⁸ Over the next decade, immigrants and refugees, possibly as much “Greeks” as the previous populations, flooded Kilkis, which in the meanwhile was undergoing re-construction. The great transformation, however, came with the population exchange of 1923, when the heterogeneity of the town was reinforced further, as it

⁶⁶ Various authors, *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars*, Washington D.C., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1914.

⁶⁷ *Report of the International Commission*, 99.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 106.

received a proportionally very large number of Orthodox immigrants, mainly from the Pontus area as well as from western Thrace.⁶⁹ The next stage of this story comes in 1926 when Kilkis was now ready to receive a monument intended to commemorate the victorious battle of Kilkis-Lachanas and glorify the soldiers who fell for the fatherland. In reality, the town council had requested the erection of a monument back in 1915, a plea that had been approved by the Greek government. The inauguration, however, came 13 years later. The reasons for this postponement are not only to be found in the fact that Greece had been continuously fighting wars from 1912 to 1922. More “local” problems occurred as well, one of which was a dispute between the town council, at the time comprised of refugees of Pontic descent, and the artist to whom the construction of the monument had been entrusted. As we learn from the newspaper *Makedonia*, Mr. Dimitriadis, the sculptor wanted his work to be displayed on a spot near the railroad station, whereas the town council thought that the central town square would be a much more fitting place for it.⁷⁰ Although Dimitriadis claimed that the railroad station was his preferred site for reasons of cost-effectiveness, the town authorities were not convinced. More precisely, the town’s mayor, after rejecting Dimitriadis’ arguments as weak, personally accused the sculptor of vanity, suggesting that he wanted his monument erected near the station only in order to ensure that it would be admired by as many people as possible.⁷¹

In an unexpected as well as an inexplicable twist of events, the monument was placed on a site that probably left both sides deeply dissatisfied: a densely wooded hill, located 3 kilometers outside the town of Kilkis, neither close to the city center nor close to the railroad station, with virtually zero visibility. The archives do not offer a reason for this change of mind.

The inauguration ceremony was perhaps the most celebratory event that the town would experience for many years to come. All the elements that made Verroia’s monument inauguration memorable were there, supplemented by even more military divisions, more flags, more moving speeches and nationalist agitators. Even more

⁶⁹ For a biased but numerically accurate report of how Kilkis was re-populated see: Paschalis Valsamidis, *Prosfygikes Egkatakastaseis sto Kilkis kai tin periferieia tou* [Refugee resettlements in Kilkis and its prefecture], *Makedonika*, 32, 515-521.

⁷⁰ *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, O kyrios Kaleuras eis Kilkis: I eris dia to Iroon [Mr. Kalevras in Kilkis: The Dispute for the Heroon], 15/10/1926, 1.

⁷¹ *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, I thesis tou Iroou [The Heroon’s site], 23/10/1926, 4.

importantly, Eleftherios Venizelos was there, the man who was about to once again become the prime minister of Greece.⁷² In fact, Kilkis was the first stop on Venizelos' long electoral campaign, a place and time that he chose carefully. For this brief cherished moment, the old prestige and glory of Venizelos returned as the people who stood there "remembered" his contribution in "liberating" Macedonia. At least this is what the pro-Venizelist journalists reported on the ceremony.⁷³ As already hinted, however, the truth was far from this. There stood Kilkis' commemorative monument, dedicated to the fallen of the Greek army; an army that had burned the old town to the ground; a town that was now exclusively inhabited by Greek-speaking refugees who were urged to remember and cherish a battle of which they obviously had no memory.

In the following years, the monument dropped off the radar. Only in 1930 was it mentioned, specifically on three occasions. On the 28th of March, Kilkis students, the first generation of refugees to be raised as pure Greeks, visited the hill outside the town and, under the watchful eye of their teachers, paid their respects to the fallen soldiers during the school's celebration of Greece's Independence War of 1821.⁷⁴ Next, on May 17, another group of students, from central Macedonia this time, visited the site as part of an excursion, and, lastly, a football team based in Thessaloniki, tellingly named *National of Thessaloniki*, laid a wreath in front of the monument, adorned with blue and white ribbons.⁷⁵ In other words, the interaction between this particular public work of art and the public was simply the one defined by protocol, somewhat superficial and expected. This was in fact the case with most such monuments across Macedonia.

Another interesting case illustrative of this lukewarm stance toward memory-construction is the Black Statue of Giannitsa. It was erected in 1927 to commemorate the victory of the Greek army against the Ottomans in 1912 during the First Balkan War, and to honor the dead of the battle of Giannitsa. Interestingly, the official title of the monument is not "Black Statue" but "The Heroon of Giannitsa". Its nickname has

⁷² Syrago Tsiara, *Topia tis Ethnikis Mnimis* [Landscapes of National Memory], Athens, Kleidarithmos, 2004, 77.

⁷³ *Makedonia* [Macedonia], *I teleti ton apokaliptirion* [The inauguration ceremony], 24/7/1928, 3.

⁷⁴ *Makedonia* [Macedonia], *O eortasmos tis ethnikis epeteiou* [The celebration of the national anniversary], 28/3/1930, 2.

⁷⁵ *Makedonia* [Macedonia], *Ekdromi ton mathiton eis to Kilkis* [Student excursion in Kilkis], 17/5/1930, 2, *Makedonia* [Macedonia], *I metavasis tou "Ethnikou" eis Kilkis* ["Ethnikos" going to Kilkis], 30/9/1930, 3.

been attributed to the residents of the town who thought (and think to this day) that it was a much more fitting title than its pompous original one.⁷⁶ In comparison with Kilkis' monument, the Black Statue is of much greater artistic value. It is clearly more refined and aesthetically pleasing, due to its unusual black polished look as well as the theme that it depicts, which resembles a *Pietà*: A mother holding her dead (or wounded) soldier son, while a winged man who represents History immortalizes his sacrifice by writing his name in a book. In fact, its imagery was deemed so powerful in the manner in which it conveyed nationalist grandeur, that it was displayed in the center of Athens for some time before departing for its final destination.⁷⁷ However, despite its elegance and despite the fact that it was placed right at the eastern entrance of the town, on the side of the main road, which ensured visibility from all sides, the Black Statue did not receive any more recognition than its Macedonian equivalents.

Similarly to Kilkis and Verroia, Giannitsa was a heavily heterogeneous town, where half the population was of Slavic descent and, at the time, dissatisfied with the state policies that favored the other half, who had recently resettled as refugees in the town (in Chapter 4, I will examine this subject in much greater depth). The locals, both refugee and native, did not seem to care all that much for their town's monument, at least not enough as to suggest that the presence of the Black Statue had a positive impact on the consolidation of a Greek national consciousness among the populace. As with other monuments, the Black Statue only served as a meeting point between the local authorities and politicians from Athens who came to Giannitsa to win the people's favor, as was the case in 1929 when Eleftherios Venizelos visited the town again in order to announce the founding of the Agricultural Bank.⁷⁸ In some few cases, sports clubs that toured the province in order to participate in the national football championship -as happened with the *Hercules* sports club from Thessaloniki- also visited it to show their loyalty, while there is no reason not to assume that local schools organized short outings to the monument. Nevertheless, it is exactly this apathetic stance and the minimal interaction with these public works of art that prevents us from making any educated guesses as to whether the locals actually had

⁷⁶ Tsiara, *Topia*, 66.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁷⁸ *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, I thriamveutiki diadromi tou Venizelou eis tin pediada ton Giannitson [Venizelos' triumphal tour in the Giannitsa's plain], 9/4/1929, 1.

any feelings about them and about the nationalist narrative that they sought to communicate.

If we briefly return to Bolzano's *Monumento alla Vittoria*, we can clearly see this dimension. The inauguration day of the monument in 1928 was marked by a counter-demonstration that took place a few miles away, in Austrian Innsbruck: on July 12, 10,000 protesters took to the streets loudly exclaiming that the monument was a shameless act of imperialism and that erecting it had violated the consciousness of their compatriots. Furthermore, some years later, the authorities of Bolzano decided to remove the centerpiece statue from the town's main square, which depicted Walther von der Vogelweide, a medieval German poet, and to install it in a much more obscure location at the margins of the town.⁷⁹ These events clearly illustrate that the question of Bolzano's identity was still very much alive and controversial. The monument-politics were getting wide media coverage and it was obvious that the tension was only stopped temporarily when Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany formed their alliance.⁸⁰

In contrast, the campaign aiming at the construction of historical memory in Macedonia was devoid of drama. It is as though Greek monuments happened just mechanically or as if the decision for erecting them was implemented solely because the same was happening at the time in the "civilized world" which Greece was striving to enter. A good indication of this is the deafening silence of Stylianos Gonatas on this subject. A retired General of the Greek army and a zealous Venizelist, Gonatas was appointed Minister General Commander of Macedonia in 1929. During his time in this position, he approved, supervised and inaugurated a substantial number of Macedonia's monuments, including the ones in Serres and Siatista.⁸¹ Yet, in his exhaustively detailed memoirs, which he wrote after his second retirement – from his career as a politician- he did not mention his monument-related duties once

⁷⁹ Marilena Pinzger, *Steinernes Zeichen des Imperiums: Faschistische Denkmalsarchitektur am Beispiel des Siegesdenkmals in Bozen in Südtirol*, Wien, University of Vienna M.Phil dissertation, 2011, 92.

⁸⁰ *Simplicissimus*, Im Kleinen Rosengarten (Cartoon), 7/4/1935, 24.

⁸¹ *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, Irchisan eis tin iroikin polin ton Serron oi eortasies gia tin ethniki mas aneksartisia [In the heroic city of Serres the festivities for our national independence began], 30/6/1930, 1.

Makedonia [Macedonia], I chthesini oraia teleti eis tin istorikin Siatista [The yesterday's nice ceremony in historic Siatista], 9/11/1931, 6.

nor did he hint at any kind of interest in them, leading us to believe that monument-erecting policies did not serve any other cause than a ceremonial one.

If we trace the bureaucratic procedures that controlled these projects we can see why. In most cases, the public was not involved or even present in the project in any way. Each started with the state's decision to adorn a town with a monument, immortalizing either a military victory or the fallen soldiers of a battle. Subsequently, the job was assigned to the local military authorities, which published an official call for applications in the press, asking sculptors and artists to submit their proposals. A commission comprised of military officials crowned the winner of the competition and probably contacted him for any artistic-related changes. The local government of the town would then recommend the exact display site, as happened in the case of Kilkis, and on the inauguration day, the mayor would invite prestigious individuals from the army and from the government to attend, asserting the state's dominance in a symbolic and exuberant manner, as was described by the emotional reporter in Verroia. In this long process, the public's participation was neither needed, nor wanted. Ironically so, in one of the very few instances where a citizens' association put forward a demand for a monument, in the town of Kozani, the state did not respond positively.⁸² Furthermore, in most cases, the state alone directly funded the construction and only rarely did associations with nationalist convictions hold fundraisers for the construction of the monument, hoping to cover a part of the overall cost.

If we were to assess the practice of erecting commemorative monuments in Macedonia, the final verdict would be somewhat disappointing, the way it seemed disappointing to some individuals at the time, such as one school teacher who called for more schools to be built instead of even more soulless monuments.⁸³ As this chapter has shown, the effectiveness of the monuments in stirring up nationalist feelings, in favor of the Greek nation-state or against it, was heavily mitigated by the indifference of the people toward them. More accurately, people expressed neither enthusiasm nor opposition to them. In light of this, it would be fair to say that monuments ended up being simple structures with no specific consensus on their

⁸² *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, I angersis tou Iroou Komanou [The Komanou's Heroon erection], 16/10/1931, 2.

⁸³ *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, Pos tha timisomen kalitera tous iroas [How to honor heroes better], 20/11/1930, 1.

meaning, located in the urban (or rural) environment. With them, the construction of a common memory among the residents, one that would emphasize the unity of diverse populations under the Greek nationalist narrative, failed as well. As Chapters 3 and 4 will discuss, the chasm between all those opposing populations would remain huge, regardless of the iron, marble, and stone that was spent to create a false sense of belonging.

Chapter 2.3-Unearthed Hellenism: Archeology in the service of the nation

“One year ago, an illiterate Macedonian peasant demonstrated the everlasting character of the Greco-Macedonian consciousness to a foreign diplomat who asked him what nationality he was:

-Dig the earth and you will find antiquities. If they are not Hellenic, then I am not a Hellene either!”

Macedonian Journal, 1908

The academic literature on the connection between archeology and nationalism is plentiful, and for a good reason. Archeology has always been an institutionalized discipline within the context of national statehood, which used it as a tool for the ideological consolidation of nationalism. In other words, every time nationalist ideologues embarked on the journey of inventing the grand narrative of their nation, they referred to the primordial existence of its people –presumably tied to a particular land- in order to legitimize their state’s authority over what they claimed to be its national community. Given these parameters, archeological findings could be crucial to this process, as the unearthing of long-lost physical evidence of the nation that they claimed to belong to could function as a powerful propaganda device.

One of the many prolific scholars on the subject, Victor Shnirel'man, has traced such paradigms in almost every continent. In an introductory article that discusses the general interplay of archeology and nationalism, he argues that in examples as far apart as Iran, Israel and Turkey, to Germany and Italy, national mythologies and nation-building processes were founded upon evidence of a long lost sophisticated civilization, a “golden age” as he suggests, that had to be restored.⁸⁴ The process, however, is often much more complex than that. Michael Dietler has shown in his discussion of Gallic archeology how any given past can be used in many ways. There have been cases, he argues, where a certain ancient civilization, like that of the Gauls,

⁸⁴ Victor A. Shnirel'man, “Nationalism and Archeology,” *Anthropology & Archeology of Eurasia* 52, no. 2 (October 1, 2013): 13–32

was not associated with only one national narrative. Celtic findings came to be associated with multiple self-proclaimed nations, as well as local identities within the same nation-state. They could even be utilized in such a way that they stressed the unity among different nation-states on a supranational level.⁸⁵ The same applies to the Greek case. Before becoming an independent state, the territory upon which the modern Greek nation-state was founded had been informally colonized, as Margarita Diaz-Andreu put it, by many different Archeological Schools. German, British, French and American archeologists scoured the then Ottoman land seeking not to validate the modern Greek nationhood, but to unveil the imagined roots of their own civilization, one that they considered democratic and progressive.⁸⁶ This was the reason why western archeological schools decided to spend their resources on sites that dated back to classical antiquity, which was defined by the domination of Athens, consciously choosing to ignore other eras that were thought of as more autocratic.

Highlighting democratic institutions of the past was not a priority of the Greek state as regards Macedonia. Instead, archeologists-with-an-agenda were at this time enlisted in order to hastily Hellenize the rural parts of the province that were inhabited by populations regarded as ethnically ambiguous, a process that intensified after the province was ceded to the Greek state in 1913. Trying to change the people of a certain locale by transforming the area around them was not the result of Greek ingenuity. There was already a long tradition of states, independent institutions, and individuals who wholeheartedly believed that consciousness -national or otherwise- was a matter of gazing upon a landscape crammed with antiquities. From 1912 to 1914, the Italian state completed a similar project, although this time not to nationalize but to ‘civilize’ the landscapes of the island of Rhodes and the colony of Libya. As Simona Troilo has shown, in order to do this the Italian authorities sent archeologists and intellectuals into those Italian-occupied territories to excavate for evidence of advanced civilizations. Whether they were Roman, Hellenic, Byzantine or Venetian antiquities, what mattered was that they would symbolize the victory of the west against the Ottoman Empire, to which these lands had belonged before 1911. The author concluded, however, that the project was not as successful as had been

⁸⁵ Michael Dietler, “Our Ancestors the Gauls!: Archaeology, Ethnic Nationalism, and the Manipulation of Celtic Identity in Modern Europe”, *American Anthropologist*, v 94-3, 1994, 584-605.

⁸⁶ Margarita Díaz-Andreu García, *A world history of nineteenth-century archaeology: nationalism, colonialism, and the past*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.

expected. While the Italian authorities genuinely saw merit in promoting the ancient glorious past of both Libya and Rhodes, their own internal disagreements on how to handle the antiquities as well as the fact that they excluded the natives from such discussions, left Italy's prestige on such matters tarnished.⁸⁷

Similarly, in Brittany, as Patrick Young argues, the Touring Club de France together with several other institutions, not necessarily run by the state, initiated a "Sites and Monuments campaign" in 1900 to highlight and preserve places of archeological interest, natural monuments, and typically French picturesque landscapes. As it grew more popular, however, the club evolved into a rural oppressor that sought to keep the French heritage unspoiled and pure –at least as far as the notion was defined in the minds of its middle-class urban members- often preventing local practices in an effort to save the countryside from its peasants.⁸⁸ Troilo and Young's findings on the interplay between refined intellectuals and seemingly boorish peasants are the same. Either in an overseas colony or a province within the same state, nationalist institutions adopted an imperial mentality when they realized that the locals were still very far away from accepting their enlightened vision of nationalism. This chapter will follow a similar story, one that will be developed through the actions of an institution dedicated to consolidating the Greek claim in Macedonia, both before and after 1913: the Archeological Society at Athens.⁸⁹

The Archeological Society at Athens (the Society's official title, henceforth TASA) was the highest authority on excavations and antiquities in Greece. It was founded in 1837, only seven years after Greece became a sovereign state. This alone illustrates the prominent position that archeology would hold for the newly-established country, partly as a political tool. While this statement may seem to imply that TASA was run by the state, this was not actually the case, despite the fact that the King of the Hellenes himself became responsible for the society from at least as early as 1896,

⁸⁷ Simona Troilo, "'A gust of cleansing wind': Italian archaeology on Rhodes and in Libya in the early years of occupation (1911–1914)", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, v 17-1, 2012, 45-69.

⁸⁸ Patrick Young, "A Tasteful Patrimony? Landscape Preservation and Tourism in the Sites and Monuments Campaign, 1900–1935", *French Historical Studies*, v 32-3, 2009, 447-477.

⁸⁹ For more literature on the subject of what the city-dwelling *flâneur* must witness see: Bosworth, Richard JB. "The Touring Club Italiano and the nationalization of the Italian bourgeoisie." *European History Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (1997): 371-410 and Koshar, Rudy. "'What Ought to Be Seen': Tourists' guidebooks and national identities in modern Germany and Europe." *Journal of Contemporary History* 33, no. 3 (1998): 323-340.

when he was appointed President of the Society for life.⁹⁰ On the contrary, TASA was set up only to assist the state-run Archeological Service, perhaps in order to split the cost of expensive archeological expeditions. It seems, however, that eventually the Society managed to steal the thunder from the Service, not only in terms of intellectual prestige but also in terms of efficiency.

Its flexible and ambitious members who were striving to make a name for themselves were responsible for this success. Unlike the Archeological Service, which was manned by civil servants, an eleven-member board that included prominent archeologists and intellectuals alike governed TASA. This board was elected by the registered members of the Society called *hetairoi* who, according to the protocol, were also its primary financiers. The Society sought to attract wealthy patrons in order to draw them in for its cause. In turn, the eleven members of the board held the right to vote for the head of the organization, the TASA Secretary General. Moreover, on several occasions, many important members of the Society were absorbed into the Archeological Service to serve as curators and chief archeologists for particular high-profile digs. Given that kind of interaction, we should not imagine the relationship between the Society and the service as being a competitive one. It was principally a symbiotic relationship, and only at times an uneasy one.⁹¹

During the Balkan Wars, TASA became openly politicized; this was a normal development since it was run by Crown sympathizers at the time, who were not at all shy about their convictions. The opening speech at the annual meeting of its members in 1912, which was held in early 1913 (when the Greek army had already occupied the whole of Macedonia), was characteristic of this politicization:

Gentlemen!

The board happily salutes you [...] in these days when the Hellenic Nation reaches manhood and conquers glory under the leadership of the High president of our Society. His Royal Highness the Heir, leading the brave Greek army, glorious and victorious marched across Macedonia; and from the

⁹⁰ Panagis Kavvadias, *History of the Archeological Society, from its founding year of 1837 to 1900 (Istoria tis Archeologikis Etaireias, apo tis en etei 1837 idriseos autis mechri tou 1900)* (Athens: Perris Bros. Publishing house, 1900), 6.

⁹¹ There were cases where conflicts arose between the two institutions, most often caused by micropolitical differences and which resulted in bureaucratic power trips. On one such occasion, which interestingly occurred in Macedonia in 1912, a member of the Archeological Society was forced to halt his excavation by the provisional curator of the Archeological Service, who previously had been his colleague in the Society.

fatherland of Alexander the Great to the cheers and the admiration of the people, heads toward the ancient *Dodoneon* sanctuary of the Hellenic race granting freedom [...] to our brothers.⁹²

The speech was delivered by the Secretary-General, P. Kavvadias, who had actively pursued a closer relationship with the heir to the throne, Prince Konstantinos, who also served as commander of the Greek army in Macedonia. The following year's speech was even more enthusiastic than this one. The fact that Prince Konstantinos was no longer a simple prince but the new "King of the Hellenes" (acquiring this title after his father's assassination in Thessaloniki by an anarchist) and that Macedonia was officially a part of Greece, perhaps had something to do with this. The speaker this time was G. Mistriotis, the vice president of TASA, who praised the new King by asserting that: "Perhaps there are other generals who could be compared to ours, but only our own has the honor of bringing our most intelligent Race back to its civilizing capacities".⁹³

TASA's activities in the new land started right away. Immediately after the advancing Greek Army had occupied Macedonia, TASA moved quickly by authorizing one of its members, Apostolos Arvanitopoulos, who had been serving in the expeditionary force that marched through the province, to scour the Macedonian countryside for ancient monuments, cities, and inscriptions. Arvanitopoulos was indeed successful in his task. In the minutes of the Archeological Society for the year 1912, we find a long and detailed report written by the archeologist, where he enumerated and described his findings in great detail. Even though his discoveries were not pioneering (as there were none of those to be achieved in the area he covered), he was nevertheless able to excite the imagination of his fellow archeologists. He located and marked the positions of five small ancient towns -one of which was *Argos Orestikon*, the legendary cradle of the ancient Macedonian Kingdom- several Hellenistic strongholds and a plethora of inscriptions bearing Greek writings on them, which sadly he could not salvage as he was still on duty. As he claimed, it was in fact the inhabitants who helped him discover and map many of these findings. It was therefore not only prominent local nationalists, like a certain doctor who went by the name of "Mr. Oikonomidis" but the simple folk as well, such as those who revealed to him the position of a tomb near the small village of *Chantovo*:

⁹² *Minutes of the Archeological Society (Praktika Archeologikis Etaireias)* (Athens, 1912), 70.

⁹³ *Minutes of the Archeological Society (Praktika Archeologikis Etaireias)* (Athens, 1913), 61.

Opposite it, meaning on the left side of the street, as laborers who worked there in the construction of this road years ago claim, one can see a dugout limestone tomb that contains a great building with drawings.⁹⁴

In 1913 TASA undertook a new project which for unspecified reasons did not include the systematic excavation of ancient sites in Macedonia. This time Konstantinos Zisiou, a board member of the society and archeologist, was instructed to go to Macedonia to map instead the Christian antiquities of the province, straying slightly from its ancient path. Zisiou returned with a lengthy account, which exceeded 150 pages. Its intellectual and scientific value was in fact recognized even further as it was not only published in TASA's proceedings for the year 1913 but also came out as a separate book and sold on the market. The one element that stands out and deserves to be mentioned in connection to Zisiou's mission is the depiction of some Christian monuments in Macedonia. Until then, it was common for archeologists to depict the buildings drawn by hand, detached from their natural surroundings. However, Zisiou's take on the matter was different as he would photograph some of the most interesting monuments, showing them as part of the landscape as in the case of *Agios Nikolaos*, a destroyed Byzantine church just outside the city of *Serres*, and the monastery of *Timios Prodromos* (Image 2.1).⁹⁵

⁹⁴ *Minutes of the Archeological Society (Praktika Archeologikis Etaireias)* (Athens, 1912), 234-246.

⁹⁵ *Minutes of the Archeological Society (Praktika Archeologikis Etaireias)* (Athens, 1913), 119-251.

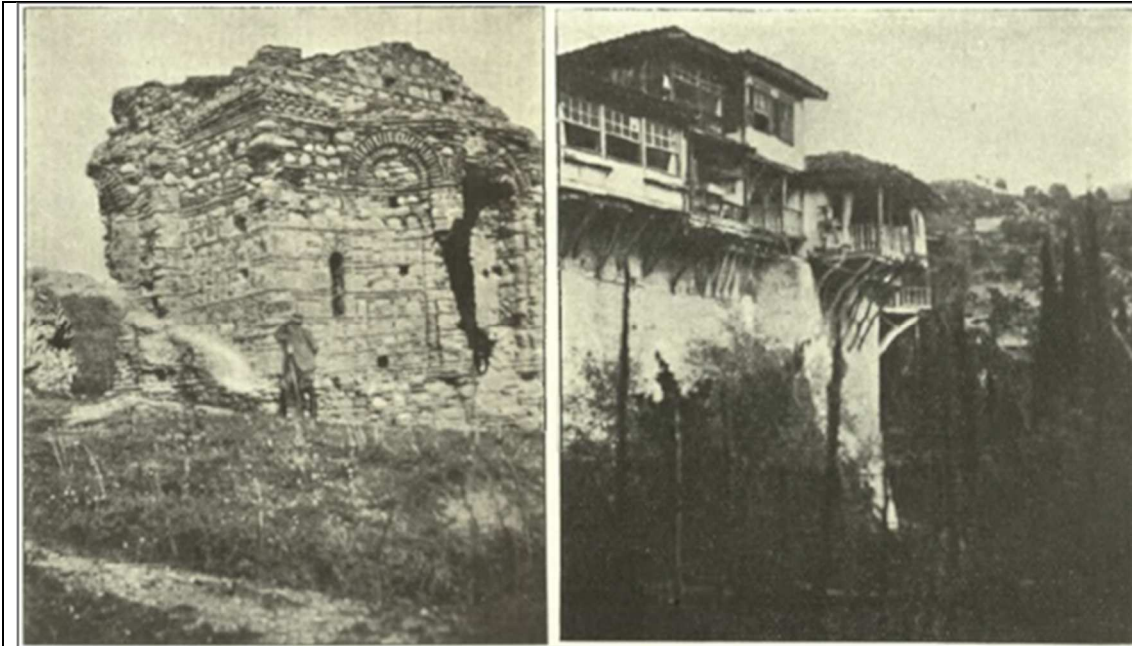


Image 2.1: On the left, the destroyed church of Agios Nikolaos and on the right the Timios Prodromos Monastery

Up until 1914, however, TASA's archeologists had not done much to Hellenize the landscape that Hadjikyriakou and Dimitzas had written so much about. The salvaged inscriptions were obviously remarkable findings, but the Society could not use them as firm evidence from which it could draw legitimization for the fact that Greece was now in possession of Macedonia, nor could it convince the locals to accept the primordially Hellenic character of the province. The problem was that the inscriptions had been removed from public view and put into special warehouses in order to take them to be exhibited in the Archeological Museum of Thessaloniki, which would only be founded later, in 1925.

The fact that they were cloistered in this way meant they could not function as effective tools of propaganda. The international archeological community could neither see them nor study them; Athenian nationalist ideologues needed more impressive findings upon which to base their narratives of superiority, while the high percentages of illiteracy among local Macedonians, as mentioned in earlier chapters, prevented them from being mesmerized by the ancient scripts. Instead, what was needed for all this to happen, was a large-scale, highly-publicized excavation in a certain area that would stir the excitement of Philhellenes, native nationalists and unconvinced peasants alike. Or so TASA thought.

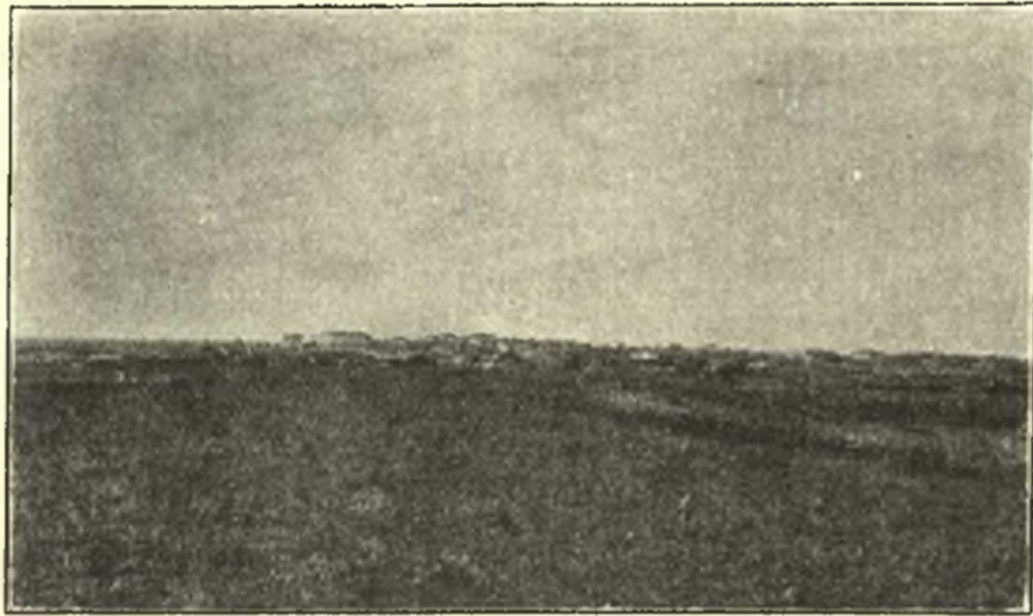
After not much thought, the site was chosen. It was the home of Alexander the Great, the ancient city of *Pella*. Apart from the obvious historical reasons surrounding one of the most prominent icons for the Greek nationalistic narrative, the choice of *Pella* also ticked more desirable boxes. It was situated near the village of *Agioi Apostoloi*, the same place where the disrespectful peasants would wash their clothes in the (Roman) aqueduct, as Hadjikyriakou had written. It seems that the village was a typical example of mixed loyalties and national communities, inhabited mostly by Slavophone peasants. It was also situated on the crossroads that linked the major towns of western Macedonia with the city of Thessaloniki, therefore guaranteeing that the excavated site would be visible to everyone heading in that direction. Furthermore, the closest town to the site was Giannitsa which was a significant religious center for Muslims, as well as a significant center for the Ottoman administration and a home to thousands of Slavophones as well. And finally, on top of all this, this particular locale had seen very intense military action during the previous decade. It was not only the fact that this was the setting where many dramatic events of the Macedonian Struggle had unfolded but also that one of the most critical battles of the First Balkan War had taken place there, namely the “Battle of Giannitsa”.

The excavation started in 1914 and was undertaken by Georgios Oikonomou, a former member of TASA who had now been reassigned to the Archeological Service and appointed chief archeologist of the whole province. As expected, the entire operation was financed by TASA. Before doing anything else, Oikonomou took a photograph of the site where the excavation would shortly begin, depicting a vast and desolate plain, in the background of which stood the village of *Agioi Apostoloi* (Image 2.2).⁹⁶ He also stated that the village was completely unremarkable, poor and ugly, devoid of any vegetation or wealth. Without failing to highlight the significance of his excavation in the re-civilization process of the locals, he claimed that:

The Hellenic spade, which henceforth will freely be opening the Macedonian soil after a long period of slavery, will excite and strengthen the miserable locals, who have lost their language and the courage of their national pride that was taken from them by the raiders [most probably he meant both Bulgarians and Ottomans].⁹⁷

⁹⁶ *Minutes of the Archeological Society (Praktika Archeologikis Etaireias)* (Athens, 1914), 127.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 133.



Εἰκ. 1. "Αποψις τῶν Ἁγ. Ἀποστόλων καὶ ὁ πρὸ αὐτῶν χῶρος
τῆς ἀνασκαφῆς πρὸ τῆς ἐνάρξεως τῶν ἐργασιῶν.

Image 2.2: The caption reads: Image 1. View of Agioi Apostoloi and the excavation site before the commencement of the digging.

The first trial dig took place on a plot of land previously owned by the *chiflik* ruler of the village, who at the time had *de facto* but not *de jure* lost his rights over the land, probably rendering the excavation illegal. This, however, did not concern Oikonomou. His first findings were not spectacular; in fact, in retrospect, they were not even noteworthy. The excavations revealed only parts of two ancient Macedonian houses and a crypt entrance. Along with these came numerous items of everyday use, such as coins, pots, bed frames and other paraphernalia. Regardless of the banality of his discoveries, Oikonomou had to make the best of them by sugarcoating their significance to his fellow compatriots, who were anxiously expecting a triumph. As a result, he underlined the symbolic importance of his findings. The final synopsis that he submitted following the first year of his excavation in Pella illustrated this attempt. Oikonomou stated that:

Based on what has been stated above, concerning the digging progress in Pella until now, it is obvious that the excavation of 1914 revealed only Hellenic items. [...] The Luck of the spade to strike into

Hellenic soil and the revelation of the first Macedonian houses -similar to those of Asia Minor, an area that had received the Macedonian Hellenism- the exceptional art, examples of which we saw above, and the interesting houseware, are a great sign for the progress of the excavation.⁹⁸

The excavation in *Pella* continued for the next year as well. The findings were again nothing to be overly enthusiastic about. And this time, truly, Oikonomou was not. The nationalist fervor had subsided and his definitively scientific profile as an archeologist had taken over, perhaps mixed with some discontent. In the minutes of 1915, Oikonomou comes across as a typical scientist and not as a propagator of nationalism. Furthermore, the excavation was abruptly halted due to the general military mobilization of 1915 that constituted the prelude to the National Schism of 1916-17.

However, this is not the whole story. Had it been, the only possible conclusion that we could reach from our end would be to describe Oikonomou as the typical enlightened nationalist who went on a mission to unveil the long lost greatness of Hellenism. If only the gleaming reports that were published by TASA were taken into account, his excavation would have been regarded as an esteemed campaign. In the light of this, it is a blessing that Oikonomou's personal archeological log survives, giving us insight into all the incidents that did not make the final cut. Archeological logs were semi-official documents intended only for the eyes of archeologists as they contained the records of the systematic process of the excavations. Most of the time, these logs simply reported and presented the daily findings and exact positions of the excavation, rendering them of limited interest for modern historians. That was not the case with Oikonomou's log at all though. A certain amount of details, incidents and anecdotes slipped through the cracks of these perfectly structured scientific accounts and this leads us to believe that his excavation was neither as uneventful nor as triumphant as he claimed. These crucial texts reveal important information about what exactly was going on in the region around the time when the archeologist arrived.

The journal itself is rather small in size, perhaps because Oikonomou thought that it would be wiser to carry it with him and take notes on the spot (Image 2.3). It is adorned with an engraved golden cross on the cover. Right from the start, we can understand how a nationalist agent from Athens understood ethnic diversity in this

⁹⁸Ibid., 148.

new frontier, through his comments on the nationality of the laborers he hired to do the initial digging:

June 25, 1914

Commencement of the excavation trials alongside the Gienitsa-Thessaloniki Avenue, close to the 39th kilometer near the entrance of the underground edifice. We had workers coming; refugees from Vizye [a region in Eastern Thrace, present-day Turkey] from the village of Ramel [present day Rachona, a nearby village. The refugees had resettled in Ramel from Eastern Thrace because of the second Balkan War], located one hour away from [the village of Agioi] Apostoloi. They are very Hellenic, Hellenic-speakers and quite perceptive. Contrary to the local inhabitants.⁹⁹

He then proceeded to write down the exact names of his team of laborers. In this small excerpt, it becomes clear that, to him, citizenship did not necessarily entail nationality. This is why the inhabitants of *Agioi Apostoloi* were, at best, characterized by their ignorance and the refugees who provided their cheap labor and who had suffered under the Bulgarians and the Turks were immediately praised as outstanding examples of Greekness. Oikonomou even praised his workers for their seeming perceptiveness, which perhaps meant that he thought that they were capable of grasping the importance of his nationally sacred mission. His preference for what he called ‘Hellenes’ is also obvious from his decision to hire a non-Greek laborer whom he simply called “a roaming Serb who does not even speak a Hellenic word”.¹⁰⁰ His name was never even mentioned. However, Oikonomou’s strong faith in his fellow Greeks, the refugees who were working for him, evaporated on 31st August 1915, when he stated, very curtly and almost annoyed, that only three workers had shown up, as the others had refused to come due to a little rainfall. This must have been a harsh realization for him, since he probably now understood that his team of laborers was not really there for him or for his mission, but simply for the pay. In fact, it could not be otherwise. The implication that refugees, who had lost their homes back in Bulgaria because of a war that was fueled by nationalist irredentism, would be particularly happy about participating in an excavation that also had nationalist aspirations seems quite naïve.

⁹⁹ Georgios Oikonomou, *Pella’s Archeological Log 1914-1915*, ASA, 1.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 51.

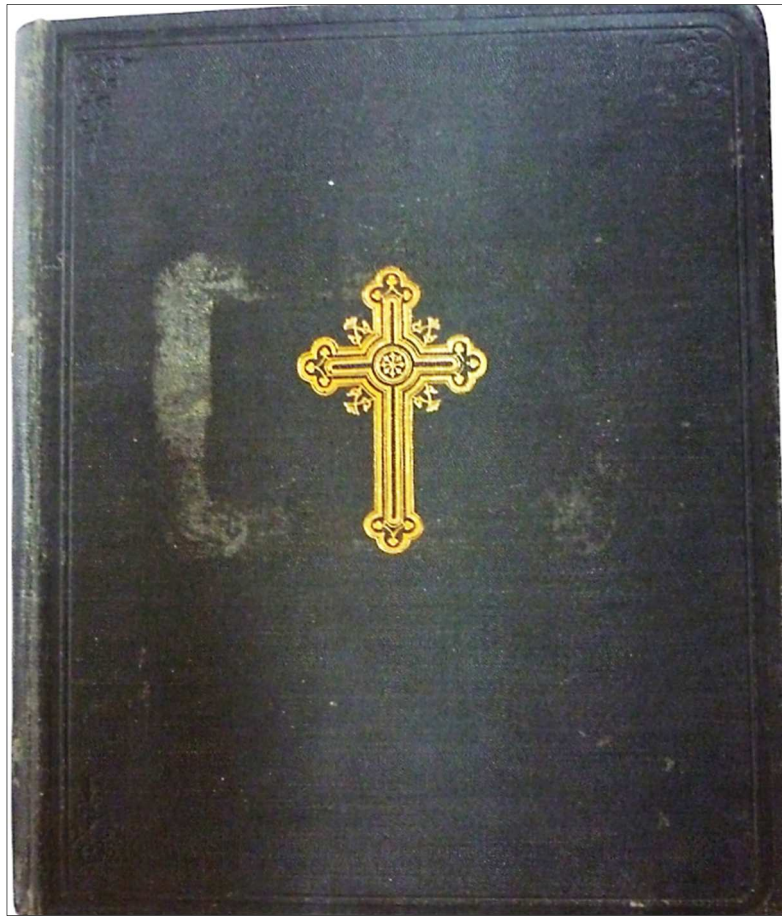


Image 2.3: Georgios Oikonomou's Archeological Journal, cover page

But there is another incident described in Oikonomou's journal that deserves our attention, since it illustrated, probably for the first time and in a very definite way, the conflict that arose between the state's plans for the area and certain social groups who operated economically there. The archeologist, who was apparently too upset to even note the date of the following entry, at some time in early September 1915 wrote:

Some shepherds who came during the night seeking vengeance because our laborers would not let them enter the digging site during the day [probably to graze their animals], damaged some of the pillars' quadrangular pedestals under the shed, completely shattering most of them and indecently smudging the rim of the well. Constable Kyriakos undertook to detect and prosecute them.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 87.

Bourgeois courtesy and Victorian morals would not allow Oikonomou to describe the situation in a direct way. However, the fact that hard evidence of this crime was still visible the next day probably meant that the shepherds had defecated in front of the entrance to the excavation. Apart from the comedic value that this incident provides, we must try to understand what it represented at this time and place. The fact that the vandals were shepherds should not be downplayed at all. In fact, it seems that being a shepherd in this area at this time was not merely a profession: It also implied an allegiance to a set of economic interests that, at times, adhered to a certain national narrative, as will be argued in Chapter 3.4.

Apart from Oikonomou's excavation and its arguably anticlimactic conclusion, by 1914 the Society had undertaken another noteworthy project, which was officially implemented by state legislation in 1926-27. A commission comprised of TASA members traveled to Macedonia entrusted with the Greekification of the place names of villages, towns, cities, mountains, rivers, and lakes. As it was described at the time, their task was the "expurgation from the country of *barbaric names*" and this project was blessed from the very beginning by the Ministry of Interior Affairs. The commission included several archeologists, historians, intellectuals as well as a former minister. In order to achieve their goal, the members were instructed to either find the new place names in ancient Greek texts or to Greekify the already existing "barbaric" ones. After working for a whole year on the subject, the committee produced a detailed map containing the updated version of Macedonia. The fruit of their labor was accepted by TASA with enthusiasm, with the Secretary-General noting that "The Archeological Society intends to multiply the copies of this geographical map -without taking into account any financial cost- for the benefit of the higher educational institutions and any enthusiast."¹⁰²

Over the following years and until 1922 the Archeological Society stopped its projects in Macedonia, partly as a result of the political developments in the country, partly because there were now bigger fish to fry. From 1915 to 1917 northern Greece was practically a different state due to the great National Schism between the Liberals and the Royalists. But even after 1917 archeological investigations focused on the new provinces that were only briefly acquired by Greece (after the Treaty of Sèvres) such

¹⁰²Ibid., 73-75. Unfortunately, despite my best efforts, I did not manage to trace any remaining copy of the actual map.

as Eastern Thrace and Smyrna. In fact, it was again Oikonomou who was sent to Smyrna to initiate excavations on sites off the coast of Asia Minor where circumstances could allow for political exploitation of such investigations. The excavation in Pella reached an inglorious end before it was even started, and it was not until 1957 that another archeologist revisited the forgotten site. Regardless, Oikonomou's excavation succeeded in advertising Macedonia's eternal Greekness to those who were eager to believe it. This shows a degree of political opportunism on the part of the Society and of Oikonomou personally, as TASA did not try to engage with the locals in a positive way, constructing their collective memory by transforming the landscape in which they were living. Evidently, it was principally Oikonomou's personal gain and the collective vanity of the Society that drove the excavation expeditions and not any deep dedication to the task of assimilating nationally indifferent peasants. As for Oikonomou? The now famous –at least in his tight professional circle- archeologist managed to take full advantage of his few but well-publicized findings in Pella and Asia Minor by parlaying them into a longstanding career as the Secretary-General of TASA from 1924 to 1951.¹⁰³

Even if we excuse Oikonomou for his opportunism—after all his intentions were not harmful in any way compared to those of the warmongering bigots of his time- the use of archeological excavations as an instrument for cultural assimilation should still be analyzed. To do that, we must first acknowledge the three groups that directly interacted with any given dig: The intellectual community, represented on site by one or more trained archeologists; the group of laborers hired by the archeologists to complete menial tasks, most often comprised of locals who strove for a fair day's pay; and finally the inhabitants of the surrounding settlements, either towns or villages, on whose land the digging took place. What we must address and try to evaluate is the impact of such operations on the (national) consciousness of each of those three groups.

As we saw from the example of Pella, the chief archeologists and their colleagues who monitored the excavation back in the TASA offices, did not need to be convinced of the necessity of unveiling Greek antiquities in Macedonia. They willingly acted like agents of nationalism, dedicated to spreading their convictions

¹⁰³ *Minutes of the Archeological Society (Praktika Archeologikis Etaireias)* (Athens, 1921), 63-74; *Minutes of the Archeological Society (Praktika Archeologikis Etaireias)* (Athens, 1928) 59-95.

among those who they thought of as potential co-nationals but surely primitives. Pella was not the only case; it was simply the first. High-profile archeological campaigns were (and are) to be exploited politically. Tellingly, the second large-scale excavation that took place in Macedonia had the same fate in terms of its promotion for reasons of national prestige. This time, Georgios Sotiriadis was in charge of the excavation, a former vice president of TASA who had been appointed professor and rector of the University of Thessaloniki. Born and raised in Macedonia, Sotiriadis' opinion on how useful excavations could be for Greece was clear. In 1927, he carried out a preliminary study of the ancient Greek town of Dion, located close to Litochoro (the town that Drakiotis had scorned in an earlier chapter) and for which he requested official permission from the Minister of Education in order to begin his archeological investigation. He even reminded the Minister that this was a pressing issue because, as he noted in his correspondence with the ministry, "this excavation matters as much as the history of Macedonia". In fact, he did not stop there. Sotiriadis proceeded to imply that there was some kind of anti-Greek conspiracy lurking in the background, which he attributed to what someone said (his writing at this point is illegible) to the President of the Academy of Athens, while the latter was in the Hague.¹⁰⁴ Whether Sotiriadis truly believed that his excavation near Litochoro could pose a serious threat to the nationalist aspirations of other states, or whether the undeniably intelligent Sotiriadis attempted to make the Minister feel culpable in case he denied his demands remains unknown. One thing is for sure: In the end, Sotiriadis convinced the Minister and Dion was the first successful large-scale excavation in Macedonia.

As for the laborers who were employed on excavations, the academic literature tends to overlook them. They were, however, the very first non-scientists who actively engaged with the material that intellectuals declared to be precious to the nation. Konstantinos Romaios, another TASA archeologist, acknowledged that such interaction could be remarkable. In a surprisingly egalitarian essay that he published for the University of Thessaloniki in 1935, Romaios described how his workers turned from apathetic wage earners to enthusiasts of ancient Greece, when they realized the beauty that ancient artifacts held. The admiration for the statues and vases, which they brought to light with their own hands, he claimed, was immeasurably more important

¹⁰⁴ NAMD, Box 675 E, Folder "Peri anaskafon ep'onomati tis Archaialogikis Etaireias eis Nea Agchialo, Epidauro, Amfiareion kai Dion".

than the refined appreciation of an armchair intellectual who also knew their value but who had never experienced the joy of discovery. Undeniably, the image that Romaios presented is very far from that of the easily deterred workers in Oikonomou's excavation. This, however, is not surprising if we take into account that all the major excavations that Romaios had conducted up until 1938 had been either in Central Greece or in the Peloponnesus, both provinces with populations that had accepted the nationalist narrative to some degree, unlike Macedonia. Then again, Romaios probably did not approach his sites with the same colonialist mentality as Oikonomou did. On the contrary, Romaios sympathized with the peasants and those who worked for him and did not seek to civilize them. In fact, not without guilt in his tone, it seems that he understood how his relatively easy profession earned him a huge salary, in comparison with the simple villagers who, despite being constantly overworked, are always underpaid. In an essay he wrote, Romaios remarked modestly on the subject of the hired workforce on an archeological site:

For this reason we should take into consideration the countryside and the humble Greek village, from which we all, some more others less, originate from. This is where we will find the largest bulk of our people, the pure and clean alloy that we need for our investigation [...].

[...] The excavation laborers! When they first came to work they had in general the following attitude: "We come here for the payday. I guess that the job will go on for a couple of months and we will put bread on the table. We will dig up antiquities. What antiquities? –How should I know? Ancient stuff. The people doing the excavation are from a learned society and only God knows how much they earn from this job, but why do you care?" [...] Honest and acquainted with hard work. they wholeheartedly start digging without understanding at all the expectations of the archeologist.¹⁰⁵

But regardless of Romaios' good disposition, the interwar period in Macedonia was tumultuous and the Greek authorities always treated the locals with distrust, as Bulgaria and Romania were thought to have established a network of nationalist agents all around Macedonia, clad in peasant clothes. Oikonomou's behavior, therefore, was typical, as was the stubbornness of the locals to subscribe to a nationalist narrative that painted them in dark colors.

Quite relevant to this was the reaction of the people whose economic activity was being disrupted because of the excavations. In the case of Pella, we saw the

¹⁰⁵ Konstantinos Romaios, *Laos kai Techni [People and Art]*, Thessalonikii, Nikos A. Sfontonis, 1935, 4-5.

disgruntled shepherds express their resentment by vandalizing the few finds that had been made at the site. Was this an act against national symbolism? Probably not. More likely, it was the result of despair at losing their pastures. The fact, however, that something like that happened in Macedonia right after the Greek state annexed the province should not be overlooked. After all, similar cases were reported to the Archeological Service and TASA all around “Old Greece”. For example, archeologist Keramopoulos in 1927 became more and more frustrated over an individual in Thiba, who refused to give up his plot of land for the benefit of the excavation, and who was willing to take things all the way, registering it as a parking lot in order to make its expropriation by the state more difficult.¹⁰⁶ The act of opposition to the Greek state in these two cases is undoubtedly comparable. What differs, however, is the consequence that this opposition might have had on the consolidation of Greek authority in Macedonia. In other words, being a protesting plot owner in Thiba, a town located fifty kilometers from Athens, was different from being an irritated shepherd in Macedonia: The latter was part of an organized *tselegkato*, the interests of which did not align with that of the Greek state in the province.

To conclude, judging by the case study presented in this chapter, archeological excavations in Macedonia did not eventually serve their intended goal. They may have helped some careers take off along the way and perhaps allowed intellectuals to boast a bit more about the “golden age” of their nation, but reconstructed ancient sites certainly did not awaken the same feelings among the rural communities of the province. If anything, the incident with the shepherds in Pella shows that the battle for the control of Macedonia would not be conducted in terms of cultural assimilation but in terms of economic domination.

¹⁰⁶ NAMD, Box 758 Γ, “Peri Anaskafis eis Kadmeion Thivas”.

Chapter 3: Molding Modern Greek Macedonia

Chapter 3.1-Of Societies, States and Oppression: Private and state agency in the effort for agricultural intensification

Unlike archeology, public works of art or novels praising epic deeds performed by national heroes – all perhaps awe-inspiring intellectual works that were supposedly able to establish an inextricable connection with the country's national history – agriculture was not a subject that could easily produce nationalist feelings among Macedonia's rural population. At a time when higher romantic ideals dominated the nationalist rhetoric, farming and husbandry were too banal to try to build a successful national narrative upon. It is for this reason that finding studies and treatises that discuss agriculture in Macedonia before the annexation of the province is almost impossible. Even after the annexation, however, Macedonian agriculture was far from being a hot topic among Greek nationalist circles. As we shall see, however, the mentality with which the state and other independent institutions approached the province was that of *spolia victoribus*, which regarded Macedonia simply as a sandbox within which state and private entrepreneurship could unfold. What mattered though was that this mentality was falsely based on unrealistic exaggerations and wishful -in fact, very wishful- thinking.

But, even though agriculture does not appear in the archives often, at least not as much as discourses concerning history, geography, archeology and generally the disciplines that constituted the building blocks of nationalism, many scholars recognize the importance of the state's attempts to encroach on the everyday struggle of rural populations, the overwhelming majority of whom were agricultural laborers. In cases where the discourse on agriculture was not hijacked by nationalist activists, the advanced elements or alleged primitiveness of this particular sector were still seen as an excellent indicator of national vigor or feebleness.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, as a form of

¹⁰⁷ For the rise of agrarian nationalism see Spyridon Ploumidis, *Soil and Memory: "Agrarian" Nationalism in Greece and Bulgaria (1927-1946)* (*Edafos kai Mnimi: O "georgikos" ethnikismos stin Ellada kai stin Voulgaria (1927-1946)*) (Athens: Pataki, 2011) and Dimitris Panagiotopoulos, *Agricultural Party of Greece: Aspects of the Agricultural Movement in Greece (Agrotiko Komma Ellados: Opseis tou agrotkou kinimatos sin Ellada)* (Athens: Plethron, 2010).

manual labor, agriculture represented the diligence of the nation, a moral quality that was revered by nationalists. It was thus expected of nation-states that they would try to channel the productive powers of agriculture to their own benefit by at least assimilating rural populations to the nation on a practical level, rather than on a discursive one.

There are many examples in national and transnational contexts of attempts to integrate peoples through agriculture. This has, in fact, become a constantly re-occurring subject over a span of many years since the consolidation of social history. In one such case study, Osama Abi-Mershed discusses the aspirations of French Saint-Simonian administrators to civilize colonized Algeria in agricultural terms. Far from being chauvinists, these “apostles of modernity” -as the author calls them- exercised policies toward the indigenous population that eventually could only be described as promoting their nationalization or assimilation into the French state. But this was not the cheap explicit façade of nationalism, the kind that included racial slurs and eugenics. In fact, the author notes that the Saint-Simonians were genuinely well-disposed bureaucrats who believed in progress and efficiency, not only for the French state but also for the Algerian locals. Nevertheless, nationalization was their desired result, in the sense that they strove to bring Algerian agriculture up to the civilized French standards of the time. By corroding the existing land system of the region, they attempted to introduce Algerian peasants into the global capitalist market while viewing the natives not as potential enemies but as a population in need of guidance. However, as Abi-Mershed argues, this effort did not come to fruition.¹⁰⁸

What is remarkable though is that we can also see a comparable civilizing mission occurring at the same time although now not in a “savage” overseas colony of the French Empire but within the state’s borders. One of the first scholars who observed this possibility was Eugen Weber. In his extraordinary work *Peasants into Frenchmen*, he dealt with the nationalization and integration of rural France into the nation state, part of which was to be accomplished by the modernization of French agriculture. By manipulating reforms that governed the land, and ultimately, the lives of countryside dwellers, the French state tried to transform the a-national peasants, living in closed moral economies, into nationally-indoctrinated farmers, actively

¹⁰⁸ Osama Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity: Saint-Simonians and the Civilizing Mission in Algeria* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2010), 154-158.

participating in the financial life of their country. Interestingly, in this example national education and speeches on the superiority of the nation were not the sole factors that pushed peasants into accepting and/or tolerating their nation; it was their *de facto* alignment with national interests that produced Frenchmen, rather than the mesmerizing rhetoric of nationalist activists.¹⁰⁹

In an Italian context now, Marco Armiero concludes that the nationalization of peasants followed an identical path in Italy since it was realized only when the state abolished the common land system and promoted the notion of private property, instilling an ethos of competition among its subjects.¹¹⁰ Nelson Moe, again in Italy, attributes the antipathy that northern Italian intellectuals showed toward the southern provinces of the country to either the inability or the unwillingness of the southerners to conform to the advanced agricultural practices of the north. Leaving one's land barren and unproductive and therefore not fulfilling your obligations toward your fatherland meant that one was not a loyal patriot, or any kind of patriot.¹¹¹ Nitsiakos, finally, in his short but tremendously concise book, titled *Peklari*, describes the same process, only this time set in a small village located close to the Greco-Albanian border. In this work, we witness how a self-sustained and independent economy that relied on a system of commons became gradually, after the advent of the Greek nation-state, a community where the establishment of private ownership eventually led to severe depopulation and decline.¹¹² This chapter follows the actors who contributed to this process in Macedonia, their successes and their failures, ranging from opportunistic "philanthropists" to disillusioned agronomists and violent officers.

In our story, it all started with individuals who traveled to Macedonia, to assess the potential agricultural development of the province and evaluate the existing systems of production and land use while it was still under the Ottoman rule. One such example, perhaps the most interesting one, is that of Ioannis Kalostipis, a Greek philologist, playwright, politician, and publisher. He was, more importantly, the first person to have reported on the economic prospects of Macedonia. Having been

¹⁰⁹ Weber, *Peasants into French Men*, 115-129, 241-277.

¹¹⁰ Armiero, *Rugged Nation*, 76-86.

¹¹¹ Nelson Moe, *The View from Vesuvius: Italian Culture and the Southern Question, Studies on the History of Society and Culture* (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 2002), 232-234.

¹¹² Vassilis Nitsiakos, *Peklari: Koinoniki oikonomia mikris klimakas [Peklari: Small-Scale Social Economy]*, Ioannina, Isnafi, 2015.

appointed headmaster of a Greek middle school in Kozani, a small town in the south of the region, Kalostipis was more or less familiar with the economy of the region. He was by no means an economist, though. This becomes painfully obvious in a study he published in 1886, titled *Macedonia, namely an Economic, Geographical, Historical and Ethnological study of Macedonia*.¹¹³ However, the fact he was not an expert on the matters he was discussing did not mean that his book was not well received. In fact, it seems that the study gained a considerable amount of attention, since it was published serially by a well-read newspaper and was published in a second edition in 1896, something quite uncommon at the time. In this study, Kalostipis attempted to portray Macedonia as the “Promised Land” of Hellenism.¹¹⁴ He criticized the Greek state and Greeks themselves for not knowing enough about Macedonia and for not caring enough to find out more, asserting, just as Hadjikyriakou in Chapter 2.1 had, that:

We are not being taught in schools, by the press, by the textbooks [...] the value and sanctity of *Megali Idea* [Here referring to the annexation of Macedonia] and so we cannot have a well-educated opinion [...] about large and beautiful Macedonia, its rich resources, its strategic position [...].¹¹⁵

Kalostipis spent many pages of his book enumerating the riches of Macedonia. But clearly the lion’s share of his attention went to the metal deposits or mines and the abundance of timber in the region. The references to agriculture are few and plainly given in a language that overflows with bloated remarks and maximalist expressions regarding the glory of Hellenism. Only one passage is particularly worth commenting on, when the author claimed that:

The extraordinary variety of the Macedonian soil can be seen in its pleasant nappes and well-watered valleys, its rippled bright-green plateaus, its fertile valleys and fruitful basins along with their loamy moors. No other Greek province could brag more about its fertile plains, apart from Macedonia.¹¹⁶

As stated though, such claims about the agricultural potential of the land were generally infrequent. The notion of a bountiful land was built upon different bases, which were thought to be more worthy and profitable. Besides, agriculture was

¹¹³ Ioannis Kalostipis, *Macedonia, namely Economic, Geographical, Historical and Ethnological study of Macedonia (Makedonia, hetoi Meleti Oikonomologiki, Geografiki, Istoriki kai Ethnologiki tis Makedonias)* (Athens: Carolos Vilberg, 1886).

¹¹⁴ Kalostipis, *Macedonia*, 8.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

considered a task for simple peasants who were always suspected of not being Greek enough. When the time came, however, this humble occupation would become a game-changer in Macedonia.

As we saw, *Megali Idea*, the official national(ist) ideology of the Greek state, pretty much since its founding, did not really include the imperative of expansionism for its own sake. The nationalistic slogan of regaining the lost lands of the Byzantine Empire from the Ottoman usurpers and re-establishing the city of Constantinople as the center of Hellenism and Orthodoxy was also not enough by itself. We should look at these conceptual schemas as an effort to cement the national consciousness of the Greeks, rather than as an active political goal of the tiny Kingdom of Greece at the time. What was more feasible, not to mention more beneficial, was the modernization of all the sectors that influenced the social and economic stability both of the people and more importantly, of the state apparatus and its investors. The quest for progress was the only aspect of *Megali Idea* that was emphasized the first time it was “presented” officially in 1844 by the then-to-be Prime Minister of Greece, Ioannis Kolettis, inside the Greek parliament. More specifically, Kolettis asserted that:

... [b]ased on her geographical position, Hellas, located in the center of Europe, having the East on her right and the West on her left, was destined to enlighten the West through her fall, and then the East through her restoration. The first was accomplished by our forefathers [the ancient Greeks]; the latter is confided to us.¹¹⁷

Kolettis’ urging was founded on a solid basis. It is easy to imagine that in a country that was heavily dependent upon the production of primary products, the modernization of agriculture was one of the top priorities of the state. Improvements in agriculture were not only necessary in order to minimize frequent food shortages, but it was also one of the basic sources of income to such an extent that it could potentially make the Greek economy competitive on a regional level. This is probably the reason why in as early as 1835, enlightened intellectuals and men of science founded in Athens the first association that addressed the subject of Greek agriculture, albeit indirectly. This was the “Natural History Society at Athens” (*Hetaireia tis Fysikis Istorias en Athinaiis*) and, as its name suggests, it was a Society that was

¹¹⁷ *I tis tritis Septemvriou en Athinaiis Ethniki Syneleusis: Praktika* [The third of September National Assembly at Athens: Proceeding], Athens, Royal Printing House, 190.

mostly oriented toward the science of natural history.¹¹⁸ This piece of information would be irrelevant to our subject however, if it was not for another institution that was founded two years later, in 1837. This time it was the “Committee for the Encouragement of National Industry” (*Epitropi Empsychoseos tis Ethnikis Viomichanias*), which was partly staffed by staff from the previous Society.¹¹⁹ Even though they were officially established as legal entities, the actual impact that these two societies had on the improvement of agriculture in Greece was negligible. In fact, the several other societies and associations that were established after these two also completely failed to leave their mark. It was only at the dawn of the 20th century that a number of serious progressive actors in Greece who possessed enough capital to aim to seek profit, joined forces and formed the Greek Agricultural Society (*Helliniki Georgiki Etaireia*, henceforth GAS).¹²⁰

GAS was founded in 1901 by a Royal Decree and King George appointed himself as life President of the Society. It seems that the King did not just want to serve as an honorary head, as we saw with the Archeological Society at Athens. He wanted to exercise total control over the Society and made it so that he was able to appoint 18 out of the 36 members of the board of directors, while he also maintained the right to veto any decision of the board with which he did not agree. Below him, there were three Vice Presidents of GAS, who often were influential personalities. Tellingly, the first three vice presidents were G. Theotokis, A. Zaimis, and P. Stefanovik-Skilitsis; the first two served multiple times as prime ministers of the Greek government, while the third was a prominent large landowner and investor.

The registered members of the Society and the board of directors were not of humble origins either. In 1911, for example, the list of members of the board included six prominent politicians, four bankers, four industrialists, five landowners and six scientists.¹²¹ In addition, representatives of the national bourgeois class were also behind the financing of the Society. Again in 1911, half of the income of the

¹¹⁸ Royal Decree of 16/28.4.1835 in Official Government Gazette 21/17.5.1835. Newspaper Athena, issue n. 290, 13.11.1835: 1061-1064

¹¹⁹ Royal Decree of 25.1.1837 in Official Government Gazette 5/9.2.1837.

¹²⁰ Leonidas Kallivretakis, *The Dynamics of Agricultural Modernization in 19th Century Greece (He dynamiki tou agrotikou esksigchronismou stin Ellada tou 19ou aiona)* (Athens: Educational Institute of the Agricultural Bank, 1990).

¹²¹ *Report of the Auditing Committee of the management of the year 1910-1911 (Ekthesis tis Exelegtikis Epitropis tis diacheiriseos tou etous 1910-1911)* (Athens: Greek Agricultural Society, 1911), 6.

Society came from donations and bequests from its members. In this light, it would be utterly naïve to claim that GAS was just a utilitarian association brought together for the greater good of the people. Far more likely, the Society functioned as a well-connected lobby that sought to render agriculture more productive and thus more profitable.¹²² In fact, it would be only fair to claim that GAS can be very easily compared to all the other Societies –private or otherwise– that sought to make agriculture more lucrative, since their members probably regarded them as an investment rather than charity. The Royal Agricultural Society of England, founded in 1838, similarly operated on the premise of being a “non-profit organization” as did the German Agricultural Society, which was established by agriculturalist Max Eyth in post-unification Germany.¹²³

GAS did not go to Macedonia untrained. Before attempting to modernize the new lands, the Society had managed to provide excellent samples of its efficiency in Old Greece. Assisted by the state, the Society had managed to form 162 agricultural associations as of 1909, a number that would drastically go up in 1911 when there were 720 of them all over Greece. In addition to these remarkable achievements, GAS introduced what came to be known as “model orchards” in every province of the country. These were essentially farms, run by educated agronomists appointed directly by GAS, who used progressive techniques in accordance with the specialized needs of the province to which they were sent.¹²⁴ When the time came, GAS tried to show the same degree of dedication in Macedonia, where its members realized that a completely new market was opening before their eyes. As we shall see, however, Macedonia was not as easy a target as southern Greece.

In 1913, GAS appointed agronomist G. Palamiotis to tour Macedonia in order to evaluate the state of agricultural production there. After a trip that must have been eye-opening to him, as he was one of the very few Greeks to see the real Macedonia, Palamiotis returned with a thorough and lengthy report on the subject, which was published in March 1914 by the Society.¹²⁵ It contained detailed descriptions of every

¹²² *Report of the Auditing Committee*, 13.

¹²³ For more information on the English case see: Nicholas Goddard, *Harvests of Change: History of the Royal Agricultural Society of England*, United Kingdom, Quiller Press, 198.

¹²⁴ Kallivretakis, *The Dynamics of Agricultural Modernization*, 112-116.

¹²⁵ Georgios Palamiotis, *Agricultural Investigation of Macedonia (Georgiki Erevna Makedonias)* (Athens: Greek Agricultural Society, 1914).

district of the province, the extent of cultivated lands, the condition of the soil, the goods produced and the quality of agricultural tools that were being used by the locals. But it is not the meticulousness of the investigation that it is most surprising. Rather, it is the deep scientific character of the whole endeavor, an undoubtedly uncommon quality given the time and place where the research was conducted. Unlike the highly politicized reports that were produced by the envoys of other Societies, such as the Archeological Society, Palamiotis did not seem to possess any nationalistic superiority complex. On the contrary, one can find many passages where he commented positively upon the hard-working spirit of the Turkish-speaking peasants. For example, at one point he notes that:

The district, which is inhabited mostly by Ottomans, is totally segmented into small estates, up to 80 *stremmata*¹²⁶ at most, and only rarely in small villages can one find large estates of 500-800 *stremmata* belonging to Turkish landowners, but they are very few. Because of this segmentation, the land is cultivated well and with diligence [...].¹²⁷

In another instance, Palamiotis criticized the predominant land-owning system that existed in Macedonia, namely the Ottoman system of the *chifliks*. Contrary to the older Ottoman system of land management, the Timariot system which it had eventually replaced, *chifliks* were large hereditary and private estates. In simplified legal terms, the owner of a *chiflik* estate was in a constant pact with the peasants working on his land: The peasants provided their labor for agricultural production as well as a part of the yield to the ruler, only when the yield was adequate. In return, it was expected that the estate owner would protect his laborers and their families from bandits, loan sharks and natural disasters and at the same time provide them with housing and land for personal sustenance.¹²⁸ Without anything to gain, the laborers did not strive to maximize their production as long as they were able to produce the least amount of goods (mostly grain) to cover their own needs as well as the landowner's expected share. In addition to that, as agronomists often noted, peasants in *chifliks* engaged in other activities that could be more lucrative for them, such as animal husbandry and small trades.¹²⁹ Even if this was far from an ideal situation for them,

¹²⁶ *Stremma* (pl. *stremmata*) is equal to 1000m².

¹²⁷ Palamiotis, *Agricultural Investigation of Macedonia*, 27.

¹²⁸ For a concise yet thorough analysis on how *chifliks* functioned within the Ottoman Empire see the classic: Vergopoulos Kostas, *To Agrotiko Zitima stin Ellada: I koinoniki ensomatosi tis georgias [The Agricultural Question In Greece: The social incorporation of Agriculture]*, Athens, Exantas, 1975, 65-68.

¹²⁹ Palamiotis Georgios 1914, Kazas Giannitson, '*Oikonomiki Ellas*', 6 July, p.321-2.

especially as regards the power that the landowner had over them,¹³⁰ the *chiflik* system kept laborers mostly shielded against the whims of the capitalist market and guaranteed their communal survival. This non-competitive *modus operandi* that did not reward increased productivity was exactly what Greek agronomists observed when they travelled Macedonia. Many of them, however, Palamiotis among them, blamed the *chiflik* owners and the Ottoman government for the agricultural mismanagement of Macedonia, at the same time fully excusing the farmers for their flawed technique.¹³¹ He even directly criticized the Orthodox residents of a certain area for burning down Turkish villages, destroying the crops and plundering the livestock of Muslim peasants as the main impediment that held agricultural development back.¹³²

In the spirit of this national neutrality, Palamiotis detected three different factors that impacted negatively on the economic growth of the agricultural sector in the province. The first, which was also the one most mentioned, was the primitive quality of the tools that were being used by the farmers. In fact, the “Hesiod plow” - namely the archaic wooden plow that bore a flat iron tip and was thus not capable of plowing deep enough furrows on the fields- was one of the main culprits in the author’s report. Ironically enough, even though the Hesiod plow is the only connection to ancient Greece, albeit a superficial one, in the whole report it is mentioned as an absolutely anachronistic element. This is the reason why when Palamiotis went to the district of *Servia* (just northwest of Mount Olympus) one of the most backward and underdeveloped districts in the region he noted:

From a technical point of view, the agricultural activity of the district is still in its infancy.

¹³⁰ For an exploration of the peculiar economic structure of *chifliks*, not only in Greece but all over the Ottoman realm, see: Kostas Vergopoulos, *To Agrotiko zitima stin Ellada: I koinoniki ensomatosi tis georgias [The Agricultural Question in Greece: The social incorporation of agriculture]*, Athens, Exantas, 1975, 64-103, Stathis Damianakos, *Apo ton Choriko ston Agroti: I Elliniki agrotiki oikonomia apenanti sti pagosmiopoiisi [From Peasant to Farmer: Greek Agricultural Economy toward globalization]*, Athens, Exantas-EKKE, 2002, 211-213 and Lynda Carroll, “Sowing the Seeds of Modernity on the Ottoman Frontier: Agricultural Investment and the Formation of Large Farms in Nineteenth-Century Transjordan, *Archeologies: Journal of the World Archeological Congress*, vol.4:2, 233-249.

For even more on the related publications on the subject see: Keyder, Caglar, and Faruk Tabak, eds. *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East: Globalization, Revolution, and Popular Culture*. SUNY Press, 1991 and

Kostopoulos, Tasos. ““Land to the Tiller”. On the Neglected Agrarian Component of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement, 1893–1912.” *Turkish Historical Review* 7, no. 2 (2016): 134-166.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 10.

The cultivation of the fields is done poorly with Hesiod plows, with which one can only open shallow furrows. In recent years, some Company attempted to introduce the iron plow and other agricultural tools, but this failed; this failure was mainly due to the complete ignorance as to how to use them by those who tried this first, as well as the total lack of professional education.¹³³

Another point that Palamiotis lamented was the use of fertilizer or, more precisely, its limited or negligible use. In most cases, the farmers used manure on their fields to make them more fertile. Some few cases were even reported, especially in the non-competitive *chiflik* estates, where the tenants were not at all familiar with the concept of fertilization. Ideally, GAS as well as Palamiotis would indoctrinate peasants into following the progressive model of western European countries: the mechanization of agriculture, along with the extensive use of chemical fertilizers, which were considered an innovation at the time. However, it was clear that such a huge leap - from wooden plows to tractors- was not realistic. Thus, the short-term goal for the agronomist would be for the Society to introduce the peasants to both more advanced tools -like the iron plow, the harrow, and the cotton gin- and more efficient ways of utilizing fertilizers.

Those material deficiencies were not the only issue that GAS had to face, though. The complete lack of practical education regarding agricultural techniques was the second problem that had to be tackled. As evident from the above passage, the majority of farmers were discouraged from using new tools and methods because they did not have the much-needed training in order to engage with them correctly. This was already known in 1913, when another agronomist of the Society, named Pilavios Papageorgiou, had written in the annual Agricultural Bulletin of the Society that the Macedonian farmer

[p]rincipally needs agricultural propaganda in order to diffuse agricultural knowledge among the rural Macedonian population, which it now lacks, and for this reason it is necessary for a sufficient number of agronomists to tour every district and to teach on the spot about the agricultural machines, cleaning and disinfecting the seeds, the new crops, methods of artificial grazing grounds etc. [...].¹³⁴

Finally, the last issue that was identified by the Society as a pathology of the Macedonian countryside was the one that would take the longest to fix and it boiled down to the prevailing model of land ownership, the *chiflik*. *Chifliks* were mainly large

¹³³ Ibid.,13.

¹³⁴ *Agricultural Bulletin* (Athens: Greek Agricultural Society, 1913), 218.

estates that belonged to Muslim Ottoman subjects. The size was not the problem though. After all, many members of the Society's board of directors were themselves owners of huge estates as well. The total absence of incentives on part of their tenants to be more productive, however, was considered problematic. The inhabitants, and consequently laborers, of a *chiflik* were similar to serfs, who bore heavy responsibilities, as they were forced to hand over to their landlord a large percentage of their annual agricultural production. Under these conditions, the villagers that belonged to a *chiflik* estate developed a peculiar moral economy that was based upon the survival of every member of the society, rather than on ambition for market desirability and profit margins.¹³⁵ Apart from a very few cases, where the *chiflik* ruler and his tenants were genuinely praised for being honest and true workers of the land, the *chiflik* estates were portrayed as enclaves of underdevelopment and laziness.¹³⁶ When Palamiotis visited the countryside around Giannitsa, an area that also included the aforementioned village of *Agioi Apostoloi*, he noted:

Due to underpopulation, a huge area of the district remains uncultivated, used only for grazing.

Large ownership, which is prevalent in the district, should be blamed for this, along with the complete lack of supervision by the owners. Thus, the tenants (mainly Bulgarophone serfs) cultivate a small part of the field, just enough to justify their presence there, at the same time preferring to occupy themselves with their livestock, each of them tending to 5-15 oxen.¹³⁷

The next step both for GAS and for the Greek state was to find adequate solutions in order to bring Macedonian agriculture into the new era. Dealing firstly with the material aspect of this issue was considered the easiest way to initiate the transition toward modernization. Thus, priority was given to the use of more advanced tools and fertilizers. In the annual Agricultural Bulletin for 1915, published by the Society, we see the first actual data regarding this task. The Society had established several "agricultural stations" in Macedonia, which provided the farmers with the needed materials. Iron plows seemed to be the most desired tool at the time, while other, more specialized farming utensils, such as harrows, wheat gins, and seeding and threshing machines came second. We are also informed that by the end of 1914 the Society had made 18,349 Drachmas from selling these tools. In order to calculate the approximate

¹³⁵ Kostas Vergopoulos, *The Agricultural Question in Greece: The social Incorporation of Agriculture (To agrotiko zitima stin Ellada: He Koinoniki Ensomatosi tis Georgias)* (Athens: Exantas, 1975), 56-57.

¹³⁶ *Agricultural Bulletin*, 1913, 37.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

number of tools sold, we would have to take into account that every piece of equipment cost from 80 to 100 Drachmas. This means that peasants in GAS stations had purchased only 200 new tools, more or less, which suggests that the new equipment was not so eagerly accepted by the locals.¹³⁸ Moreover, the daily newspaper titled *Macedonia*, which at the time sold in Thessaloniki, Kavala, and Serres as well as in smaller towns, where it was distributed only to subscribers, had started a campaign to promote the new tools, as evident by the frequent advertisements for iron plows that could be found in the paper.

In addition to that, GAS was not the only one that had undertaken such efforts. The Agricultural Bulletins inform us that the state was also a crucial agent in this campaign along with another well-known privately owned company at the time, which had identical goals. This was the “Hellenic Company for Chemical Products and Fertilizers”, founded in 1909 in Piraeus, which had started its expansion in Macedonia, establishing six stations that were mainly in or nearby the cities or large towns of the province by the end of 1914. Despite the fact that this particular Company was more oriented toward the development of industry, it nevertheless profited from the increase in agricultural production, which provided with the necessary raw materials that kept the agricultural industry moving. As implied by its title, when it came to agriculture, the Hellenic Company for Chemical Products and Fertilizers was mostly oriented towards spreading propaganda for the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, as well as selling them. Supplementary to this effort was also the textbook/pamphlet that the Company issued, which even contained altered images that demonstrated the alleged effectiveness of fertilizers on one’s yield as part of its vulgarization policy. Unfortunately, the circulation statistics of this publication are impossible to estimate.

Returning to GAS, the Society had also been an ardent supporter of the introduction of chemicals to the Macedonian fields. A report that dates again to 1915 states that the first shipments of copper sulfate -one of the most basic and essential pesticides- had reached Macedonia and had been distributed to the agricultural stations of the Society waiting to be sold. However, Macedonians were not too fond of chemicals. As a writer in the Agricultural Bulletin notes, the Macedonians “only spray

¹³⁸ *Agricultural Bulletin* (Athens: Greek Agricultural Society, 1915), 170-171.

their vineyards a little or [in other cases] they completely ignore the use of sulfate copper”.¹³⁹ In addition, it seems that the use of chemicals, either pesticides or fertilizers, did not become widespread in Macedonia until 1940. Research that was conducted 14 years after the report, in 1929, proves that the farmers of the province were not yet adept at using them. Only 0.8 tons of chemical fertilizers were used for every 1000 residents, while in Crete, the same number was 27.5 tons.¹⁴⁰

In terms of the lack of education among the Macedonian population, the Society had decided to take certain actions that were deemed necessary. As we saw, Papageorgiou in 1913 had called for touring agronomists in Macedonia who would be responsible for educating the locals, which was a frequent tactic in old Greece.¹⁴¹ However, there is no evidence whatsoever that something like that took place in Macedonia until 1922. One of the actions that were indeed reified regarding this matter was the distribution of booklets to the farmers of the province that contained practical information and advice for producing better crops and more productive fields. These booklets were printed in large numbers and were sold to farmers for the very low price of 20 cents of a Drachma. Judging by the actual booklets that have been traced, probably the most popular as well, they were not written in vernacular Greek but in simple *Katharevousa*, something that minimized their effectiveness. In an effort to make up for this, all of them contained well-explained and illustrated instructions that would guide the illiterates toward right actions. As one passage informs us, in 1914 there were at least 30,000 copies of such booklets distributed across Greece. The writer particularly states that some of them were meant for Macedonia, destined to be given to schoolteachers in order for them to “indoctrinate pupils and farmers on agricultural matters”.¹⁴²

Recognizing and rewarding the efforts of particular farmers was another tactic that could potentially give incentives to the local population to become more productive. Organizing exhibitions where the farmers would be able to show their best crops, winning monetary prizes, was on the to-do list that Papageorgiou had proposed in 1913. Again, until 1922 there is no documented evidence suggesting that such contests ever happened, apart from one exception: The famous Panama–Pacific

¹³⁹ *Agricultural Bulletin* (Athens: Greek Agricultural Society, 1915), 172.

¹⁴⁰ Vergopoulos, *The Agricultural Question in Greece*, 191.

¹⁴¹ *Agricultural Bulletin* (Athens: Greek Agricultural Society, 1915), 21-22.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 169.

International Exposition of 1915 that was held in San Francisco. Both GAS and the Greek government were rather eager to send a Greek envoy overseas and anxious to demonstrate their progressiveness and forward thinking to the rest of the world. Regardless of the centerpieces of the exhibition, which were marvels of technology and engineering, Greece, as well as a very large number of other countries, sent representatives to advertise the agricultural riches of their land. Due to the fact that this exhibition was meant to be a showcase for Greece, Papageorgiou -who was appointed as the country's official delegate - was very meticulous about the quality of the products that were to be displayed. Indeed, it seems that the Greek envoy was well-organized and successful. In the GAS bulletin of 1915, we find a boastful article summarizing the many positive remarks with which Greece's envoy was showered by delegates of other countries (western countries in their majority). In addition to that, a few pages later, we also find the complete list of the prize-winning participants. They numbered more than 300, were producers, and as many as 60 of them had come from Macedonia.¹⁴³ Publicity and pride aside, however, it is hard to measure the actual impact of such symbolic gestures on the agricultural production of the country.

After all, it seemed that the main problem for agriculture in Macedonia was the anachronistic *chiflik* system, as it was keeping the province non-competitive in the market. The Agricultural Bill that passed in 1917 was tailored to counter this deficiency. The Minister of Agriculture, A. Michalopoulos, defended the bill in Parliament in the same year and GAS readily endorsed his statements, by publishing them in its bulletin for 1917:

After the liberation of our enslaved brothers, the Agricultural Question became even more exacerbated, both in quality and quantity. [...] Many vast and fertile areas that would be capable of producing tenfold of what they produce now and bring happiness to the country and its inhabitants, remained fallow. The morbid phenomenon of absenteeism [sic] that characterizes the *chifliks* [...] is a general rule. [...] Because of this, the state of agriculture remains primal, almost the same as in barbaric times.¹⁴⁴

By absenteeism, Michalopoulos meant the common practice of the *chiflik* holders to neglect their estates and only set foot on them when the time had come to collect their rents. Based on these premises, the bill enabled actions that seemed radical at the time. Firstly, and most importantly, it allowed the state to expropriate *chiflik* lands at will,

¹⁴³ *Agricultural Bulletin*, 1915, 28-32, 292-296, 328-337.

¹⁴⁴ *Agricultural Bulletin* (Athens: Greek Agricultural Society, 1917), 176.

presumably in order to sell them to the farmers who had been cultivating them as its agricultural laborers. “Compulsory expropriation was inevitable.” Michalopoulos noted, “It is legal because the 17th Article of the Constitution allows it; it is also just, because [the expropriations] will serve greater and more critical interests, of social or even national importance”.¹⁴⁵ The bold statements, however, were not followed by equally bold actions. Eleftherios Venizelos’ government seemed reluctant to proceed with fundamental changes. From 1917 to 1922 the Greek state had expropriated only 88 *chiflik* estates, a number that seems insignificant if we take into account the fact that in the three-year period from 1923 to 1925, therefore after the arrival of the refugees, the number of expropriated *chifliks* had risen sharply to 1764.¹⁴⁶ As we will see in the next subchapter, the main catalyst in the decision to radically change the land ownership model in Macedonia was the arrival of more than one million refugees.

Our investigation into why Macedonians were so unwilling to abide by a narrative that wanted to elevate them into productive members of the Greek state would not be complete without underlining a dimension that is almost always ignored in Greek public history: the oppressive imperial mentality that Greek officials either brought with them or developed in the province. Incidents of conflict were numerous and surely many of them are not documented. In fact, the ones that are were most of the time reported by other state agents and civil servants who had the decency to empathize with the locals. Not all, however, were even considered “bad” at the time. The patronizing tone with which Greek officials addressed the peasants in remote villages when the former went there to communicate the establishment of Greek rule in the province, is certainly the least condemnable but it nevertheless exemplifies the prevailing attitude.

In 1918, the village of Loubnitsa (renamed Skra in 1926) was visited by a Greek official and two translators. Their job was to tour the rural parts of Macedonia in order to organize the administrative structures of the countryside, urging the peasants to elect a body comprised of three of their compatriots to act as a quasi-official Community Council. While this was meant to appease the locals with a façade of egalitarianism on the part of the Greek state, the attitude of the said official toward the

¹⁴⁵ *Agricultural Bulletin*, 1917, 177.

¹⁴⁶ Vergopoulos, *The Agricultural Question in Greece*, 177.

villagers showed that he held them in contempt. It also reminded them who was in charge at all times:

[Our Government] will send you teachers to teach your children and to educate them, and because now you have found yourselves in an unfortunate situation, it will lend you animals, seeds, and ploughs, and we also brought you as a present 68 sacks of flour, 10 sacks of rice and one sack of sugar. And for the animals and the rest, be aware that if you take them you will have to plow and sow and repay your debt and progress. [...] But we cannot stay here to distribute them [...] that is why you need a commission which will undertake the transportation and distribution of the food. This commission will be decided by you [...] and if you choose good people, the work will be done well, if you choose bad people it will be done poorly and you will be held accountable.

And again I tell you that we will not push you; come forward and tell us who you want. Three names.¹⁴⁷

What is remarkable about this rather one-sided interaction is that the official went to the village fully informed on matters of conviction. More precisely, it seems that the administrative sector of the Greek Army kept a very detailed catalog of peasants' doings around Macedonia, which our official knew about beforehand. It included thorough information on how many of them had enlisted in and how many had defected from the Greek Army, how many joined the military of other states' and what kind of services they offered, if any, to the Greek authorities.¹⁴⁸ Based on such material, the officials would decide whether the village they would enter next was loyal or hostile and whether they deserved harsh or benevolent speeches. For example, the same official who went to Loubnitsa had visited, just earlier in the week, the small town of Boemitsa/Axioupolis that would receive the commemorative monument later in the 1920s. Due to being a frontier town, situated only 25 kilometers from the Greco-Serbian border, our official was in fact very suspicious of the town's inhabitants. It seems also that the shaky national allegiance that the locals had demonstrated in the past did not leave him with an abundance of choices, other than to be intimidating toward them. In this case, the speech that he delivered in front of them began like this:

I will explain to you how the Hellenic state takes care of good citizens. Firstly, however, I will tell you the weird thing I noticed here. On the one hand, you complain that the French [who were present in the area during the First World War] exhausted you by forcing chores on you and they harmed you because they gave you only 1 Drachma per day. On the other hand, many and very important people are being

¹⁴⁷ ASCSA/Karavidas Archive/Folder 3/Subfolder 4: "Simeiomata gia ti Loubnitsa kai tous katoikous tis".

¹⁴⁸ ASCSA/Karavidas Archive/Folder 3/Subfolder 4: "Simeiomata gia ti Loubnitsa kai tous katoikous tis".

critical of you for not being interested in the motherland when she was in danger and [they say] that you are unworthy of protection because you did not enlist into the Hellenic army. And, in regard to the latter accusations, I know that many here in Macedonia and for many reasons did not enlist in the army and they chose to be humiliated to the ultimate degree instead of completing their military service, which is a shame that burdens everyone, not only you. In regards to the complaints you have against the French, I find them unfair and ridiculous, because while you were spilling sweat doing chores, others were spilling blood in the front line and while you were getting 1 Drachma they were getting only 25 cents.¹⁴⁹

What shines in both examples is the definite effort on the part of the speaker to inspire the feeling of the omnipresence of the state. Even in the far reaches of the country, the new subjects had to acquire the sense that nothing remains hidden and presumed under Greek rule, especially when it comes to matters of national obedience. Presenting the state as a paternal panopticon was one of the common ways with which officials and bureaucrats tried to consolidate their authority in out-of-reach areas. While it seems pervasive, a supporter opting for the establishment of the state apparatus would reasonably advocate such actions as necessary to an end, perhaps for the greater good. This was not at all the case with the next few incidents, however, which demonstrated the opportunistic tendencies of many low-level officials in Macedonia.

Some incidents were just a matter of corruption at the expense of the locals, like the one that a conscientious treasurer reported in the summer of 1917. In an application addressed to the General Commander of Thessaloniki, the treasurer of a department administrating the yield surplus in Central Macedonia, Mr. Ek. Kriezis, described in detail the murky deeds of his co-workers. In his report, in which he requested protection against them, he suggested that his whole department engaged in illicit and damaging activities, going as far as to accuse the Deputy Governor of appropriating part of the wheat surplus of Macedonia for his own benefit. The result of his honest attitude –provided that it was not triggered by political factionalism- was that his colleagues started threatening him with a demotion. In fact, the said Deputy Governor intimidated him saying that: “Kriezis is going to end up in Malta because of his doings”, which probably stands as a hyperbole for the obligatory dispatch to a faraway place.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ ASCSA/Karavidas Archive/Folder 3/Subfolder 5: “Boemitsa”.

¹⁵⁰ ASCSA/Karavidas Archive/Folder 3/Subfolder 1: “Pros ton Geniko Dioikiti Theesalonikis, 6/7/1918”.

Stealing the labor of peasants in such a faceless manner was arguably harmful in many ways, but not in a physical one. Other incidents however, showed that Greek state agents, especially military men, had a tendency for violence and humiliation. On April 11, 1915, a long confidential letter arrived in the prefect's office in Thessaloniki. It was written by a low-level administrative employee in Macedonia and it gave a grim picture of the impunity of the officials in the countryside. According to the letter, some individual working in the post office of the prefecture, named Papaleonidas, who is described as being "full of racial passion" had started a close friendly relationship with an army officer who was stationed in the area at the time (probably in Verroia). The lieutenant, named Konstantinidis, is described as an unstable person, neurotic as well as suicidal and apparently prone to manipulation by charismatic personalities. Indeed, it seems that Papaleonidas had managed to bring him under his influence and, with the long arm of the law on his side, he was now trying to terrorize all those whom he regarded as enemies of the nation.

His first victims were residents of the aforementioned village of Loubnitsa. The whole village watched as Konstantinidis, under the command of Papaleonidas, barged into the house of a peasant who was thought to be sympathetic to the Romanian cause. Konstantinidis' men first beat a family guest, also suspected to be pro-Romanian, while calling him names and accusing him of being an agent of the Bulgarian IMRO (which in the mind of fanatic nationalists was working together with the Romanians against Greece). Two hours later, after they had returned the guest to the house, they forcefully took the owner to the coffeehouse (*kafeneio*) of the village and demanded that he present to them a colleague of his, Mr. Tziotis, one of the teachers of the Romanian school. After he refused to comply, the soldiers started hitting him, which was exactly what they also did to Tziotis' father, who came out of his house to assist the beaten man. Next came Tziotis himself, who was found somewhere in the village and was taken to the nearest army outpost, after being continuously attacked along the way by several men who claimed to have found a gun on him. Later Tziotis asserted that the soldiers had planted it on his person. This terror-inducing party, that went on for many hours, ended only after Konstantinidis' soldiers beat Tziotis' elderly mother after forcing her to lay down on her belly.¹⁵¹ A few days later, the name of the

¹⁵¹ GRGSA-IAM/Anotati Dioikisi Makedonias/ Folder 001.01_000091: "En Magiadag ti 11i Apriliou 1915. Confidential".

rampaging lieutenant came up again as, this time, he had stolen a substantial number of sheep and goats from the herd of a local shepherd (shepherds were always suspected as agents of Romanian nationalism, as we will see in Chapter 3.4) and had inflicted superficial injuries on the shepherd as well. The shepherd also claimed that he had suspected the lieutenant in the past of stealing his livestock, as the army officer was frequenting the area “in search of Bulgarian *comitadjis*”.¹⁵² What is also worth noting about this case is that the civil servant who reported the incidents insisted upon downgrading the severity of the issue, claiming that the bruised victims had exacerbated the situation as they surely had been paid to do so by Romanian propagandists.

Greek military authorities, in a somewhat similar manner, artfully buried another incident that took place in Doliani/Koumaria, a village just outside the town of Verroia. Soldiers of the nearby camp came to the village in 1918, under the pretense of rooting out deserters. After a quick and fruitless investigation, they assaulted a local by hitting him with the butt of a rifle when he protested about the theft of one of his chickens and twenty eggs and the attempted theft of his horse.¹⁵³ In another report on the matter, there were also accusations that the soldiers even held a number of female residents hostage, who were only freed after the soldiers had stocked up on more supplies.¹⁵⁴ Once again, the first reaction of the rural authorities was to imply that Romanian agents had perpetrated the incident and that the assaulted villagers were just undercover agents who were being provocative on purpose.¹⁵⁵

Finally, in this list of extrajudicial abuses of power against the native population, ignoring the “Foreman” institution would be unfair. Not much is known about them, but it seems that it was an institution that existed in the *chifliks* of Macedonia while still under Ottoman control. After the province was ceded to Greece though, the local Greek authorities did not abolish the position. Rather, they made them answer to the Greek state and not to individual *chiflik* owners. The new foremen were civil servants

¹⁵² GRGSA-IAM/Anotati Dioikisi Makedonias/ Folder 001.01_000091: “En Magiadag ti 11i Apriliou 1915. Confidential”.

¹⁵³ GRGSA-IAM/Anotati Dioikisi Makedonias/ Folder 001.01_000086: “Peri ton ypo ton katoikon Dolianis ypovlithenton paraponon, 22/5/1918”.

¹⁵⁴ GRGSA-IAM/Anotati Dioikisi Makedonias/ Folder 001.01_000086: “Ekthesis eksagomenou energhtheisi proanakriseos”.

¹⁵⁵ GRGSA-IAM/Anotati Dioikisi Makedonias/ Folder 001.01_000086: “Perilipsi mias epistolis apeuthinomenis para this Roumanikis Koinotitas Dolianis plision Verroias, 10/5/1918”.

drawn from a pool of loyal subjects or uprooted Greek refugees, in order to facilitate the rural resettlement of thousands of uprooted individuals and supervise their agricultural tasks. In other words, they represented the last and lowest step in the state's effort to make this rehabilitation process as little traumatic as possible, both for the refugees but also for the locals. At some point on the way, however, it seems that the power that had been given to them, along with the fact that they were far away from any actual state supervision -as policemen were most commonly stationed in urban centers rather than isolated villages- caused them to act as small-time tyrants. While no actual incidents involving them were found in the archive, perhaps because they were successful in hushing up their misdeeds, this is what a high-level agricultural administrator and intellectual, also working for the Greek state, had to say about them:

Foremen are fired because they cost a lot; because they poison the countryside [i.e. spread discord]; because they became small-time Beys [Ottoman title held by the *chiftlik* owners]; because they formed small private cliques that distributed public land, superseding the government; because they messed with the authority of the General Directorate of Macedonia's Resettlement; because they became depraved, benefiting from the foolish and bureaucratic law 350 and similar laws, by creating themselves the opportunities for abuse; Besides, the statistics that they maintain are completely useless to us.¹⁵⁶

Another commentator added to that:

The right of retention for agricultural plots belonging to locals must be removed from Resettlement Foremen, taking into account that all of them come from refugee ranks and are all negatively predisposed toward the locals; it wouldn't harm the Resettlement Service at all if all of them were fired [...].¹⁵⁷

Regardless of the impact that such behavior had on the morale of the local Macedonian populations -who ended up distrusting their Greek rulers- agriculture was also affected, understandably so, since it was their main occupation. The agricultural census that was conducted in 1921 is complete enough to provide us with adequate information about this since it also includes data from previous years. In the census, we see that the extent of cultivated land from 1917 to 1921 had actually risen by a lot. More precisely, in 1917, cultivated land in the province occupied 1,800 km² while

¹⁵⁶ ASCSA/Karavidas Archive/Folder 5/Subfolder 1: "Schedio nomou peri apokentrotikis diorganosis tis ypiresias tis georgias kai tou Epoikismou ton Neon Choron".

¹⁵⁷ GRGSA-IAM/Anotati Dioikisi Makedonias/ Folder 001.01_000090: "En Florini ti 24i Oktovriou 1925, I dioikisis Chorofylakis Florinis pros tin Anoteri Dioikisi Chorofylakis Makedonias".

after only two years, in 1919, the same number had risen to an overwhelming 2,800 km² only to slightly decrease during the next two years to 2,680 km², perhaps due to conscriptions for the Asia Minor Expedition.¹⁵⁸

However, a closer look at the previous statistics reveals a different point of view. The extent of cultivated lands back in 1914, based on an identical survey that was conducted in the same year, was exactly the same as in 1919.¹⁵⁹ The sharp rise in the extent of cultivations should not be attributed to Macedonians deciding to aid the Greek state in its pursuits, but simply to the fact that the Allies' military operations of the First World War, which had disrupted agriculture in the area for the time period of 1915 to 1917, had now ceased. Mark Mazower, who claims that the agricultural production in Greece had been following a downward path since 1914, also confirms this.¹⁶⁰ If this is true, then it would turn out that -in retrospect- the task of GAS was not to modernize Macedonian agriculture, but to prevent its complete collapse after the annexation of the province. As we have seen in this chapter, many different and disparate factors contributed to this sad result. On the one hand, the illiteracy of the natives, as well as their apathy toward the novelties that "philanthropic" associations, like GAS, brought along is surely one factor. On the other hand, the complete ignorance with which GAS itself approached the rural inhabitants, the locals, farmers in their own homes, with their preaching about modernization and intensification, surely did not help. To make things even worse, lower-level and uncontrollable civil servants kept interfering with what the central government was trying to achieve in Macedonia, either by terrorizing the local labor force or by being implicated in corruption cases, in a magnificent example of shooting oneself in the foot. Ultimately, these were the reasons why the Greek state failed to make an agricultural paradise out of Macedonia from 1913 until 1923. In fact, this is also the reason why the arrival of a huge number of refugees was beneficial to agriculture, as Chapter 3.2 will discuss.

¹⁵⁸ *Agricultural Census 1921 (Georgiki Apografi 1921)* (Athens: Elstat, 1921), 9.

¹⁵⁹ *Agricultural Census 1914 (Georgiki Apografi 1914)* (Athens: Elstat, 1914), 6.

¹⁶⁰ Mark Mazower, *Greece and the Inter-War Economic Crisis* (Oxford: Oxford University Monographs, 1991), 76.

Chapter 3.2-The Barefoot Colonist: The peculiar story of the refugee resettlement

When Greek forces disembarked at the port of Smyrna in May 1919 no one back in Greece would have been able to foresee the downward spiral events would take. The Greek army occupied Smyrna and its surrounding territory, as a result of the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire which followed the end of the First World War. One of the milestones of Greek nationalist aspirations, perhaps second only to the “recapture” of Constantinople, was being realized: a Greece of two continents and five seas. Spirits were high for many nationalists as well as for a part of the Asia Minor populace that identified itself as Greek. The anticipation culminated in 1920 with the Treaty of Sèvres, which assigned Thrace in its entirety to Greece, apart from Istanbul and the coast of the Sea of Marmara, which was to remain under international control. While the coastal province of Smyrna remained under Ottoman control it became a protectorate of Greece. Smyrna’s population was to decide its own fate in a plebiscite, which would be held after five years. However, it did not come to this. Back in Athens, the United Opposition alliance, comprised of all the parties that opposed Eleftherios Venizelos’ party (except for the Socialist Labor Party of Greece), emphatically and successfully demanded elections. The resulting new United Opposition government, although initially anti-war, decided to widen the Asia Minor front and the Greek army started taking more and more territory into the Anatolian heartland, even though the Allies had no intention of supporting the Greek forces. After this splendid demonstration of arrogance as well as the secret agreements that the Italian and French governments concluded with Mustafa Kemal’s revolutionaries, the tables turned. Following a successful general offensive, Turkish forces managed to breach the front and drive the Greek army out of Asia Minor altogether. All the expansionist goals that had been achieved from 1919 to 1922 disappeared in the space of two weeks.¹⁶¹

¹⁶¹ So that the reader can avoid the countless heavily-politicized works that tend to serve either extreme nationalist or shallow anti-nationalist agendas, it is advisable to read material that was written at the time. A good point of departure is: Horton, George, and JAMES W. GERARD. *Blight of Asia*. Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1953 and Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Western question in Greece and Turkey: a study in the contact of civilisations*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1922.

As the army was being expelled and making a completely disorderly retreat, the Orthodox populations of Asia Minor were left to their own devices to face the vengeful advancement of Kemal's military. Wave upon wave of refugees, with nothing more in common than their creed and the fact that they were regarded as a threat to the Turkish nation-state in-the-making, hastily abandoned their villages and towns with the very real fear that atrocities would be committed against them. From the Pontus region to Cappadocia and from the Caucasus Mountains to the coast of the Aegean, disparate groups of people were violently expelled to Greece only to find themselves as strangers among other strangers, scattered in ports all around the country.¹⁶² The new Turkish government began the negotiating process for a new agreement from a position of power, rejecting the Treaty of Sèvres as one that had been signed by the Ottoman Empire rather the Turkish Republic. Attached to this new treaty, the Treaty of Lausanne as it was titled, was the *Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations*. This bilateral agreement, negotiated only between the Greek and the Turkish sides, dictated the "compulsory exchange of Turkish nationals of the Greek Orthodox religion established in Turkish territory, and of Greek nationals of the Moslem religion established in Greek territory".¹⁶³

The numbers were staggering. The first official census that exclusively counted the refugees in Greece was only conducted as late as 1928, five whole years after the Convention. It concluded that 1,221,849 individuals had been resettled in the country, a number that must be evaluated side-by-side with the existing population of Greece at the time -a little less than five million- to demonstrate the sheer size of the population exchange. Furthermore, the increased mobility that the refugees demonstrated during the first three years after the population exchange, essentially emigrating from Greece to other states, as well as the serious mortality rates among them, complicate

¹⁶² For an in-depth exploration of several aspects of this particular subject see: Clark, Bruce. *Twice a Stranger: the mass expulsions that forged modern Greece and Turkey*. Harvard University Press, 2006 and Renee Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean: an appraisal of the 1923 compulsory population exchange between Greece and Turkey*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2008.

¹⁶³ The text regarding the Population Exchange Convention can be found in ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 4, Subfolder 4, Document 1.

For other interesting insights concerning the Lausanne Treaty see: Bayar Yeşim, "In pursuit of homogeneity: the Lausanne Conference, minorities and the Turkish nation", *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 42:1, 108-125, Emen Gozde, "Turkey's Relations with Greece in the 1920s: The Pangalos Factor", *Turkish Historical Review*, vol. 7:1, 33-57 and Shields Sara, Forced Migration as Nation-Building: The League of Nations, Minority Protection, and the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange, *Journal of the History of International Law*, vol. 18:1, 140-146.

considerably any effort for a final verdict on the true number of people who were forcibly uprooted from their homes in Asia Minor, Eastern Thrace, the Pontic coast and Caucasus region. As some researchers have suggested, a rough estimation brings the number up to one and a half million refugees.¹⁶⁴ The exchange convention had also specified that all individuals would be able to carry freely with them any movable assets they wished. A committee would then estimate the value of the remaining assets, both movable and land property, in order for the Greek government to compensate them in due time, with funds provided by the Turkish state and vice versa. The uproar was immense, however, when, in 1930, the Venizelos government signed a friendship treaty with Turkey. According to this both sides were to agree to cease providing each other with compensation, which entailed a serious loss of face for Greece, as the much greater lost property of the Orthodox refugees in Asia Minor was basically declared as being of the same value as that left behind by Greece's Muslims.¹⁶⁵ Without a doubt, this unfortunate development impeded even further the assimilation of the refugees, as it prolonged their struggle with both economic and moral deprivation. Although the resettlement process had been nearly completed by then and although a part of the monetary compensation, albeit a small one, had been given to most beneficiaries, the countryside, where half of the refugee population was to be resettled, was still a tumultuous place to be, as it had been for the last seven years.

In 1923, the main riddle for the Greek government was to find a way to settle this massive and massively diverse population. In the minds of many commentators, journalists and politicians, the solution was clear and simple. To them, these impoverished and fragile individuals presented a great opportunity for agricultural development. It was not the first time that this had happened of course. As Greece had been in an almost non-stop state of war since 1912, a considerable number of refugees had already crossed the country's borders to find shelter from the nationalist aspirations of nearby states. This accumulated population, though it paled in size in

¹⁶⁴ George Th. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922-1936*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1983, 187.

¹⁶⁵ It must be noted that this action was seen by many, especially refugees and Venizelos' party members who represented the refugee interests, as treason, since the value of compensable assets of the Orthodox "compulsory immigrants" was much higher than that of the Muslim refugees. Many scholars also claim that Venizelos' decision caused a major alliance shift in terms of political preferences, since until then refugees had supported Venizelos' party in overwhelming numbers.

comparison with what would follow after the Convention of 1923, was nevertheless in dire need of resettlement. The eventual solution had started as a low-intensity policy, back in 1913, immediately after Greece annexed Macedonia, in a village close to Thessaloniki, initiated by an unknown bureaucrat. The provincial newspaper made the first announcement:

We are informed that the Government decided to resettle two thousand refugees on the outskirts of Koulakia [present day Chalastra] after the proposition by Mr. Liveriou, director of the Labor Bureau. The Government will undertake the subsistence of the refugees until they become capable of earning their livelihood and will grant them oxen and everything else needed for the cultivation of the land. Mr. Liveriou sent the plan to Athens to be validated by the cabinet.¹⁶⁶

A few days later:

Nice Idea!

[...] We can only congratulate those who took the initiative for such action since the said countryside is in need of working hands and the refugees who will resettle there, being the capable and deftest of farmers that they are, will contribute as much as possible to the improvement and refinement of agriculture in these extensive and fertile lands.¹⁶⁷

Although at the time rural resettlement was merely a “Nice Idea” which served the cause of agricultural development in a neat and planned way, the situation after 1923 was just chaotic. Before 1923, rehabilitating small numbers of families in “underdeveloped” or simply abandoned villages that presumably could sustain their new members had been a simple task. However, attempting to resettle and sustain a mass of people that almost matched the existing population count of Macedonia evolved into an involuntary colonization procedure rather than a simple resettlement. As colonization had been used by imperial powers to consolidate and exercise their control over the land, this was how the resettlement process in Macedonia was administered.

For once, the state sought to utilize refugees as a form of agricultural capital, or, put more bluntly, as an agricultural investment. In an article that was published in early January 1923 -before the exchange of populations was made official- a journalist wondered:

¹⁶⁶ Anonymous 1913, Refugee Resettlement, *'Makedonia'* 13 June, 3.

¹⁶⁷ Anonymous 1913, Nice Idea!, *'Makedonia'* 16 June, 1.

[...] Therefore, today we have in the bosom of our country more than three hundred thousand agricultural hands capable of multiplying our productive output and rejuvenating our economic body. How did Greece put this colossal economic and agricultural force to work? How did it distribute and in what proportions this wealth to all the anemic plains of our country? [...] What kind of efforts did it put into turning all this dead mass [the refugees] into robust entities of economic vigorousness? And finally, how did it utilize this agricultural capital? ¹⁶⁸

The reason why was simple. What the refugees lacked in equipment, land and expertise, coming from Turkey with virtually only the bare minimum for survival, they made up in willingness (or more likely necessity) to start all over again. This left them with no choice other than to bestow their hopes on the state apparatus, which, in the interest of an increased yield and extensive cultivation, was very much willing to provide them with what they needed. At the same time, the then liberal pro-Venizelist government aimed at making a devoted political clientele out of the refugees, as the Asia Minor Catastrophe had been blamed exclusively on the Popular party which governed, badly, the country.

However, due to the economic hardships that the state had encountered in the previous years, it was unable to complete such a gigantic task on its own. Thus, the Refugee Settlement Committee (RSC) was founded in 1923 as a non-governmental institution under international supervision that was meant to direct and facilitate the resettlement process of refugees in Greece. Officially, enlightened and neutral individuals who wanted nothing but the good of these war-torn people ran the RSC. Tellingly, the first President was Henry Morgenthau, the former ambassador of the USA to the Ottoman Empire from 1913 to 1916 and a stern humanist who had reported the genocidal tendencies of the Ottoman or Turkish army against Armenians and other minorities in Asia Minor. Unofficially though, as the RSC was based in Greece, and as its Bureaus and Directorates were dispersed across the country and especially Macedonia, and as Greek bureaucrats, civil servants and agronomists staffed the whole institution, it is possible that Morgenthau's commands were susceptible to diversion as they made their way down to every local RSC office. Besides, cooperation between the state and the RSC was indeed very close, to the point that the state eventually left the whole mission of agricultural and rural resettlement in the RSC's trusty hands. It even granted the RSC the entirety of the

¹⁶⁸Zografos, Dimitris 1923, 'The refugee agricultural capital', *Makedonia*, 9 January, 1.

lands that were left behind by the exchanged Muslim refugees, to be distributed accordingly to the incoming Orthodox ones.¹⁶⁹

A certain national agenda also needed to be fulfilled during this process of course. It concerned the Hellenization of Macedonia. As we saw earlier, the majority of Macedonians had not been particularly welcoming to their new Greek rulers, for a multitude of reasons. Their integration was not moving forward because they were unwilling to alter their accustomed production systems in order to fit the ones promoted by the state, which sought to commodify production and introduce the locals to the global market. Macedonian peasants, however, as we saw, were accustomed to the Ottoman agricultural production system predominant in the Balkans, the *chiflik*. In the light of this, the Hellenization of Macedonia did not entail only the cultural assimilation of the peasantry, but also, and much more importantly, this cultural assimilation was intended as a simple stepping-stone toward their economic integration into the production system that was proposed by the state.

The plan to achieve this was simple and tested even before the exchange of populations. It is documented in the private correspondence of Konstantinos Karravidas, a man who more than anyone else dealt with the agrarian issue in Macedonia on an intellectual and theoretical level as well as a very practical one, as he served in multiple meaningful positions in the Ministry of Agriculture. In a letter found in his private archive, written by an unknown individual, probably a colleague or superior to him in the Resettlement Bureau for Macedonia before 1922, the author explicitly confirms that in the whole of Macedonia east of the River Loudias (located in the west of the province) the peasants are ignorant of the Greek language and only speak “Bulgarian”. He then complains that the common nationalist agents that were sent there by the Greek state, namely priests and teachers, have failed to succeed in their task of assimilating the locals, stating sarcastically that: “[...]with the priests and the teachers we have, we will not succeed in Hellenizing Macedonia, even after a century.”¹⁷⁰ The same disappointing effect is pointed out in another report, which states that:

¹⁶⁹ Elisabeth Kontogiorgi, *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia: The rural settlement of refugees, 1922-1930*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, 131-140.

¹⁷⁰ ASCSA, Karavidas Archive/Folder 4/Subfolder 1/Document 1.

No one, of course, denies the great impact that schools have in the diffusion and imposition of the Greek language, but although this is an important aspect, no one is capable of denying that the School results up until now have proven utterly weak, not to say negative. It is not in my authority to deal with this subject, but due to the service that I exercise [probably as a travelling advisor for the Ministry] I was convinced that [...] education in Macedonia is in worse condition than it was under the Turkish yoke, as nowadays there are still dozens of refugee settlement that have no teachers.¹⁷¹

As the previous commentator insisted, the solution was to either establish Greek-speaking settlements between the non-Greek-speaking ones or, more efficiently, to flood those suspicious villages and communities with refugees who spoke Greek.¹⁷² At the same time, the minds working on the subject in the Ministry of Agriculture concluded that the *chiflik* estates, especially those located in the frontiers of Macedonia, were to be appropriated and distributed to Greek-speaking refugees. As Alivizatos had concluded back in 1935, by the time that the colonization process had come to an end the government had appropriated 422 *chiflik* estates, which had been subsequently been divided into 120,000 distributable plots of land. The vast majority of those, 90,000 of them, went to refugees, who constituted a minority even in Macedonia, while only 30,000 of them were granted to locals, who represented the majority of the existing Macedonian populace.¹⁷³ Finally, in the interest of facilitating this situation, the state mechanisms that were located in Macedonia would complete a number of infrastructure works, ranging from repairing streets to draining small swamps.¹⁷⁴

Until 1922 this process had not been executed particularly intensively, due to the fact that the Greek government did not have an adequate amount of refugee bodies at its disposal in order to complete such a colonization program in Macedonia. Wars kept bringing in populations perceived as Greek from the Balkans and from Asia Minor by the hundreds. After the major population exchange with Turkey, and for three years, from 1923 to 1925, the waves of hundreds of refugees became hundreds of thousands, and the resettlement process evolved into a massive social engineering project, which was directed toward effecting national and/or economic homogeneity. As the

¹⁷¹ ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 4, Subfolder 1, Document 2.

¹⁷² ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 4, Subfolder 1, Document 1.

¹⁷³ Evgenia Burnova, Giorgos Progolakis, 'O Agrotikos Kosmos, 1830-1940' ['The realm of agriculture, 1830-1940'], *Eisagogi stin Neoelliniki Oikonomiki Istoría, 18os-20os aionas* [Introduction to the New Greek Economic History, 18th-20th century], 1999, 82.

¹⁷⁴ ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 4, Subfolder 1, Document 1.

guidelines had been laid during the period 1912-1922, what remained now was to revisit them within the new, exacerbated circumstances. This becomes clear in a schedule that Konstantinos Karavidas elaborated. In 1925 he participated in the Pan-refugee Conference, a meeting organized not by refugees for refugees, but by all the different governmental and non-governmental institutions that played some role in their rehabilitation. Karavidas possibly attended as a delegate of the resettlement bureau of Macedonia or simply as a state official who had some experience under his belt in the matter. The said schedule contained all the issues that were to be discussed in the conference, a document that definitely hints at the complete transformation of Macedonia. Parts of it deserve to be cited here:

1) Agricultural part

Land distribution, temporary and definitive/ Property, Estates of the exchanged [Muslims] /Exchange service, Rural and urban assets /Farmer rehabilitation/ Confiscations and appropriations

2) Improvements

Irrigation/ New crops, vineyards cotton, flax, cannabis rice- pomegranate /Sugarbeets, arboriculture, tobacco/ [...]

3) Economic part

Groups Cooperatives, Collaborative/ Local production, economic emancipation, relief to professionals/ Art reinforcement, carpet manufacturing/ Agricultural and technical education

[...]

5) Housing

The necessity for spaciousness, New establishments/ New houses, opinion on hygiene/ [...] Stone houses, transportation regarding housing matters/ Better houses, healthier families/ Civilization through better houses/ Urban settlements¹⁷⁵

The above list gives an impression that the Greek state apparatus had everything under control and the resettlement of the refugees was proceeding without any problems. In retrospect, however, things did not run so smoothly. Every tiny detail included in those lists and countless more as well should be translated into enormous sums of money that the state did not possess. Every small setback exacerbated the situation and the Greek officials appointed in Macedonia had to first tackle this

¹⁷⁵ ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 7, Subfolder 1, Document 1.

budget-busting problem before even thinking of turning the province Greek. This forced the following governments to take out two “Refugee Loans”, as they became known: One in 1924 and another within the 1926 to 1928 period, which amounted to 12,3 million English pounds and eight billion Drachmas accordingly, both amounts representing a very serious chunk of the country’s yearly gross domestic product.¹⁷⁶

But even when budgetary challenges did not concern the Greek bureaucrats and officials in Macedonia, the success of the rural resettlement was far from guaranteed. Although number-crunching became routine for the technocrats of the Ministry of Agriculture, part of the staff of which had been seconded to RSC,¹⁷⁷ by the time their estimates left the four walls of the Ministry and faced the reality of this humanitarian disaster, the circumstances had already changed. In a very extensive report written by a Ministry of Agriculture employee who revisited the issues that had occurred with the refugee resettlement in Macedonia as a whole in 1924, he concluded that despite all the predictions that were directed toward eradicating foreseeable problems, on-the-ground hardships still persisted. For one, the estimated distributable lands were not enough to cover the needs of all the refugees. Even in the case that the refugees had acquired (temporarily for the first years) land and adequate equipment to cultivate it with, there were still practical problems for their rehabilitation. The commentator here noted that it was not likely for refugees to render themselves economically self-sufficient, as they were ignorant of the land they were supposed to work on, meaning that the cultivating conditions and techniques differed significantly between their place of origin and Macedonia. Another insuperable challenge was the lack of plowing animals, namely horses and oxen, without which the “exchanged” peasants could not even begin tilling the soil.¹⁷⁸ The total number of animals that it was calculated were required in order for each refugee household simply to have a very mediocre field plowed surpassed 60,000, which translates into one animal per refugee family.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ For more specific information on the subject of the refugee loans that constituted both a blessing and a curse for Greek governments, see: Kontogiorgi, E. *Agrotikes prosfygikes egkatastaseis sti Makedonia: 1923-1930. Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικών Σπουδών*, 9, 47-59 and Τογντα-Fregadi, A. *I daneiaki exoteriki politiki: I periptosi tou deuteroy prosfygikou daneiou 1926-1928*, Athens, Sideris, 2009.

¹⁷⁷ Kontogiorgi, *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia*, 92.

¹⁷⁸ ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 7, Subfolder 2, Document “*Έκθεση Ειδικής Επιτροπής επί του Προβλήματος Εγκαταστάσεως Προσφύγων*”.

¹⁷⁹ ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 7, Subfolder 2, Document “*Έκθεση Ειδικής Επιτροπής επί του Προβλήματος Εγκαταστάσεως Προσφύγων*”.

Finally, the grim overview of what the Greek state had to endure was given with a very rough (even optimistic) estimation of the cost for each family:

Based on the above, the settlement cost for one family of wheat producers on ½ a field¹⁸⁰ is:

½ pair of plowing beast [either a horse or an ox]:	Drachmas	5,000
200 okkas of seed [256 kilograms]:	Dr.	1,250
Tools:	Dr.	700
Full sufficiency in animals for one family [sheep, chickens and pigs]:	Dr.	8,000
Animal Feed:	Dr.	2,000
Small house [probably concerning the building of new rudimentary houses]:	Dr.	3,000
		20,000 [overall]

It is thus estimated that for the resettlement process of 60,000 families of wheat producers in Macedonia, which approximately numbered 240,000 refugees, the state needed 1.2 billion Drachmas or 3 million English pounds in 1924. This, in turn, translates into almost one-fourth of the refugee loan of 1924.¹⁸¹ Colonization was indeed an expensive business, especially when the state and the RSC, in its role as caring father, had to restore the well-being of each one of its children. At the same time, however, one must remember that apart from their refugee “children”, the state also had to handle and administer the local Macedonian population who, in comparison, were more likely to become prodigal sons.

The expressed intention of both the state and the RSC was to give priority to the rehabilitation of refugees, in the majority of cases at the expense of the natives. As already mentioned in a previous chapter, in 1917 the Parliament had passed a law that enabled governments to appropriate *chiflik* estates. At the time, the local population of Macedonia, where the *chiflik* system was predominant, looked forward to this change as an encouraging step that would allow them to acquire their own land, especially land on which they had been working as laborers for the local *chiflik* estate owner. Up

¹⁸⁰ Half-field in this case is measured as the extent of land that one plowing animal can plow in a day. It is referred to in this odd way here, because the standard agricultural family would have a pair of plowing animals in its possession.

¹⁸¹ ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 7, Subfolder 2, Document “Εκθεση Ειδικής Επιτροπής επί του Προβλήματος Εγκαταστάσεως Προσφύγων”

until 1923 however, only a handful of appropriations in Macedonia had been implemented, probably because Greek governments were not willing to grant land to a frontier population whose loyalty to the Greek state was not proven. Of the same opinion were also the refugees, who, in their skirmishes with the locals, referred to these as “Bulgarians”, only to be called “Gypsies” by the locals, in response.¹⁸² It was not at all hard to imagine the disappointment of the local population when the state disclosed what it had in store for them, which was nothing. Disputes over land issues between native peasants and incoming refugees, a sign that entailed land distribution in favor of the latter, were a quite frequent phenomenon. Tellingly, in one case, in the Rachtina settlement, the President of the community complained to the local authorities that refugees had trespassed on as many as 2000 *stremmata* or 200 hectares that were about to be plowed by the locals.¹⁸³ In another case, in the village Asvestario, in the prefecture of Pella, locals and refugees were involved in a massive brawl that left 20 injured from both camps.¹⁸⁴ At times, there were even reports of refugees engaging in the unorthodox act of guerilla sowing, which included sowing already plowed fields during the night in order to claim them from the locals.¹⁸⁵

Native Macedonians were not without a plan though. Notarial archives reveal that the number one weapon they had at their disposal was playing by the book, i.e. Greek law. What unfolded during this time of uncertainty was rather peculiar. These archives suggest that the laborers of the *chiflik* estates, namely peasants whose position in the Ottoman social pyramid was not at all enviable, were now eager to forge an alliance with the Muslim landlords/employers that had been exempted from the population exchange (on most occasions because they were of Albanian descent) in order to stand united against the sweeping changes that the Greek state was trying to accomplish. The notarial documents regarding a *chiflik* estate of the village Nisi in the prefecture of Edessa in Central Macedonia demonstrate exactly this. The Nisi case had probably started back in 1923 or 1924 but the folder contains documents dating back

¹⁸² ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 10, Subfolder 1, Document “Ανακεφαλαιωτικά τινές παρατηρήσεις επί της εγκαταστάσεως των προσφύγων εν Μακεδονία”.

¹⁸³ Anonymous 1928, ‘Parapona’ [‘Complaints’], *Makedonia*, 22 September, p. 2.

¹⁸⁴ Katsapis Kostas, ‘Isilthan eis to spiti mas: Koinonikes proipotheseis ton antiparatheseon anamesa se gigeneis kai prosfyges sto Mesopolemo’ [‘They barged in our house: The social conditions of the confrontation between locals and refugees during the Interwar period’], *I elliniki agrotiki koinonia*, p. 316.

¹⁸⁵ Anonymous 1927, Refugee Life, ‘*Makedonia*’ 16 June, p. 3.

Xifias 1925, How the Vromeri incident happened, ‘*Makedonia*’ 13 January, p. 2.

to 1927, which means that by then the case had already taken its course. In one of the documents, addressed to the Ministry of Justice, we come across some milestones of the case up until this point.¹⁸⁶ The *chiflik* apparently belonged to a Muslim subject, Sukri Seyfullah Bey, who for reasons unknown, the Greek government had exempted from the population exchange of 1923. This was a very rare “honor” that was granted to a very small number of Muslims, who probably had somehow helped the Greek state in the nationalist struggles in the past or had even cooperated with the state against the spread of non-Greek nationalist propaganda. Whatever the reason, Sukri Bey did not depart for Turkey. Although he was welcome to stay, his large estate, which spread over thousands of *stremmata*, was not safe from the Greek government. It had been declared as “to-be-appropriated” already in 1923.¹⁸⁷

Until 1927 however, no actions had been taken by the Greek state to implement this decision, which probably meant that everyday life was tranquil and eventless in the *chiflik*. It seems that this was about to change. Once Sukri Bey realized that the threat of appropriation was drawing near, he concluded that it was much more preferable to sell his lands to the agricultural laborers who had been working for him going back generations, rather than to leave the whole situation to chance. In 1928, landowner Sukri Bey, accompanied by a handful of his employees, went to an -almost certainly- bilingual Greek notary, based in the town of Edessa. There, the notary wrote down several pre-agreement contracts, which all sides signed willingly.¹⁸⁸ These extensive documents contained detailed information governing the manner in which the lands of the estate were to be sold to the agricultural workers that accompanied Sukri Bey, their price, and extent. It seems that this practice was quite common at the time, as the RSC responded quickly and tried to nullify these agreements, demanding that the state, more precisely the Ministry of Agriculture, inform Sukri Bey that such transactions were invalid.¹⁸⁹ Indeed, such transactions had been outlawed by the state, in order for the government to prevent troublesome situations such as those that had occurred in Thessaly (south of Macedonia) when the province had been ceded to Greece back in 1881. The reason was that rich Greeks had found the opportunity to

¹⁸⁶ Personal Archive/Folder 1/ Subfolder: “Pros to Ypourgeio Dikaiosynis Entaftha, 10/1/1927”.

¹⁸⁷ Personal Archive/Folder 1/ Subfolder: “Pros to Ypourgeio Dikaiosynis Entaftha, 10/1/1927”.

¹⁸⁸ Personal Archive/Folder 1/Subfolder 1927: “Arithmos 3991, Pre-agreement”.

¹⁸⁹ Personal Archive/Folder 1/Subfolder1927: “Pros ta grafeia antallagis, pros ta grafeia epaikismou, Eforous Epirou, Artis, Elassonos, Thessalias Nison Aigaiou, 19/1/1928”.

buy those *chifliks* at a very low price from their fleeing Muslim landowners, and subsequently had administered them very harshly, in relation to the working conditions of their laborers.¹⁹⁰ Eventually, the Ministry responded, however, that this particular prohibition applied only to those landowners, whose exchange was obligatory and that Sukri Bey could do with his estate as he pleased.

This did not mean that his estate was automatically spared though. Nisi was still a *chiflik* falling under the 1917 appropriation law and *chifliks* still represented an “obsolete” production system that was not supported by the state. It just meant that Sukri Bey was free to sell his estate, not as a whole but in parts, to keep its money’s worth, perhaps even to keep a small part of the estate for himself and to settle in Macedonia as a simple (yet wealthy) farmer. The pre-agreement contracts suggested that the story played out like this. Sukri Bey sold his estate to seven of his agricultural workers who resided in the village of Nisi and from 1929 on, we find documents confirming that the Ministry of Agriculture had officially ceded to one of Sukri’s heirs an estate of 300 *stremmata*.¹⁹¹ This, of course, paled in comparison to the initial extent of the *chiflik*, but it was still much bigger than the average extent of land that was granted to refugees in Macedonia, which most of the time ranged from 30 to 60 *stremmata*. What is even much more important and directly relevant to the subject of this chapter is the effect of this whole game with Greek law on the refugee resettlement process in Macedonia. It seems that Sukri Bey’s master plan eventually paid off. Although the RSC and the state kept very detailed record of the resettlement process in Macedonia, there is no evidence at all suggesting that refugees ever set foot in the village of Nisi, the lands of which had been distributed, in an utterly controlled fashion to its previous laborers, who had now become owners of the land they used to till.

The case of the Nisi *chiflik* was not unique. To the contrary, actually. It was so common to the point that a lawyer in Thessaloniki, Ioannis Stathakis, specialized in these kinds of deals. In his office archive, which survives to this day in its entirety, one

¹⁹⁰ The radical exacerbation of the position of laborers, as regards their rights, was a great disappointment to agricultural workers especially in Thessaly, whose status diminished to that of serfs. Their reaction for many years was lukewarm and defeatist, until 1910 when, in the villages of Kileler and Tsular a spontaneous peasant uprising was violently suppressed, leading to several dead and wounded. It was only then that the agricultural question became a pressing matter for subsequent governments.

¹⁹¹ Personal Archive/Folder 1/ Subfolder 1929: Documents 1-8.

can find a large number of virtually identical cases of *chiflik* owners dividing and selling their estates to their employees, thus keeping the state and its chosen colonists, the refugees, at bay. Interestingly, there were also examples where the *chiflik* estate, for unspecified reasons, did not end up in the hands of its agricultural workers. Instead, a certain Mehmet Tewfiq Bey, owner of a large *chiflik* estate, named Ada Tepé, located in the prefecture of Kilkis, chose to sell his lands or at least part of them, to a group of nine nomadic shepherds, who had probably been using these lands as pasture for their herds. This pre-agreement was concluded in 1924 and required the shepherds to pay the said Mehmet Bey the not-at-all negligible sum of 131,000 Drachmas.¹⁹²

The inevitable friction between locals and refugees not only produced conflict and disarray. It was by far, of course, the most anticipated result and in fact, the most justified one, as the locals saw their lives taking a turn for the worse. The previous couple of incidents showed, however, that locals did not remain apathetic in this situation. On the contrary, they put up a fight. A very slow and a very abstract one perhaps, since it was fought with paper and was conducted in ministerial offices and at bureaucratic desks, but a fight nevertheless. In a much more interesting turn of events, they also proved that assimilation was a two-way road. Statistics that were published at the time, indicated that 53,000 families were about to be resettled in Macedonia, making up 21% of the province's total population.¹⁹³ Although they were clearly still a minority by far, the fact that the refugees were favored by the state gave them the upper hand in many rural settlements over their local antagonists. This situation did not happen all at once, though. Instead, it was consolidated gradually over the years, as the resettlement process was being completed and as refugees were becoming economically self-sufficient. In the immediate wake of the population exchange and during the first couple of years, this was clearly not the case.

The RSC in cooperation with the Greek state had agreed on the course of events that the rural refugee resettlement would follow. Refugee populations would be arranged not simply in families, as was common until 1922. Instead, they were to be sorted into groups using the place of origin as a criterion. This was thought to alleviate

¹⁹² Indicatively: GRGSA-IAM/COL005/Folder 1/Subfolder 1: "Alvanis ypikoos noikiazei megales ektaseis eis tin periferia Kilkis –Ada Tepe- agorastis Nikos Goulis ktinotrofos skinitis".

¹⁹³ ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 7, Subfolder 2, Document "Έκθεση Ειδικής Επιτροπής επί του Προβλήματος Εγκαταστάσεως Προσφύγων".

the trauma of displacement as well as to lead to coherent and psychologically sounder communities. These “Refugee Groups” as they came to be known, were to settle either in brand new settlements that the RSC erected especially for them, in designated spaces across Macedonia or in abandoned houses and fields, which Muslims or emigrating Slavophones had left behind. The latter possibility, namely the mixed settlements, drew the attention of the aforementioned official and intellectual Konstantinos Karavidas, who noticed something odd about the interplay between new settlers and old residents.

Karavidas -being the bright man that he was, perhaps one of the brightest Ministry officials of his time- had realized that refugee assimilation would not come naturally just with the passage of time.¹⁹⁴ Rather, it was a matter of solid structures, stable institutions and willingness on the part of the refugees to adhere to the bidding of the Greek state. In places where those three elements did not align, Karavidas asserted, the -yet landless and impoverished- refugees were becoming susceptible to “alternative” narratives. Karavidas had the Slavic *zadruga* in his mind. *Zadruga* was nothing more than another productive system that had co-existed in Macedonia along with the Ottoman *chiflik* and the *tseligkato* (see Chapter 3.4). Unlike those, however, the *zadruga* was a kinship-based, closed-economy and introverted system that opted for the self-sufficiency of the community and that strictly coincided with the continuation of the family. Although Karavidas did not go into detail on how exactly the *zadrugas* of northern Macedonia were succeeding in leading refugees astray, in an essay addressing this matter, after explaining how state structures, like the schools, had completely failed to Hellenize the *zadrugas*, he noted:

[...] After these elemental explanations, one can easily understand the reason why school is powerless precisely against this potent and popular youth remnant, which insists on the old agricultural and pastoralist tradition; particularly because the actual agricultural and pastoral part of the population always remained Slavic and because it is going to integrate anyone of ours who [wants] to follow the same occupation and the same *modus vivendi* in the countryside, the same way that it integrated the Albanian-speaking colonies

¹⁹⁴ On the subjects of Karavidas’ theories on agricultural matters as well as on matters of minorities and social coherence one must reference the collective volume: Vegleris Phaidon and Maria Komninou (eds.). *Koinotita, koinonia kai ideologia: O Konstantinos Karavidas kai I provlimatiki ton koinonikon epistimon*. Papazisis. 1990.

that settled in Florina's highlands during the previous century, which had come from the west.¹⁹⁵

Karavidas did not write those words immediately after the population exchange. He wrote them as late as 1927, when most "Greek" communities were already starting to consolidate all over Macedonia. From this excerpt, however, we clearly see that the refugees' Greek identity was not at all taken for granted. In a subsequent report, for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs this time, Karavidas asserted that in order for refugees to develop a Greek identity, they of necessity had to follow the Greek system of production, which suspiciously resembled the Western European one. In order for this to happen, they needed land and in order to get enough land they had to stop the further spread of the communal *zadruga* system in the northern part of Macedonia.¹⁹⁶ It was a two-birds-with-one-stone situation for the Greek state. In Karavidas' thinking, nationality did not exist in a vacuum. In the perplexing case of Macedonia, nationality merely reflected the economic activity of certain groups and more precisely, the productive structures that governed this activity. Moreover, it seems that he regarded Macedonia as a theater of antagonism between productive systems, each one of them entailing ethnic alliances. When it came to the *zadrugas* of Macedonia, for example, Karavidas, not without respect and admiration toward them, asserted that:

[*Zadruga*] constitutes the living ark of Slavic traditions (of language, customs and morals) as well as the active potential of their diffusion, because it is economically more powerful and more productive than any other [structure], as an instrument of labor in the agricultural and pastoral organization [...]¹⁹⁷

While relying on the words of an intellectual like Karavidas is not always advisable in historical research, similar warnings concerning the proselytization of refugees to other causes apart from the Greek one were coming from more sides. In fact, the allure that Slavic propaganda had over those that the Greek state regarded as its colonists had been underscored for the first time in 1925.

For it was on the 16th of November of the same year when a man belted with grenades left the café-restaurant *International*, located in the town of Florina, and launched a grenade into the establishment, injuring seven people. This man was later

¹⁹⁵ ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 14, Subfolder 6, Document 2.

¹⁹⁶ Damianakos, *Apo ton Choriko ston Agroti*, 213-214.

¹⁹⁷ ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 14, Subfolder 6, Document "Προς το Υπουργείον Εξωτερικών".

identified as a member of the Bulgarian terrorist organization IMRO, confirming that this organization was still actively seeking to destabilize Greek rule in the province.¹⁹⁸ This incident would have been completely irrelevant if it had not triggered frantic correspondence between ministries prefectures and directorates, which revealed the challenges facing Greek governments in securing their dominance over certain parts of Macedonia. It even seems that the advent of the “Greek” refugees did not make this better. According to the Prefect of Florina, in a report that he sent to the General Directorate of Macedonia in Thessaloniki, the (for some inexplicable reason) mild and soft Asia Minor refugee was no match for the rugged and tough Slav. In his own words:

[...] And first of all the question arises of how is it possible for the refugee masses to have an integrating effect upon the Slavophone population.- The refugee cluster of Florina’s prefecture does not have the same language, as half of them speak Turkish, coming from Turkophone regions of Asia Minor. It is also proven that easy living conditions do not hone the mental power of people. This entails the difference in mental capabilities of a Minor Asian, as an individual, and those of the Slavophone Macedonian. The former is more tepid and more materialist, while the latter is bolder and more energetic on all occasions. Deprivation and hardships create the daring and unyielding character of the Slavophone, while the Minor Asian faces the challenges of a hard life for the first time.- In regard to this, it must be noted that the National catastrophe has hit him quite hard, thus lowering his morale.¹⁹⁹

A short trip even further back in time, namely to 1924, would eventually reveal the roots of all these problems. As was described in Chapter 2.2, 1924 was the year when the Greek government had been forced to sign the Kalvov-Politis Protocol, an agreement between Greece and Bulgaria, according to which Greece officially recognized the existence of Slavic minorities living on its soil. Even worse than that, the agreement forced Greek governments to protect those minorities from state abuse as an obligation toward the League of Nations. As far as land issues were concerned, an immediate consequence of the agreement –which was greatly lamented by the whole of the political spectrum, as one of the worst deals that Greece had ever struck– was that the government had now been rendered incapable of resettling refugees on land that had been promised to Slavophones or was being used by them. This

¹⁹⁸ Mavrogordatos rightfully points out that even though a large number of Bulgarophones and Slavophones had migrated from Macedonia to other nation-states, IMRO still had many agents on Greek soil, who in fact were taking their orders either from Sofia or the left sector of IMRO based in Vienna. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 251.

¹⁹⁹ GRGSA-IAM, Anotati Dioikisi Makedonias, Folder 001.01, Subfolder 000090, Document 00046.

obviously gave disappointed locals tremendous leverage over the Greek state, as peasants started declaring themselves either Serbians or Bulgarians at the nearest Consulate, every time they were faced with the threat of appropriations. There is a possibility that a military official observed such tactical behavior for the first time in 1925 and reported it to his superiors. As he wrote to them:

It was thus proven that Nikolaos Giannetsis on the 7th of the current month, advised peasants to go to the Serbian Consulate of Thessaloniki and ask for its protection, in order to save their fields from refugees [...]

The visit of the 17 peasants of the Lazani village to the Serbian Consulate became known like a thunder clap in the whole region and everybody waits anxiously because all have a bone to pick with the Resettlement and the measures that have been taken by the service.²⁰⁰

What is remarkable about the Protocol is that it was never implemented by the Greek government and was, in fact, annulled only months later. It was in fact the Yugoslav government that immediately opposed this agreement, as one that was legitimizing Bulgarian nationalist and expansionist aspirations (or Macedonian secessionist ones), not only in Greece but in Serbian Macedonia as well, at the time under Yugoslav control.²⁰¹ However, the die had been cast as alliances and allegiances had been openly declared in rural Macedonia, and the state's suspicions concerning the loyalty of its northern subjects had been confirmed. Despite all the impediments and all the difficulties that the state apparatus faced, some of which were the subject of this chapter, the refugee resettlement process was utterly focused on Macedonia. A report that closely documented the course of the whole operation, which was published every three months by the RSC, concluded in 1924 that a staggering 90% of the refugees, who had been classified as rural colonists, were being sent to either Macedonia or Thrace.²⁰² A map that was drawn at the time, depicting all the final places of resettlement all over Greece, leaves no doubt about which of the two provinces received, by far, the lion's share of the refugee population. The cluster density of the refugee communities in Macedonia is so definite to the point where the names of the settlements on the map are not easily discernible in some areas (Images 3.1 and 3.2).

²⁰⁰ GRGSA-IAM, Anotati Dioikisi Makedonias, Folder 001.01, Subfolder 000090, Document 00138, GRGSA-IAM, Anotati Dioikisi Makedonias, Folder 001.01, Subfolder 000090, Document 00139,

²⁰¹ For more about the Kalvov-Politis Protocol see: Divani, Lena. "Greece and minorities." *Nefeli, Athens* (1995).

²⁰² ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 7, Subfolder 1, Document "Εκθεσεις των πεπραγμένων κατά το τρίτον τρίμηνον Ιούνιος-Σεπτέμβριος 1924".

By contrast, Thrace contained only one dense cluster in its borders with Macedonia, as well as a much less pronounced one, situated along the Greco-Turkish borders. Remarkably, the rest of Greece was virtually empty, with only a very small number of agricultural refugee settlements, most of which were located in Crete.

There is no better way to end a chapter that has attempted to present the complications of the colonizing project for Macedonia, proposed by the Greek state and then hindered by unforeseeable factors, than to assess its overall effectiveness. On January 27, 1928, the main article of the newspaper *Macedonian News* was fuming with anger. Its author simply signed as “Refugee”, in order to show the presumed unity with which refugees stood. Its subject was the word *Tourkosporoi* (a demeaning term that was used against refugees, which freely translates into “Bastards of Turks”) which was hurled against refugee representatives in the Greek Parliament by members of the opposition Popular Party. “Once more, filthy mouths opened in the Parliament to vomit the worst insults against the refugees,” he wrote, calling out by name against all those who had diminished his compatriots through the years, as well as the Crown and its followers, who were regarded as architects of the Asia Minor Catastrophe of 1922. “Who are they?” he continued, “[...] They are the same royal puppets, which during the same National Assembly, were screaming against reputed refugees that “they should have been slaughtered by Kemal [Ataturk], instead of being saved in Greece”. Even more intensely the author proceeded:

So, are we *Tourkosporoi*? We, who as you boast and exclaim, we made Macedonia Hellenic? Are we *Tourkosporoi*? We, who lost as many children and brothers and we spilled as many rivers of blood as the Old Greece in battles against Bulgarians and Turks? [...] Turkophones, Slavophones, Russo-phones we might be. But we are Hellenes in our blood, in our heart, in our conviction, in our soul and in our breath; [We are] Hellenes truer than some wretched petty Greeks [graikiloi] who have sold their soul and their whole deplorable existence to the devil of royalism [...].²⁰³

To someone seeking affirmation that at some point in the late 1920's Macedonia, indeed, became irrevocably Greek, thanks to refugee blood, sweat and tears, the above inspiring words are enough. Dozens of identical articles occupied the pages of newspapers and periodicals. However, such claims were simplistic and unconvincing. Macedonians who refused, even secretly, to play the role of the subservient token to the Greek state existed still after the colonization of Macedonia, bearing ideals that

²⁰³ Refugee 1928, ‘Tourkosporoi’, *Makedonika Nea*, 1.

ranged from Communism to Slav-Macedonian secessionism or Bulgarian nationalism. After the occupation of Macedonia by the Bulgarians was imposed upon the land during the Second World War, many Slavophones took up arms and joined the Greek Communist resistance of EAM in the countryside. Some of them developed nationalist aspirations. They became turncoats, abandoned the Communist camp, at the same time inevitably reminding the Greek state that its task in erasing everything Slavic from Macedonia had failed. To conclude, one of the leaders of this nationalist sector wrote in 1944:

Do they or don't they have the right . . . in accordance with the eight points of the Atlantic Charter on the self-determination of nations, to demand, together with the other two parts under Serbia and Bulgaria, to establish their own Slavmacedonian people's republic?!

The Slavmacedonians justly ask: Why do they not permit us to develop fully our national culture and to realize our national ideals ...?! We are not Greeks, but a Slav-Macedonian nation, with different ideals. How could we remain in Greece, content solely with equality? How could this be reconciled with the basic principles on the self-determination of nations?²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ *Egejska Makedonija vo NOB: Dokumenti za uchestvoto no Makedonskiot narod od egejskiot del no Makedonija vo gragjanskata vojna vo IAMija (1944-49)*, 6 vols. (Skopje, 1971-83), 5, no. 108, p.200. (Henceforth *EM*.) Ibid., no.8, p.18, January 24, 1944; also in vol.2, no.6, pp. 15-22, March 12, 1945. See also vol.1, no.3, pp.7-8, and no.6, pp.10-11.

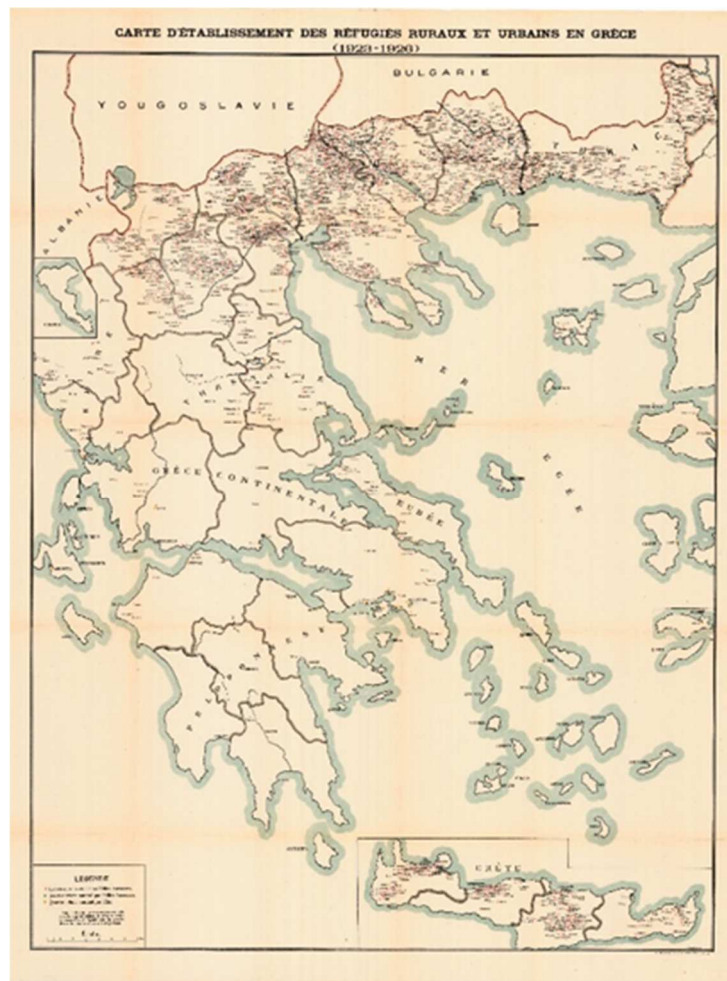


Image 3.1: Map published in 1926 or later, which marked and named all the rural and urban settlements where refugees had resettled in the period 1923-1926 throughout Greece

Image 3.2: The same map zoomed in on the provinces of Macedonia and Thrace.



Chapter 3.3-The Active, the Corrupted and the Dormant: Aspects of the agricultural cooperative movement

When it comes to the literature on agricultural cooperatives in Western Europe, one must learn to live frugally. The literature illustrating the history, development, establishment and most importantly the impact of agricultural cooperatives is extremely scant; in some national cases even more so. It is hard to speculate why, but every major work that addresses this particular subject tackles national or local contexts that are characterized by relative poverty. For example, in his 1999 short but concise book, Kotsonis showed how agricultural cooperatives in Russia, while intended to improve the condition of the peasants who had willingly founded them, ended up plunging them into deeper misery, due to their members' complete ignorance as well as to a crippling apathy on the part of the imperial administration.²⁰⁵ In similarly "peripheral" tones, Helen Gardikas and Catherine Bregianni edited in 2013 a collective volume that presented various case studies from South, Central and Eastern Europe, ranging from Greece to Estonia. One of the most recent publications regarding a "Western" case comes from Cleary's 1989 book on the French example as well as an economic analysis of agricultural cooperatives in Germany.²⁰⁶

Whatever the reason for this odd silence, examining agricultural cooperatives' archives offers a particularly good window on a population and on locales about which very little is known. Furthermore, what makes the analysis of agricultural cooperatives possibly important, is that it may provide a narrative not centered on certain individuals –who, in the case of rural studies, rarely leave something behind– but on the village as an organized community, shifting the paradigm from a personal level to a collective one. In one of the cases I will be presenting here, for example, we will see the gradual establishment of a peculiar administrative elite that evolved *in* the village among certain members of the local agricultural cooperative.

²⁰⁵ Yianni Kotsonis, *Making Peasants Backward: Agricultural Cooperatives and the Agrarian Question in Russia, 1861-1914*, London, MacMillan Press LTD, 1999.

²⁰⁶ Helen Gardika, Catherine Bregianni (eds), *Agricultural co-operatives in South and Central Europe : 19th-20th century : a comparative approach*, Athens, Academy of Athens, 2013.

M.C. Cleary, *Peasants, politicians, and producers : the organisation of agriculture in France since 1918*, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Timothy Guinnane, "Cooperatives as Information Machines: German Rural Credit Cooperatives, 1883–1914", *The Journal of Economic History*, v 61-2, 2001, 366-389.

Agricultural cooperatives, however, had a much more solid and serious foundation. They were invented and spread, initially across Europe and North America, as associations that championed the demand of farmers for emancipation from state patronage. As such, cooperatives are thought of as a progressive structure born from an aggressive popular movement, assisted by rural intellectuals but spearheaded by the people. This was how Joseph Cote back in 1979 described the emergence of agricultural cooperatives in the American south since 1899. Above all, he highlighted the part that Clarence Hamilton Poe, an editor and intellectual, had played in this process, constantly propagating the idea of agricultural cooperatives as associations of an enlightened Western Europe (and even of Japan).²⁰⁷ In a similar tone, Eva Fernández, pointed out that agricultural cooperatives appeared out of sheer necessity in the European countryside, in an almost spontaneous manner from below, when farmers realized that together they could protect themselves from the instability of the global capitalist market.²⁰⁸ This grassroots aspect is particularly present in almost all the case-studies that touch upon the subject. Whether in Imperial Bohemia or in New York and Wisconsin, whether in the 1800's or 1980's, agricultural cooperatives had been defined by the active participation of their members and the relentless pursuit of remaining, as much as possible, in charge of their own production.²⁰⁹

When compared to the above, the Greek case pales significantly. As this chapter will show, apart from a very few shining examples, agricultural cooperatives in Greece, and especially in Macedonia, did not exercise a strong appeal among the peasants. Although they were supposed to function as their European counterparts did, Greek cooperatives became state-controlled associations resembling mindless infants manipulated and scolded by a neglectful parent (the state), rather than solid and coherent structures comprised of responsible farmers maintaining their independence.

²⁰⁷ Joseph A. Coté, 'Clarence Hamilton Poe: The Farmer's Voice', 1899-1964, *Agricultural History*, vol 53:1, 30-41. Indicatively, on Poe's works, see: Clarence Poe, *Where Half The World Is Waking Up*, New York, Doubleday, Page & company, 1911 and Clarence Poe, *A Southerner in Europe*, Raleigh, Mutual Publishing Company, 1908.

²⁰⁸ Eva Fernández, 'Selling agricultural products: farmers' co-operatives in production and marketing, 1880-1930', *Business History*, vol 56:4, 547-568.

²⁰⁹ Catherine Albrecht, 'Rural Banks and Czech Nationalism in Bohemia, 1848-1914', *Agricultural History* vol 78:3, 317-345.

Clarke A. Chambers, 'The Cooperative League of the United States of America, 1916-1961: A study of social theory', *Agricultural History*, vol 36:2, 59-81.

In Macedonia, things were even more prone to failure. The exceptionally difficult circumstances of the population exchange and the conflict between locals and resettling refugees in the province made the situation even more challenging. One individual we have already met earlier, Konstantinos Karavidas, held odd opinions about the issue. In his mind, cooperatives were a great weapon for western European farmers. Situated at the heart of intensified agriculture and production commodification, the sturdy bureaucratic organizational structure of agricultural cooperatives shielded German, British and Dutch farmers from the frequent unpredictability of the global market. Karavidas, however, knew that interwar Greece was by no means a Western European country. Interestingly enough, he also asserted that in fact, Greece did not need to become Germany, Britain or the Netherlands. Following a remarkably economistic train of thought, Karavidas believed that the essence of a nation was not hidden in its cultural representations, language or history. Instead, nations are defined by the system of production they used in order to secure their reproduction, evolved through the centuries in accordance with the changes around them. That is why the Weberian bureaucracy of agricultural cooperatives was a natural development for Western Europe but incompatible with Greece's past. Instead, what Karavidas had proposed for his country, was a system based on communitarianism, unburdened by bureaucratic hurdles and intertwined with the notion of an ethical economy. This is exactly what did not happen. Instead, this is the story of how agricultural cooperatives in Macedonia ended up as a farcical version of their European counterparts.²¹⁰

Before examining the case studies though, it would be useful to see exactly how the state envisaged the agricultural cooperatives were going to be. In order to illustrate that, I will abstain from commenting on laws, parliamentary debates and political decisions concerning the topic. That has already been done in great detail and insight by a number of historians.²¹¹ Instead, I will focus on the agricultural cooperatives'

²¹⁰ From Karavidas' very rich bibliography, the two works that are more oriented toward what is being discussed here are: Konstantinos Karavidas, *Sosialismos kai Koinotismos [Socialism and Communitarianism]*, Athens, O Korais, 1930 and Konstantinos Karavidas, *Agrotika: Meleti Sygkritiki [Agrotika: A Comparative Study]*, Athens, State Publishing House, 1931.

²¹¹ Indicative bibliography on the subject starting with the monumental work of Aristotelis Klimis, *Oi Synetairismoi stin Ellada, Tomos Deyteros 1923-1934/5 [Cooperatives in Greece, Second Volume, 1923-1934/5]*, Athens, PASEGES, 1988.

statutes, namely on the template application texts that every single cooperative across Greece filled in and signed in order to become an official public legal entity. Through this analysis the exact pursuits of the agricultural cooperatives should become clear.

Although those template texts changed many times over the years (they were probably updated every two years), most of the text remained the same as did the overall character it tried to reflect, not simply as a faceless association seeking to increase agricultural productivity, but as a harmonious community morally molding its members. The architect behind the statute was most likely Socratis Iasemides, an agronomist, university professor and most importantly one of the main actors agitating for the cooperative movement in Greece. As early as 1909, for example, he had criticized the Greek state for being too backwards in this particular matter, comparing Greece to Bulgaria, thus twisting the knife in the wound of the nationalists who at the time had declared Bulgarians to be savages:

[Almyros cooperative in Thessaly] was, unfortunately, in Greece the sole example of an agricultural cooperative at a time, when in Rumania there were 100, in Bulgaria approximately 90 and in Serbia roughly 150, not to mention the 10,500 in Germany and nearly 700 in Italy.²¹²

At the time when the first statute was written, Iasemides was the Department Head for agriculture in the Ministry of National Economy. What we can, therefore, presume is that the Minister of National Economy, at the time Andreas Michalakopoulos, who three years later served as the first ever Minister of Agriculture, approved the statute and commissioned its reproduction.

The template text begins simply, by stating the necessary steps for the establishment of a cooperative. “Seven or more farmers should come together, better if they are 20-30” and they should sign the statute after having fully comprehended its meaning. The cooperative is then rendered legal following its authorization by the Ministry, after which the members of the newly-founded organization must hold their

Leonidas Kallivretakis, *I Dynamiki tou agrotikou eksygchronismou stin Ellada tou 19ou aiona [The Dynamics of Agricultural Modernization in 19th Century Greece]*, Athens, Morfotiko Institutouto Agrotikis Trapezas, 1990.

Panagiotis Papagaryfallou, *Oi Georgikoi Synetairismoi en Elladi, 1821-1940 [Agricultural Cooperatives in Greece, 1821-1940]*, Athens, Papazisis, 1973.

Sokratis Petmezas, *Prolegomena stin Istoría tis Ellinikis Agrotikis Oikonomias tou Mesopolemou [Introduction to the History of the Greek Agricultural Economy of the Interwar Period]*, Athens, Alexandria, 2012.

²¹² Nitsa Koliou, *Oi Protoporoi tis Periochis tou Almyrou [The Pioneers in the Almyro's Area]*, Athens, Ekdoseis Odysseas, 1996.

first General Assembly in order to elect the cooperative's President, vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and Consultant.²¹³ Those five composed the Board of Directors of the cooperative. The first moral elements are introduced in just the second page of the document, in the section where the goals of the cooperative are enumerated:

Article 3

The cooperative principally seeks to relieve its associates in financial terms, but at the same time, to develop them spiritually and morally. For this:

- a) It provides interest-bearing loans to competent and worthy of trust associates for productive purposes, obtaining the money for this due to the solidarity of the associates.
- b) It accepts interest-bearing deposits both by associates and non-associates [...]
- c) It provides the associates with wholesale items, needed in their agricultural and house works (seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, sulfur, copper sulphate, tools and machinery, tree nurseries) and sells them to the associates in small quantities.
- d) [...]
- g) It diffuses knowledge through lectures or pamphlets, it considers financial measures to improve the associates' status and it agriculturally reinstates its members through renting arable land or expropriating plots of land. [...] ²¹⁴

There is a point to be made here. It is clear that while moral and spiritual development is mentioned it is not elaborated upon. It seems that this element only refers –as the first goal suggests- to the development of good and solid working ethics, simply in order for the associates to be deemed trustworthy enough to receive financial aid through loans. Moreover, as exemplified in Article 4 of the statute, all associates “were prohibited from discussing politics and deciding upon political actions”.²¹⁵ This particular article remained completely unchanged throughout all the different versions of the statute, from 1914 until 1931, and not by accident. In fact, the reasoning of the Ministry on that front was wise, since the one thing that Greece did not lack during the interwar period was crippling political radicalization; and that was not at all the ideal that was promoted by the Greek state for agricultural cooperatives.²¹⁶ Those two

²¹³ Agricultural Cooperatives' Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas, Agricultural Credit Cooperative Statute, 4.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 6.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 6.

²¹⁶ For a detailed view of the political and social turmoil in interwar Greece see: Seraphim Seferiades, “Small Rural Ownership, Subsistence Agriculture, and Peasant Protest in Interwar Greece: the Agrarian Question Recast”, *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, v 17-2, 1999, 277-323. George Th. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922-1936*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1983.

features, located so early in the text, give strong hints of the character that every agricultural cooperative was meant to have: A reliable community of farmers dedicated to the cultivation of the land, maintaining cordial, undisturbed relationships between themselves. This becomes even clearer in Article 26 of the statute.²¹⁷

In this article we find the set of responsibilities and rights of the cooperative's governing body, the Board of Directors. The Board, as one entity and not as five different individuals each holding a particular office, had a large number of responsibilities: To decide upon the overall sum of loan money needed for the cooperative's members, to accept and/or strike off members, to inform the cooperative of any intended actions and to call the General Assemblies of the cooperative that needed to be held at least twice per year. One responsibility in particular is rather interesting though. As stated in the eleventh sub-article of this section:

k) [The Board of Directors is responsible] for developing the financial ethic of the land as well as improving agriculture, for fighting off at any cost loan sharks that might be in the cooperative's territory and for taking any needed measures in order to realize all the moral and spiritual goals mentioned in Article 3 [see above].²¹⁸

We can once more see the moral imperative of improvement in the above excerpt, where the directors were supposed to act as benefactors and guardians of the village against any malicious outside involvement. Its part as a depositary was not simply for show. As exemplified in Article 55 of the statute, the Board of Directors had the power to approve or reject loan applications made by the associates. The criteria followed, and were once again based on the work ethic of the applicant:

Article 55

Loans are granted only to competent and creditable associates, while the amount of the loan is determined by the Board of Directors, according to the capabilities of the applicant.

Thanos Veremis, "Some Observations on the Greek Military in the Inter-war Period, 1918-1935", *Armed Forces and Society*, v 4-3, 1978, 527-541.

Lito Apostolaki, "'Greek' Workers or Communist 'Others': The Contending Identities of Organized Labour in Greece, c.1914-1936", *Journal of Contemporary History*, v 32-4, 1997, 409-424.

²¹⁷ Agricultural Cooperatives' Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas, Agricultural Credit Cooperative Statute, 16-18.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

The associate, who does not have the necessary knowledge [or know-how] for his occupation or he is not hard-working and diligent or he is a drunkard and a gambler, is not trustworthy.

The associate who is wasteful or is in such a financial situation that he cannot safely pay for his interest-bearing debt is not trustworthy.²¹⁹

The rules of the cooperative game, however, were not made up just to be a top-down supervision scheme only. In the statute we see that competence, diligence and reliability are responsibilities spread both vertically and horizontally. To put it simply, each associate was explicitly responsible for his own actions as well as for the actions of other members toward the cooperative. The reason was simple: the cooperative's fund was mutual, which means that each associate had contributed the same amount.²²⁰ In turn, every gain for the cooperative was distributed equally among the associates, but so too was every loss and every accumulated debt. In fact, emphasis is given on the fact that the cooperative is simply the sum of its members, an element that was stressed in order to convince farmers that they *were* the cooperative. Therefore, ideally, each associate had to keep a watchful eye on his fellow villager and make sure that he was not a "drunkard and a gambler". However, the argument may be made that such an idea was practically unachievable in a city or town, where human relationships were relatively impersonal. We must not forget though, that agricultural cooperatives were thought of and built upon the premises of organizing the agricultural sector of rural units, namely villages. Each village was allowed only one agricultural cooperative manned by farmers who were strictly residents of the said village. This notion of locality, of all being a village's business, is even well exemplified by the article in the statute obligating the Board of Directors to nail the calls for the General Assembly onto the village's church and school.²²¹

This was the statute in all its formalistic and thorough glory; a text that promoted a committed cultivation of the land, improvement of agricultural techniques and an increase in agricultural production by molding a tight community of farmers who

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 33-34.

²²⁰ Each associate contributed in the cooperative with "shares", a fixed minimum sum of money that went to the mutual fund of the cooperative. While contributing with more than one share was allowed and also resulted in some advantages -the main one being a larger proportion of the distributed gain- the vast majority of the farmers contributed the bare minimum, especially in the impoverished refugee agricultural villages of Macedonia.

²²¹ Agricultural Cooperatives' Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas, Agricultural Credit Cooperative Statute, 24.

ought to identify themselves with the cooperative. The egalitarian elements are plenty and somewhat introspective as well: No outsiders to the community were allowed in, thus avoiding bureaucratic interference; all farmers had the right to check the cooperative's authorities at any given time, who, besides, were most probably their next-door neighbors; and if it were decided, the associates also had the power to dissolve the cooperative whenever they saw fit. But to say that everything was played out according to plan would be a bit naïve. Regardless of the vision of robust farming communities based on solidarity that Iasemides had in mind while writing the original statute in 1914, reality proved him wrong in many cases. As Mazower puts it: “[Farmers] did not have a great sense of solidarity or collective obligation but regarded the organization as a new means of acquiring credit.”²²² This opportunistic mentality on the part of the farmers resulted in a sharp rise in loans as well as the sharp rise in debts.

Perhaps, in order to counter that possibility, state officials decided to make one of the most observable changes in the agricultural cooperatives' statute through the years: They changed the language in which it was written. An arguably unorthodox measure, however, with an unclear impact on a population that was considerably illiterate. Changing the language meant one simple thing. At the time, the official language used in all public documents, as well as all the formal settings (for example in the parliament, in the press and in all the institutions) was *katharevousa*, the purist constructed language that only existed in order to stress the continuity between the modern Greek state and ancient Greece. All the different statutes, therefore, from 1914 to 1930 were written in *katharevousa*, not even a very formal one as the text had many vernacular elements incorporated in it. But even then, farmers did not seem to understand it, or so believed the unknown official who, in the revised statute of 1931, added seven pages at the beginning of the statute, explaining in the most unrefined way possible, riddled with slang phrases, the reasons why agricultural cooperatives existed and the responsibilities that the associates had toward it. Extensive citation is necessary:

[The Agricultural Credit Cooperative] is, to put it in few words, let's say, a company, a society brought about by two dozen or more farmers and producers to improve their financial situation.

²²² Mark Mazower, *Greece and the Economic Crisis of Interwar Years*, Athens, MIET, 2002, 164.

First things first, thanks to the Cooperative, the associates will be able to borrow money with low interest, from the Bank without mortgages, hassles, involvement of third parties, etc. etc. and be able to farm their plots when they are supposed to. [...]

Thanks to the cooperative, the associates will also be able to sell the products of their production [sic] altogether for the best price possible because there will be much stuff gathered and it will be sold to the big merchant and not to the small one nor to the brokers that come in between and buy it half-price. [...]

The biggest responsibility that every associate has is to understand, believe and digest well [sic, Greek slang for internalize] that, thanks to the Cooperative, he will improve his financial situation, provided of course that he will continue to work honestly and with a sense of honor and that he will pain [sic, Greek slang for ponder] and be interested in the affairs of the Cooperative.²²³

In the next section, there are detailed instructions on what is needed for the founding of a cooperative. Not surprisingly, those are equally “dumbed down” for the farmers:

In order for the statute to be signed, as we said before, two dozen or more farmers must come together and read well these instructions.

Then, one of the most literate farmers, or the priest or the teacher of the village, will take the trouble [sic, Greek slang for bother] to read the statute and explain it well to all the farmers who gathered to make the Cooperative. **They mainly need to understand and digest well** [sic, Greek slang for internalize] **the most important points of the statute, principally the articles 9, 10, 11, 13** [Emphasis original] [...].

This reading and explaining of the articles of the statute can be done two or three times in order to not have any remaining doubts. **In his mind everyone must tell apart the rights and responsibilities he will have in the cooperative. Not, like, to put a signature to get money and nothing else.** [Emphasis original] [...].²²⁴

It is very difficult to say what exactly triggered the above major changes in the statute, whether it was one particular incident or a result of a general evaluation of the cooperative phenomenon in Greece. Judging by those changes, however, what we may say is that cooperatives were quickly becoming institutionalized tools in the hands of the farmers who were using them carelessly in order to benefit from them, in financial terms, believing perhaps that their village was well outside the state’s grasp.

In Macedonia, the province that hosted a huge number of Asia Minor refugees after 1923, things were even more complicated. In an effort to maintain some degree

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of homogeneity, the newcomers had been divided and resettled in Macedonia in “Refugee Groups” that essentially were groups composed of refugees originating from the same area or village. One or more Refugee Groups were set to resettle in a certain locale, either in cities but mostly in villages, and they were, moreover, forced to establish their own agricultural cooperative, at the same time incorporating local residents into it. Based on the many cases of conflict between refugees and locals, one might expect that mixed agricultural cooperatives, namely cooperatives comprised of refugees and locals alike, would be inefficient, as mutual distrust between the associates would render the cooperative dysfunctional. In the case of the “Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi”, the first case I will focus on in this chapter, this was not true at all.

Agioi Apostoloi, a village which in 1926 was renamed Pella -a much more Hellenic place name- (not to be confused with the prefecture of Pella, where the village belonged), was also the place where the archeological excavation of 1914-1915 had taken place under the chief archeologist Georgios Oikonomou. It was he who had been sent there to reveal the location of the ancient city of Pella, fatherland of Alexander the Great, as described earlier. As we saw, in 1915 Oikonomou portrayed the village in demeaning terms, stating that it was poor and ugly while he negatively depicted its residents as Slavs. The interwar period was a very turbulent time for southern Macedonia however and Agioi Apostoloi was not an exception to the rule. From 1919 to 1925 the village had undergone many radical changes. A large number of residents had migrated leaving behind their houses and fields, which had been granted to the incoming Asia Minor refugees.

On January 31, 1925, the farmers of Agioi Apostoloi, both locals and refugees, gathered in order to sign the statute that would enable them to found their own mixed, agricultural credit cooperative. Their number, even at the beginning was not negligible. Judging by the names found in the statute, there were fifty-nine associates, of whom thirty-four were completely illiterate, as illustrated by the fact that the illiterate ones had to state their names to a literate representative who would confirm their identity and sign for them. This name of the representative, for all of them, was Photios Chondropoulos, a person whom we will come across later. Also, judging by their surnames, the initial batch of associates who signed the statute were

predominantly refugees.²²⁵ The official foundation of the cooperative should be placed almost four months later, on 17 May 1925, when its members held their first General Assembly in order to elect the Board of Directors, the President and the Treasurer and discuss issues regarding the logistics of the young cooperative. They even got to use their official stamp for the first time. It depicted an iron plough around which the name of the cooperative was written.²²⁶ Instead of fifty-nine members who had initially signed the statute, the first Assembly recognized only fifty-five of them. Five did not show up. The newly-elected Board of Directors contained two names that we should keep in mind. The first is that of Photios Chondropoulos, who has already been mentioned while the second is Ioannis Ivantsis, a literate local farmer who had been chosen as the record keeper for the first General Assembly by the provisional President of the cooperative. The roles of these two actors will become important later.²²⁷

Right after the first assembly, on June 28, 1925 the Secretary of the cooperative, Ioannis Anthopoulos, composed a detailed list of all the associates (a very legible one as well, unlike the majority of hand-written documents from that time). Even though this list contains expected information, such as name and surname, occupation (of course all the associates were farmers) and place of residence (all residents of Agioi Apostoloi), Anthopoulos also wrote down whether the associate was a refugee or a local, an element that is found very rarely in the registries of the agricultural cooperatives. It is from this list that we learn that the number of associates had risen from fifty-five to eighty-three in the course of only one month, and most importantly, that only twenty-six of those were locals.²²⁸

To break this down, regarding the Board of Directors: The President of the Cooperative, Chondropoulos, for some inexplicable reason is not found on the list, despite having put his signature on the document to authorize its validity. The vice-

²²⁵ Assuming the origin of a certain person by the suffix on his surname is obviously not a safe practice in history. However, given the place and time, to say, for example that villagers whose surnames ended in –ides or -djis were almost certainly of Asia Minor origin, would not be wrong. The list of the signatories can be found at: Agricultural Credit Cooperative Statute, 42-46.

²²⁶ Agricultural Cooperatives Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas, Proceedings, General Assembly 17 May 1925, 4.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

²²⁸ Agricultural Cooperatives Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi, Table presenting the names and surnames in alphabetical order of the associates of the Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi.

President, Dimitris Milonas was a refugee, as was the Secretary, Anthopoulos who compiled the list. The other two members of the board, the Treasurer Ivantsis and member of the cooperatives board of Directors Voudouris, were registered as locals.²²⁹ The cooperative was therefore quite balanced in terms of how it was represented, as both populations that shared the village of Agioi Apostoloi had “delegates” in the cooperative. Moreover, the results of the first election that took place in the first General Assembly on 17 May, show that their appointment was unanimous, as all fifty of the attended associates voted in favor of all the members of the Board of Directors.²³⁰

The next assembly that took place on February 23, 1926, or at least the next one that appears in the registry, proved that things were getting pretty serious for the cooperative. The number of associates had risen by eight, reaching ninety-one, while the topics discussed indicated that the cooperative was functioning well. Among other things, the associates decided to increase the minimum share of each associate from two hundred Drachmas to five hundred, a very respectable increase indeed, and to henceforth impose a fine of twenty-five Drachmas to every associate who was absent for the General Assemblies (on that day twenty associates did not show up). It was also decided “unanimously” that every associate would be obliged to make a special contribution to the cooperative, comprised of either produce (grain or barley) or fifty Drachmas. There was even serious talk of purchasing a mechanical harvester, an expensive and efficient piece of equipment, which however was postponed as the assembly claimed that such an acquisition was too premature. There was also an election for the new Board of Directors, where the presence of refugees was reinforced, occupying four out of the five positions. Only one local remained. It was Ioannis Ivantsis who assumed once again the Treasurer’s office, having obtained the smallest number of votes, only forty-five out of the seventy-one ballots that were casted.²³¹

And then there is silence. This is not necessarily odd or unusual as there were many cases when a cooperative went dormant after a while as its associates grew tired

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1-4.

²³⁰ Agricultural Cooperatives’ Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas, Proceedings, General Assembly 17 May 1925, 2.

²³¹ Agricultural Cooperatives’ Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas, Proceedings, Third General Assembly of 23 February 1926, 1-5.

of all that meaningless institutionalization. It was even possible that the Board of Directors simply did not send the minutes of the General Assemblies to the Ministry, as it was supposed to do. But in our case, it seems that something was actually rotten in the cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi.

The next document that appears in the registry dates to October 17, 1929, more than three years after the last minutes of the General Assembly. It was not written nor sent by an associate of the cooperative, but by a certain Mr. A. Diligiannis, the Inspector for Agricultural Cooperatives for the prefecture of Giannitsa, who at the time worked for the General Directory of Resettlement in Macedonia, an institution responsible only for the process of assimilating the refugees around the province. What Diligiannis sent back to the headquarters of the General Directory was a lengthy report presenting the numerous irregularities that he had encountered after a short visit to the village, each of them proving that the cooperative was grossly mismanaged and exploited for the benefit of certain village elite members who had learned the ropes of the system and were abusing it for their own benefit. The accusations stated by Diligiannis in his report are striking. The first issue that he identified was about the number and identities of the associates of the cooperative:

1) Among the members, some are included that neither signed the statute, nor were registered by an act of the Directing Board. They amount to 22, among them being Ioannis Anthopoulos, member of the Directing Board and Emmanuil Kollaros member of the Supervisory Board [emphasis original, the Supervisory Board was a another board in the cooperative, responsible for auditing the accounts of the cooperative before the election of a new Board of directors].²³²

As he also found out, not only were twenty-two of the associates written in the official list of the cooperative unbeknownst to them, but twenty-four more, all of them founding members of the cooperative, back in 1925, had been struck off for no apparent reason.²³³ To add another drop to this stream of shady actions, Diligiannis duly noted that the last election had taken place on March 1, 1928, which implies that at least four elections had not been held, since the cooperative was obligated to either elect new a Board of Directors or renew the terms of the old ones every six months.²³⁴

²³² Agricultural Cooperatives' Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas, 17 October 1929 Giannitsa, To the General Directory of Resettlement of Macedonia, 1,

²³³ Ibid., 1-2,

²³⁴ Ibid., 1,

These accusations were just at the beginning of the note. What he reported later paled significantly in front of what someone well-intentioned could attribute to just laziness or not thorough enough bookkeeping. The General Inspector wrote in the administrative sector of his report:

1) The President of the Cooperative, Emmanuil Papamichail received on February 1926 fifty ploughs, worth 825 Drachmas. Despite the fact that I asked him to present me with the bill explaining his further actions on the matter, he did not do so, due to his idleness, avoiding to meet me and only vouching that the ploughs were in his possession after selling only some of them, something that we do not know if it is true.

2) The vice-President of the Cooperative, Photios Chondropoulos, has unjustifiably in his possession 1992 Drachmas, coming from interest on deferred payments and loan renewals of the Associates

Stefanos Delilamprou, 497 Drachmas

Christos Sgourakis, 275 Dr.

Anestis Mermetsakis, 344 Dr.

Miltiades Tsachalakis, 440 Dr.

who paid them in their own name in order to renew their agricultural loans. Because of the fact, however, that the Bank did not accept these renewals as well as some other [associates'], the treasurer returned the money to those who paid them, also giving the vice-President the above amount of money in order for him to return it to the above-mentioned [associates], something that he did not do.

The Treasurer was forced to pay the above Mermetsakis 340 Drachmas from his own purse, in order to avoid some of the comments that were being said against him. To prove his claims, the Treasurer presented me with a receipt by the vice-President, under the date 15 March 1929 which proves that he indeed received that amount of money [the 1992 Drachmas] from the Treasurer.²³⁵

It is possible that right now Treasurer Ivantsis was the innocent victim of the cooperative, spending his own money to satisfy disgruntled farmers, as he was falsely accused for the sins of the Vice-President. But this is far from true. As we shall see, according to Diligiannis, Ivantsis was clearly the bigger fish that should have been fried.

As mentioned, Ivantsis had been the Treasurer of the cooperative since the day it was founded. He was the only member of the cooperative who retained his position for the entire period, which he moreover had held illegally for the two years when the

²³⁵ Agricultural Cooperatives Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas.

associates had not bothered to hold elections (from 1926 until March 1928). And by the time that Diligiannis arrived, Ivantsis was again the Treasurer after the elections of 1928. This means that Ivantsis had served non-stop as the Treasurer of the cooperative for five years, more than enough time to understand how the system worked, or more precisely how it did not work. The third and fourth issue we find in Diligiannis' report is all about Ivantsis and the ways he found to embezzle money. His scam was quite simple and relied upon a combination of illiteracy and indifference on the part of the associates.²³⁶

One of the cases reported by Diligiannis went as follows: The associate Photios Impas, an illiterate refugee, applied for a loan to the National Bank of Greece on December 23, 1927. But as he was registered illiterate he could not sign for himself. Instead, another associate –this one had to be literate of course- had the responsibility of reading the application to Impas and then signing it on his behalf. In this case, there were two associates that signed for him: Photios Chindropoulos, who as we saw, had served as President in the past, as well as Georgios Voudouris, most probably a close relative of Petros Voudouris who was a former member of the Board of Directors. Impas had originally asked for a loan of four thousand Drachmas. Instead of four thousand however, the Board member who was responsible for the processing of the loan applications –Treasurer Ivantsis- applied for five thousand Drachmas, without telling the applicant about this slight change. The two literate attestors who were supposed to read the application to Impas, either told him that his application was fine or did not read it to him at all, as blind trust was a widespread vice at the time. In any case, the loan of five thousand Drachmas was approved, but Impas realized that he did not need the whole amount at once and so he chose to receive initially only three thousand Drachmas, leaving the rest of the money for a later date. Indeed, some months later, in April 1928 Impas asked for the remaining one thousand Drachmas, which he also received. But while he thought that he had paid the whole sum of the loan back, he found out that the Bank had issued an arrest warrant for him, for an overdue repayment of one thousand Drachmas, which had been embezzled by

²³⁶ Agricultural Cooperatives Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas.

Treasurer Ivantsis since the first installment of the loan that in reality amounted to four thousand and not three, as the poor and ignorant Impas had believed.²³⁷

Three more associates of the cooperative came forward to complain to Diligiannis for similar reasons. One of them was Mermetsakis -who was literate but probably only signature literate- the man who had accused Ivantsis of embezzlement and for whom Ivantsis had paid a debt that –surprisingly- was not his fault, as we saw earlier. There was a pattern in Ivantsis’ scam. Every time the loan application was a bit more than what the applicant had asked for, each applicant was illiterate and every time it was Voudouris and Chondropoulos who signed as attestors. It was a good business indeed, as Diligiannis speculated that it would only be a matter of time before more associates came forth to blame Ivantsis for embezzlement of their own loans. But this was not all. Diligiannis raised another allegation against Ivantsis that was equally serious:

From all the above anomalies, in case the claims of the complainants are true, besides the conclusion that is extracted, that his is embezzlement, we are also under suspicion, due to Tsernas’ case [one of the four cases the inspector presented], that the Board of Directors of the Cooperative, especially its Treasurer, Ioannis Ivantsis, was composing, unbeknownst to those interested, warrants of agricultural goods, which he discounted in the Bank, deceiving it, while the product of this discount was used by him for private matters. And when the deadline approached he returned the money to the Bank.²³⁸

As if there was any need to add to Ivantsis’ dreadful reputation, the General Inspector also learned that more than fourteen thousand Drachmas that belonged to the cooperatives’ mutual fund had been given to certain associates as loans by Ivantsis himself, without prior approval by the Board of Directors. The associates who received those loans included former members of the board, such as Anthopoulos and Chondropoulos, current members of the board, such as Papamichail and even what appeared to be relatives of Ivantsis, such as Theodoris Ivantsis. All the other irregularities listed thereafter seemed to be minor breaches of the statute compared to the masterplan of Ivantsis, and Diligiannis treated them as minor, only giving advice to the associates on how to fix them. But Ivantsis’ case was not to be cured simply with a slap on the wrist.

²³⁷ Agricultural Cooperatives Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas.

²³⁸ Agricultural Cooperatives Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas.

The General Director did not regard ChnDROPoulos or Voudouris to be accomplices of Ivantsis, despite the fact that both of them had been signing as attestors. He claimed that constantly signing a document without reading it first was a practice more than common in the countryside. Even the fact that Chondropoulos had illegally benefited multiple times from Ivantsis' actions should not arouse any suspicion. On the contrary, the case of the resourceful Treasurer reached the court of Verroia, the town with Agioi Apostoloi under its jurisdiction, after Diligiannis sent a report urging the Prosecutor to examine his allegations closely.²³⁹

While this story does not have an end, and the fate of Ivantsis remains unknown, the course of events surrounding the cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi confirms that, not surprisingly, the members that staffed such cooperatives were not at all strangers to corrupt practices. It also illustrates how an organization that was meant to guide peasants toward emancipation, became twisted and manipulated in the hands of its staff, in such a manner that rendered the bureaucrats in Thessaloniki incapable of detecting and interfering for many years. However, what a historian will find in the registry of agricultural cooperatives next to those cases of corruption, which do not come up often, are also dozens of thin folders that contain next to nothing. They signify, in a much more illustrative way, how cooperatives in Macedonia failed to inspire trust and hope to both refugee and local farmers. These folders are testimony of dissolved cooperatives, which became that way by choice either of their members or the state. Their sad content is, most of the time, the statute that brought them into existence and then the members' application or ministerial notification that the cooperative had been dissolved.

This is what *almost* happened to the agricultural cooperative of the village Kirtzilar. The village, located half way between Thessaloniki and Giannitsa, amidst the marshlands that later would become the Plain of Giannitsa or Thessaloniki, acquired its agricultural cooperative at a time when a storm was brewing. More precisely, the signatures for the founding of the cooperative were placed on July 27, 1922. Two weeks later the Greek front in Asia Minor would spectacularly collapse, a catastrophic event that led to the population exchange of 1923 and the subsequent flooding of Macedonia by refugees. This was something that the peasants of Kirtzilar did not know when they got together to form their cooperative. The initial member

²³⁹ Agricultural Cooperatives Register, File 5647, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Agioi Apostoloi Pellas.

count was only 15, barely above the required threshold.²⁴⁰ As Karavidas noted, the village was Bulgarophone and as such, its residents' convictions had been met with suspicion by Greek authorities.²⁴¹ In any case, Kirtzilar villagers somehow knew that having a cooperative of their own could help them improve their credit capabilities. Whether they had something sinister in mind, namely using funds not for productive purposes but to cover other expenses, or whether they intended to build an exemplary agricultural cooperative, is irrelevant. After the ministry approved the signed statute, on September 5, 1922 (at the same time when the Asia Minor Catastrophe was unfolding), the cooperative's activities stopped.²⁴²

Unquestionably, the reason for this abrupt silence lies in the radical changes that the population exchange brought to the area. Kirtzilar was too close to Thessaloniki - one of the main initial stops of the Thracian, Pontic and Asian Minor refugees- not to mention too unimportant to emerge unscathed by the resettlement process. It seems that almost immediately the village was made to receive a disproportionately large number of refugees, leading to the reinvention of a completely new village with completely new residents. This transformation was furthermore ratified when the name of Kirtzilar, due to being Slavic, was changed to Adendro in 1926.²⁴³ Its agricultural cooperative of course followed the changes. The silence of four years breaks in 1926 when an Inspector of Agricultural Cooperatives visited Adendro. He reported on the status of the cooperative to the Ministry, writing that the village indeed had a cooperative that had been dormant since 1922. After a closer look, he found that while the old cooperative was inactive, the new residents of the village had unofficially joined in, without the approval of the Ministry. Nevertheless, the cooperative's members went up drastically, from 15 members in 1922 to 66 members in 1926, fifty of them being of refugee origin.²⁴⁴

The new life that the refugees breathed into the cooperative did not last long. The organization went silent once again after 1926. The advent of refugees that had briefly reanimated the cooperative was not enough to keep it alive. Speculating why is hard, but judging by the time and place, the safest bet would be that the agricultural cooperative could not operate normally as its members did not have land on which to

²⁴⁰ Agricultural Cooperatives Register 4631, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Kirtzilar, Statute.

²⁴¹ Karavidas Archive, Folder 3, Subfolder 4, Document 'Πίναξ Τσιφλικίων Περιφέρειας Θεσσαλονίκης'

²⁴² Agricultural Cooperatives Register 4631, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Kirtzilar.

²⁴³ Agricultural Cooperatives Register 4631, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Kirtzilar.

²⁴⁴ Agricultural Cooperatives Register 4631, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Kirtzilar.

practice their agriculture. As we will see, the Greek government at the time, had signed a contract regarding the reclamation of the whole marshland that surrounded Adendro. Constant postponements, however, kept settlers inactive and their cooperative dormant, as wasting time and resources on fields that next year may have to be dug up by excavators or flooded by dredges did not seem rational.

It was no wonder then that the cooperative emerged from its hibernation in 1929, when the American company that had undertaken the reclamation project of the swamp returned reclaimed fertile fields to the Greek government that were to be distributed to farmers. This promising news was accompanied by an equally enthusiastic letter sent by the Inspector to the Court of First Instance in Thessaloniki responsible for the dissolution of cooperatives:

With our report [...] toward the Ministry of Agriculture, we asked the dissolution of the Agricultural Credit Cooperative Kirtzilar, on the premises of being inactive more than two years, which may have been forwarded to you in order to start the procedure.

However, because of the fact that this Cooperative has begun its chores once again, as evident by the proceedings submitted to us of Meetings of its General Assemblies, and therefore there is no reason for its dissolution, we ask to you issue the suspension of any action that was relevant to its dissolution.²⁴⁵

From there on there is nothing out of the ordinary about this cooperative. Nothing in particular is special about it, apart from fulfilling its everyday purpose, aiding its members and facilitating adequate agricultural production. Along the lines of Chapter 3.2 which emphasized the state's colonization of Macedonia using the exchanged populations as colonists, claiming that agricultural cooperatives played a part in this colonization, would not be far-fetched. As demonstrated in this example, refugees became, out of necessity, supporters of the cooperative scheme, at times hijacking them from the locals, especially in cases where they constituted the majority in a community. In light of this, it would be fair to claim that agricultural cooperatives constituted the backbone of refugee self-organization, as they often were the only legal entities in which rural refugees participated or had power over.

However, what is also useful to take away from this case of Kirtzilar/Adendro's agricultural cooperative is the distinct tendency toward apathy exhibited both by its Slavophones as well as by its refugee members. This is not to say that cooperatives

²⁴⁵ Agricultural Cooperatives Register 4631, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Kirtzilar, Document "To the Court of First Instance of Thessaloniki", 18 October 1929.

were destined to fail under all circumstances, as the next brief case study will show. It does show however, how much the Greek cooperatives strayed from the logic of serving as emancipatory mechanisms of the countryside, to becoming organizations essentially controlled and nurtured from above by the state apparatus.²⁴⁶ In fact, it was both the state and the RSC that promoted and supported the founding and development of agricultural cooperatives, as a means of rendering farmers self-sufficient and thus not dependent on the welfare state. Karavidas, being one of the main advocates of agricultural cooperatives in Macedonia, managed at some point to set up a short-lived institution, which he called *School for Cooperative Members*. Run by who else but the state. The *School for Cooperative Members* was meant to guide farmers through the legal and administrative perils of their cooperative. In a letter addressed to the General Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Karavidas explained the significance of such a deed:

Being full of a peculiar satisfaction, I inform you that here [Thessaloniki] there started operating a regular school for members of cooperatives. Up to 100 students came for the first term, they are farmers with basic education and the Resettlement Directorate reimburses them with 40 Dr. per day. Lessons, apart from general theory, include accounting and [lessons] on the administrative part of the cooperative [...]

From my point of view, this school is the most efficient measure, because training and spreading a number of cooperative members among locals and colonists [...] will increase mobility in the villages, will bring them in contact with Banks and will tighten the relationship of the peasants with cities, which is the same as Hellenization- especially since there are villages that do not speak Greek, that lack teachers and that remain isolated in the most barbaric ways and they have never come into beneficial contact with the State, except through policemen and tax collectors.²⁴⁷

Even in Karavidas' words, we get confirmation that agricultural cooperatives had completely failed to realize their idealist goals. The above excerpt shows that they were utilized as a device capable of introducing peasants to the state apparatus, while at the same time acting as an agent of national homogenization.

The attitudes of cooperative members were equally cynical toward this institution. As Mazower has argued, the ease with which agricultural populations were

²⁴⁶ More on the close structural relation between the cooperatives and the state in: Kostis, Kostas. *Agrotiki oikonomi kai georgiki trapeza: Opseis tis ellinikis oikonomias sto Mesopolemo, 1919-1928*. MIET. 1987.

²⁴⁷ Karavidas Archive, Folder 10, Subfolder 2, Document 'Thessaloniki, 15 Maiou, 1925, Pros ton K. Per. Agryropoulo, Gen. Dieuthinti Ypourgeiou Exoterikon'.

now capable of obtaining agricultural loans made them reckless.²⁴⁸ At the same time, the system of production that was promoted in Macedonia -quick and flexible capitalization of agricultural production by farmers with small estates- was not developing particularly well, since both new and old residents had real trouble adapting to the capitalist market. Thus, the supposedly productive loans led to terribly unproductive debts. As Ploumidis states, in 1937, already fourteen years after the population exchange, a staggering 70% of Greek farmers was indebted (probably this percentage was higher if only Macedonia were to be taken into account) while their debt represented more than 40% of the gross agricultural product.²⁴⁹ Such numbers indicate that the case studies presented in this chapter were neither taken out of context nor do they constitute extreme examples of bad or corrupt management. On the contrary, they are the rule rather than the exception.

To conclude, the situation grew so bad that the quasi-fascist dictator Ioannis Metaxas, had to take extreme (but popular) measures to avoid a complete collapse. In the Greek version of the *Battaglia del Grano*, which his Italian counterpart had already begun, and in an effort to both win the favor of the people –the majority of whom were farmers- as well as to secure wheat sufficiency for the country, Metaxas decided to alleviate the farmers’ burden. In 1937, only one year after he took power, having already declared himself “The First Farmer,” he proceeded to order the writing off of a significant amount of the overall debt of each indebted farmer.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ Mark Mazower, ‘The Refugees, the Economic Crisis and the Collapse of Venizelist Hegemony, 1929–1932’, *DKMS*, vol 9, 119–34.

²⁴⁹ Spyridon Ploumidis, *Edafos kai mnimi sta Valkania: O “georgikos ethnikismos” stin Ellada kai sti Boulgaria (1927-1946) [Soil and Memory in the Balkans: “Agricultural Nationalism” in Greece and Bulgaria (1927-1946)]*, Athens, Pataki, 2011, 38.

²⁵⁰ Ploumidis, *Edafos kai mnimi sta Valkania*, 110.

Government Gazette, *Mandatory Law, no. 667. 1937: Regarding debt adjustment.*

Chapter 3.4-The War on Crooks: The expulsion and subjugation of the nomadic shepherds

On 22nd May 1927 the hall of the Parnassos Literary Society, the most important intellectual salon in Greece, situated in the historical center of Athens, was probably filled with people patiently waiting for the lecture that was about to be given by Kostas Faltaits. The man with the unlikely (for Greek standards) surname, could be described in many ways. He was a novelist with as many as nine novels under his belt;²⁵¹ an amateur historian devoted to writing about his personal homeland, the small island of Skyros;²⁵² a researcher of multiple topics, ranging from Greek folk songs to searching for the true place of origin of the Roma people;²⁵³ a holder of a prestigious Law Doctorate, and even a music composer. But above all Faltaits was a diligent and restless journalist. Far from being an “armchair” editor –so common in his time- writing big words for gullible masses, was not his style. Instead, he served as a war correspondent, covering three wars: The first and second Balkan War (1912-1913) and the Asia Minor Campaign (1919-1922) during which he was even injured during an air raid and was forced to return to Greece.²⁵⁴ Judging by the newspapers he wrote for, namely *Kathimerini*, *Empros* and *Vradyni*, Faltaits must have been of moderate conservative convictions, a royalist and a nationalist.²⁵⁵ However, it would be unfair to imagine him as the stereotypical hot-headed, warmongering demagogue, admitting only to the infallibility of his nation and the Crown. This became obvious in the lecture that ensued in the Parnassos hall.

²⁵¹ Despite the fact that his novels were mediocre, they are representative of the style of Greek interwar literature. Some titles are: Kostas Faltaits, *Argia [Holiday]*, Athens, Vasileiou Bookshop, 1920 and Kostas Faltaits, *I naumachia tis Ellis: istorima [The Battle of Ellis: Novel]*, Athens, Papapavlou Press & Co., 1919.

²⁵² The two main works of history Faltaits published are: *I grippi sti Skyro: Chroniko [The influenza in Skyros: Chronicle]*, Skyros, Middle-School and High-School of Skyros, 1919 and *Naoi kai Latriai tou Dionysou en Skyro [Temples and Adoration of Dionysus in Skyros]*, Athens, Literary Union of Skyros, 1939.

²⁵³ See Kostas Faltaits, *Orfeus kai Tsigganoi [Orfeus and the Gypsies]*, Athens, “Music Chronicles” Magazine, 1930.

²⁵⁴ Information taken from: <http://www.faltaits.gr/people/konstantinou-faltaits.html>, last accessed 15/04/2017.

²⁵⁵ Kostas Mayer, *I Istoría tou Ellinikou Typou [History of Greek Press]*, v.1, Athens, A. Dimopoulos, 1957, 187.

Kostas Mayer, *I Istoría tou Ellinikou Typou [History of Greek Press]*, v.2, Athens, A. Dimopoulos, 1959, 187, 242.

The title of the lecture was *Keep Macedonia in Mind* and among the many dozens of books that had been written about Macedonia, the countless speeches that had been given and the hundreds of lyrical and epic poems that had been recited, Faltaits decided to come in front of his audience with an unorthodox frankness that not many had the courage to express in such a direct way. His views are still those of a hard-nationalist, however they are presented in an utterly realistic way and explained in political terms, rather than based upon claims about ancient civilizations, racial superiority and historical legacies. In his lecture Faltaits stressed the point of Macedonia not being essentially assimilated to the Greek state. In spite of the ceding of the province to the state fourteen years ago, the expulsion of the Turkish and Slavic minorities and the subsequent resettlement of hundreds of thousands of refugees who were seen as Greek in the province, Macedonia, according to the speaker, was not yet represented equally in the Greek state apparatus. And he was blunt about this: “Both before and after the Asia Minor Catastrophe, Athens saw Macedonia as a colony”. Later in his speech he elaborated upon this bold statement:

Our union with her [Macedonia] is mechanical rather than organic. From 1912 on, we sent there what leftovers we had as regards the administrative, education, legal sector, medical sector, religious sector and we sought to assimilate Macedonia, while Macedonia never gave anything to herself, let alone to Hellas. Thus, Macedonia and Hellas remained like oil and water, regardless of whether they were united politically, namely mechanically, and seemed as the same entity. [...]

In terms of officials, Macedonia is not self-governed. It is ruled, in fact dominated, by other parts of Hellas [the Old Greece, namely Central Greece and Peloponnesus].

There are no Macedonian teachers; there are no Macedonian officers; there are no high clergymen; no bankers, no agriculturalists, no civil servants, no telegraph employees, no lawyers, no doctors, no taxmen, no notaries; there is nothing Macedonian in Macedonia. [...] Thus [Macedonia] was just ceded in geographical terms to the Old Hellas, while the latter tries to contain her [...] using the rotten shackles of its civil servants [...].²⁵⁶

As Faltaits made clear, the reason behind his harsh remarks was the bad handling on the part of the Greek government, three years earlier, during the negotiations in Geneva between Greece and Bulgaria concerning the official recognition of minorities in Macedonia. It was then, on 29 September 1924, when the Foreign Ministers of the two states had signed what came to be known as the “Politis-Kalfov Protocol”, which

²⁵⁶ Kostas Faltaits, *To nou mas sti Makedonia [Keep Macedonia in mind]*, Athens, Deli Press, 1927, 17.

forced Greece to admit that a Slavic minority indeed existed in Macedonia and it should be protected against ethnic violence.²⁵⁷

The Protocol was eventually *de facto* nullified by the Greek government, which never took the initiative of ratifying it after facing the uproar of the Parliament. It seems however that some social groups in Macedonia realized that whenever they were in a dispute with the government, they could use the minority card as a leverage to defend their financial interests. And these were cases where national identity became inextricably entangled with the local economy. It might seem complicated, but the incident Faltaits as witnessed and described by himself will simplify it greatly:

One night, in a restaurant at Giannitsa, some rich shepherd from Trikala [a village in the prefecture of Imathia in Macedonia] -who, as I found out later his son was serving as a permanent army officer in our military- after yelling his head off against the ongoing refugee resettlement in the Giannitsa plain [he means the swamp of Giannitsa] – this Macedonian Mesopotamia was left completely uncultivated and was only given to sheep herds- he said:

-Now with the protocol we have another option. I dare them to start settling here.

-What option?

He responded in a loud and striking manner:

-We proclaim ourselves Romanians. What did they think down there in Athens?

I almost expected such an answer. In fact, it was not long before I had left Goumenitsa [a nearby town], along with Mr. Kleinias, the then secretary general of Macedonia's Resettlement office, with whom we had been trying to dissuade the locals from registering themselves as Serbs in order to avoid the resettlement of refugees in their town; After all, due to the Protocol, anyone could register himself whatever he wished.²⁵⁸

This is the second time we find a shepherd acting in a manner hostile to the nation in this thesis. The first case was in Chapter 2.2 where shepherds defiled the excavation site of Pella, after laborers, hired by the chief archeologist, did not allow them to graze their animals in the surrounding area. In this second incident, a shepherd from a nearby village seemed to be very quick to renounce his Greek nationality –

²⁵⁷ It would be easier to understand this particular agreement that seemingly came out of the blue if we take into account that some months earlier seventeen Slavophone villagers had been murdered by the Greek army, under suspicious circumstances, outside a mountain village near the Greco-Bulgarian borders.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

which he did not feel particularly comfortable with- in order to protect his interests against the hundreds of thousands of refugees who were being resettled in Macedonia. What is even more remarkable is that the two incidents span a period of over ten years, during which the relationship between the shepherds and the state did not become better. In fact, as we will see, it was about to become even worse.

It is not difficult to see the reason behind the shepherds' discontent. But before doing so it would be crucial to explain how and why shepherds –seemingly people with an inconspicuous occupation- began to consider themselves, and be considered by the state, as a foreign body to the nation.

Some shepherds in Macedonia, or *tseligkes* from now on, exercised a certain type of nomadic or semi-nomadic husbandry, mostly herding sheep and goats. Typically, during summer they would bring their herds into preordained winter pastures (*theretro*) for which they did not pay any rent, since they were situated in mountainous areas, often in plateaus and forests. During winter however, when the mountains were unapproachable because of the heavy snowfall, they were forced to graze their animals in low altitude plains and lands (*cheimadia*) that, especially in Macedonia, belonged to *chiftlik* rulers. As expected, *tseligkes* were required to pay a, usually low, rent to the local *chiftlik* ruler, in order for their herds to be allowed in the uncultivated or fallow fields of the *chiftlik*.²⁵⁹

The organizational structure of this nomadic social group was remarkable. All *tseligkes*, owning either large or small herds, belonged to a certain *tseligkato*, a strictly hierarchical community that was run by an *archi-tseligkas*. This *archi-tseligkas*, was either elected by the other shepherds of the community or rose to this position through his experience, knowledge, connections, expertise and, most importantly, private wealth. His duties were quite diverse and even resembled the duties of agricultural cooperatives or other associations of the “modern world” that were meant to protect their members. Thus, the *archi-tseligkas* represented the interests of the *tseligkato*, decided upon the winter and summer pastures as well as the size of the herd, divided the livestock into the pens (*mantria*) that the *tseligkato* had in its possession and most

²⁵⁹ Stathis Damianakos, *Apo ton choriko ston agroti* [From peasant to farmer], Athens, Exadas-Ekke, 2002, 210-211.

notably ensured the financial stability of the *tseligkes* by providing loans with favorable conditions (low interest rates, etc.).²⁶⁰

What is even more important to understand about the *tseligkato* is the fact that it was a closed system of dairy production that was not easily affected by capitalist crises. With the survival and well-being of its members guaranteed by the *archi-tseligkas*, there was no actual need for the *tseligkato* to engage in external transactions with the market; and whenever this was deemed necessary by the leader, it was meant to increase the common as well as the private fund of the *tseligkato*, by selling milk, cheese and, more rarely, meat to local merchants. There was only one structure with which this peculiar nomadic community had developed an odd form of symbiosis. This was the *chiftlik*. As mentioned, the *chiftlik* ruler rented his pastoral lands to the *tseligkes* in return for money.²⁶¹ But this was not all. The herds that grazed on the land provided the ruler with the necessary manure that was used as fertilizer by the serfs of the *chiftlik*. Moreover, the main buyer of the products of the *tseligkato* was the *chiftlik* ruler himself, as the *tseligkes* tried to keep their transactions with the outside world to a minimum, thus keeping the prices of their goods stable and high.

This particular system managed to reproduce itself for centuries all over the Balkan Peninsula.²⁶² However, the advent of nation-states along with the constant wars in which the Balkan states were involved had a largely adverse effect on the *tseligkata*. Naturally so, as mobility, a key element of nomadic husbandry, was now restricted by national borders and nationalist self-righteousness. This also well explains the reason why the disrespectful *tseligkes* of Chapter 2.2 wanted, or probably needed, to graze their livestock on the plain around Giannitsa during the summer months of 1915 (when they were supposed to be migrating to their winter pastures in the north). Having been left with no choice, as the Entente forces were deploying their armies along the Macedonian Front and turning their high altitude pastures into a war

²⁶⁰ Dimosthenis Syrakis, *Nomadiki, Monimos kai Georgiki Ktinotrofia en Elladi [Nomadic, Settled and Agricultural Husbandry in Greece]*, Athens, Greek Agricultural Society, 1925, 683-686.

²⁶¹ This income was quite essential for the *chiftlik* ruler, since the peasants of his estates (who could accurately be described as serfs) paid him in agricultural products, most commonly in grain.

²⁶² It is very difficult to give a specific date for the establishment of the *tseligkato*. It probably developed along with other institutions in an organic way, as for example the *chiftliks* after the collapse of the Timar system in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

zone, the shepherds remained hostages to their low altitude pastures, unable to move on.²⁶³

After the war, in 1920, the Greek government, while trying to tackle the high price of livestock products, imposed rent controls for the benefit of the *tseligkes* and at the expense of large landowners. For a while it seemed that the hatchet of war between the state and the *tseligkes* was about to be buried. Although the rent controls were meant to last for only one year, this period was renewed once more in 1922.²⁶⁴ The situation took a turn for the worse after 1923. As with the examples that were described in previous chapters, when the Minor Asian refugees came to Greece much changed. The social engineering project that was undertaken by the RSC and in collaboration with the Greek state scattered them across Macedonia, an act that disintegrated the old land relations in the province. As the *chiftliks* were being appropriated one after the other, nomadic husbandry became irrelevant to the needs of the Greek state. Once *tseligkata* lost their other half –the *chiftliks*- their survival was dubious. And arguably, it became even more dubious when the summer pastures of the *tseligkes* were transformed into family farmlands for refugees, who would not give access to the herds, since their small fields were the sole means of sustenance they had in their possession. It is now much easier to understand, the infuriated *archi-tseligkas* from the little restaurant in Giannitsa, who loudly proclaimed his intention to register himself as Romanian. From there on, one could only survive at the expense of the other, either the nomadic *tseligkes* or the refugee farmers. And the state openly favored the latter.

At this point we should re-introduce an old actor of this thesis: The Greek Agricultural Society. In the midst of the aforementioned situation, in 1925, while

²⁶³ For the extent of the Macedonian or Salonikan Front during WWI see: Cyril Falls, *Military Operations Macedonia: From the Outbreak of War to Spring, 1917, v.1*, London, Imperial War Museum, 1992 and for a confirmation as to where the winter pastures for the Macedonia's *tseligkes* were located Syrakis, 1925, 661.

²⁶⁴ Syrakis, 1925, 738. Also for a wider scope on the subject of *tseligkes*, their peculiar style of living and their working ethos see: Aravantinos Panagiotis, *Monografia peri Koutsovlachon [Monography on the Koutsovlachs]*, Athens, Spyridon Kousoulinos Press, 1905, Vasilis Nitsiakos, *Paradosiakes Koinonikes Domes [Traditional Social Structures]*, Athens, Isnafi, 2016, Georgios Thanopoulos, *Agrotiki kai Poimeniki Zoi stin Ellada [Agricultural and Pastoral life in Greece]*, *Dimosios kai Idiotikos Vios stin Ellada II [Public and Private Life in Greece II]*, Patras, E.A.P., 2002. Also for a more updated look at the remaining nomadic shepherds in Macedonia, which also stresses that the issue lay between nationalism and production structures see: Claudia Chang, *Pastoral Transhumance in the Southern Balkans as a Social Ideology: Ethnoarcheological Research in Northern Greece*, *American Anthropologist*, 95, 3, 1993, 687-703.

tseligkes were seeing the impending disintegration of their *modus operandi*, the Agricultural Society published one of the most insightful and complete studies on the subject of nomadic husbandry. In fact, it was not merely an abstract book written by dry bureaucrats who processed complex situations and matters in terms of numbers and statistics. Much more than that, it was an analysis which was grounded on a local level, containing actual persons in real circumstances. This is stated firmly in the short introduction to the book:

For this particular research and collection of all the elements necessary to obtaining this goal, we toured all the husbandry-heavy provinces of the country (Thessaly, Macedonia, Epirus, Central Greece), where we managed to comprehend the real state of affairs concerning the nomadic husbandry, after coming into contact with nomad shepherds, both in the plains and on the mountains.

Throughout our tours we sought to leave nothing unquestioned. We rushed everywhere, whenever possible and we repeatedly enter in shepherds' huts in order for nothing to escape our attention. We believe that we achieved that goal, despite the anticipated shortcomings that are associated with such research that was arranged in haste.²⁶⁵

The book was written by Dimosthenis Syrakis who was far from irrelevant to the subject. He was the Ministry of Agriculture's General Inspector and in this position he was responsible for providing the state with an outline of what must be done with everything related to agriculture in Greece. The study itself is not particularly extensive, almost one hundred and thirty pages long, and it was initially published as part of the 169th issue of Agricultural Bulletin of the Society for the year 1925. Later in the same year, perhaps because of its thoroughness, it was also published as a separate booklet.

The fact that this study was meant to be read as a guide for a necessary course of state action did not mean that it did not contain a nationalist agenda. In fact, nationalism is the only thing we encounter as we go through the first twenty pages of the book. Syrakis divided the *tseligkes* (although he never calls them by that name, preferring the term nomadic shepherds) into four categories, according to their alleged race. Thus, we have the Sarakatsani, the Arvanitovlachs, the Vlachs or Koutsovlach and the Peasants, the last category being an odd one since it contains all the unclassifiable nomadic shepherds. The author then proceeded to analyze each one of these types of nomads on the basis of whether they are Greek or not. And thus we have

²⁶⁵ Syrakis, 1925, 652.

the Sarakatsani who are of “unquestionable Greek descent, only speaking the Hellenic language” and who, according to him, came from the ancient village of Sakaretsi in Epirus.²⁶⁶ Additionally, in an attempt to praise their Greek ethos, Syrakis claims that Sarakatsani were one of the first ethnic groups that took up the arms against the conquerors when Greece was under the “Ottoman yoke” while now, in 1925, they were the guardians of the nation along the Macedonian frontier, as they had kept their Greek language and culture intact in an area that was predominantly Slavic.²⁶⁷

Next in his evaluation of nationalist convictions came the Arvanitovlachs who were generally described in an unfavorable light. They were culturally Albanians who had been converted to Islam by the Ottomans and during the Macedonian Struggle of 1903-1908 they had declared their allegiance to the Romanian state acting as agents for its benefit:

[...] The Arvanitovlachs show aversion and hatred toward the Greek race to the point where they never accepted developing kinship with them.” This seems to be true if one take into account that the Romanian propagandists recruited [militants] from their ranks and assembled guerilla warbands in order for them to fight against Hellenism in Macedonia and to force Helleno-Vlachs to join their propaganda.²⁶⁸

By the term “Helleno-Vlachs” Syrakis meant the Vlachs or Koutsovlachs whom we find in his analysis right after the Arvanitovlachs. In this case the author really went out of his way to prove their Greek nationality, mainly because it was commonly accepted at the time that Vlachs were descended from the province of Wallachia which belonged to the Romanian state. He presented an array of arguments. That the Vlachs were descendants of border guards that protected travelers from Rome to Constantinople during the Roman and Byzantine era; that they were not Slavs but in fact the victims of the Slav wave that drowned the Balkan peninsula after the ninth century A.D.; that their name (Vlachs) has nothing to do with Romanian Wallachia but it was adopted because of the constant bleating of their sheep (which in ancient Greek is *vlichos*). After all these reasons he eventually subscribed to the more mainstream

²⁶⁶ Ibid, 656.

²⁶⁷ Ibid, 660-661.

²⁶⁸ Ibid, 662.

nationalist opinion, expressed by a Greek historian, K. I. Amantos, that Vlachs were just Hellenized Illyrians and Thracians.²⁶⁹

Finally, for the last category of nomadic shepherds, the one he just labeled as Peasants, Syrakis noted in a rather arbitrary fashion, that they were “pure Hellenes, originating from several villages in which they have permanent residences and which they abandon in the fall in order to go to their winter pastures and come back in spring for their summer pastures”. At the end of his analysis of the different kinds of shepherds, Syrakis also presented a small statistical chart about the four categories. He claimed that in Greece there were thirteen thousand shepherd families (the majority of them of course in Macedonia) of which: the Sarakatsanoi (“unquestionably Greek”) numbered 5956, the Koutsovlachs (“Hellenized Illyrians”) 3409, the Peasants (“Pure Hellenes”) 4549 and finally, the Arvanitovlachs, the most openly non-Greek subgroup and subsequently the one more likely to claim minority rights, not surprisingly, only numbered 786.

Whether Syrakis was right in his brief ethnographical pursuits is irrelevant. What really matters is the eagerness with which he tried to nullify any possible effort on the part of the *tseligkes* to declare a different nationality. In order to make his argument more believable, he even admitted the existence of a minority which was however too miniscule to be seriously considered an actual minority. Although, if put into its historical context, such an endeavor is completely understandable. It was not only the aforementioned *Politis-Kalfov Protocol* that gave the Greek state sleepless nights in 1925. One year earlier, the Communist Party of Greece, the Greek section of the Communist International, had openly recognized the presence of minorities in Macedonia and advocated for the secession of the province.²⁷⁰ This was not all. In February 1925, on the first page of the newspaper “Macedonia” we find a large article, written by a certain “K.D. Karavvidis” which mentions that:

A few days ago, it became known that a committee comprised of vlachophone shepherds left for Romania for two reasons, as it was said: Firstly, to complain about the unfair treatment on the part of the Macedonian Authorities toward them, and secondly, to discuss facilitating their immigration.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 664-672.

²⁷⁰ For more on this particular topic see: Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991 as well as Alexandros Dagkas, Georgios Leontiadis, *Komintern kai Makedoniko Zitima [Comintern and the Macedonian Question]*, Athens, Epikentro, 2008.

This committee already reached Romania, as illustrated in an article published in “Universul” [a prominent nationalist Romanian newspaper] concerning their pleas. In this article we find that “the position of Vlachs in Macedonia became very difficult”, that “the Greek authorities decided to drive them out of their lands” and that “they were forced to sell their livestock at humiliating prices.”²⁷¹

The author’s name was not K.D. Karavvidis, of course. Instead, it was the famous K.D. Karavidas, the intellectual and bureaucrat whose opinions on agricultural matters had so influenced the resettlement process in Macedonia. In this article, he demonstrated his reluctance toward *tseligkes*,²⁷² as he had also done so in all clarity multiple times in the past. His opinions did not emanate from racial hatred though, but from a deep-seated belief that their model of production neither fit nor complemented the one that was pursued by the state.

This was however where shepherds themselves debunked Syrakis’ narrative of almost all *tseligkes* being devoted and zealous Greeks. Even if we believe that the delegate who went to Romania, as Karavidas described, did not represent the entirety of the Macedonian nomadic shepherds, one could hardly expect Macedonian shepherds to be grateful toward the Greek state. The reason is very simple and can be found on the last page of Syrakis’ study, where the author straightforwardly claims that nomadic husbandry in Macedonia should be reduced by 60% of the overall population of shepherds and their herds in the province. If we translate this into numbers, based on statistical data provided by Syrakis himself, this means that more than 1800 families and 360,000 sheep and goats should somehow either find their way out of Macedonia or just take their chances, sell their livestock and settle down as farmers. By doing that, though they would probably face difficult odds as, firstly, they did not possess the agricultural know-how to achieve such a big shift, and, secondly at the time, priority for land was given to refugees, rather than nationally-wavering *tseligkes*.²⁷³ Syrakis was not the only one who openly called for such huge changes in

²⁷¹ K.D. Karavvidis, “Ktinotrofia kai Aromounoi: I moiraia ekseliksisi kai to katantima” [“Husbandry and Arromanians: The inescapable progress and the abjection”], *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, 12/2, 1925

²⁷² What is odd, however, is the author’s bias against the shepherds. Judging by a book that he published in 1931, *Agrotika*, Karavidas was overly sympathetic toward the way of life of *tseligkes* since they avoided the capitalist market in their transactions, or just used it whenever necessary but were not defined by it in the same way that the small estate owners were. In this article though, he expressed an opinion completely opposite to that, asserting that the old systems of production, *chifliks* and *tseligkata*, must be abolished in order for progress to take their place. If true, and this is actually Karavidas signing the article, it seems that his ideas radically changed over the course of only five or six years.

²⁷³ Syrakis, 1925, 761.

the way that a considerable part of the populace was living. The RSC fully backed him on this. In a special report evaluating all that had been done up until 1924, the Commission concluded that:

Indisputably, nomadic husbandry has to yield its position in favor of agricultural exploitation and settled husbandry. Equally indisputably, however, this supersession must be done gradually in order not to shake the national economy.

It would also be wise to talk about whether it would be sound for Greece, in terms of wealth-generation, to completely annihilate nomadic husbandry due to “her” mostly mountainous terrain.²⁷⁴

Karavidas in one of his many (unpublished) treatises also confirms these ominous intentions. While describing the situation in the prefecture of Edessa, one of the areas that still maintained robust non-Greek populations, Karavidas states, as a man who knows inside information, that the decision to favor refugees over nomadic shepherds has been taken. More precisely, he referred to a number of villages, the adjacent lands of which were used as pastures by Sarakatsan nomadic shepherds. The shepherds were seeking to buy the land, probably from the local *chiflik* owner. But it was a transaction that never came to fruition, since it seems that the state blocked it in order to plant refugees in the area.²⁷⁵

Another extraordinary element that must be considered in terms of how *tseligkes* were seen by the state and its delegates, as well as by independent journalists, is the characterization of the nomadic shepherds as still being semi-barbarous people. This is not of minor importance, because as we will see the accusation of barbarity was at the core of many arguments against the *tseligkes*. This, however, became a prominent opinion only after the Greek state was posed with the threat of them registering as non-Greeks, from 1924 on. In fact, just one year earlier, in April 1923, the newspaper *Macedonia* published a main article that defended the shepherds’ rights *vis-à-vis* those of the refugees, and bore the illustrative title “Double Standards”. The author of the article is unknown and just signed as A.T. but, as commonly happened with the main articles in a newspaper, his opinion might have reflected the opinion of the editor-in-chief or even the owner of the newspaper. It is also possible that the author used such a

²⁷⁴ Karavidas Archive, Folder 7, Subfolder 2, Document Έκθεσις Ειδικής Επιτροπής επί του προβλήματος της εγκατάστασης των προσφύγων.

²⁷⁵ Karavidas Archive, Folder 4, Subfolder 2, Document Έκθεσις περί της καταστάσεως των επί του Βόρρα (Καϊμάκ – Τσαλάν) και περί την Έδεσσαν πληθυσμών’.

minimalist pseudonym because his opinion could be regarded as unpopular. What A.T. stated in his article is rather interesting. He asserted that the *tseligkes* of Macedonia should be supported by the state, as being one of the social groups that were about to experience the very negative effects of the population exchange firsthand. At the same time he claimed that:

Firstly, we must not think that our shepherd is this primitive man dressed in animal pelts and only feeds himself with the milk of his sheep.

We would not say that he is Hellene. However, he is the progressive modern shepherd who follows the developments of the modern way of life, even from afar, and who has in fact served in our army, and has seen, learned and been accustomed to living by civilized standards.

And for those reasons the shepherd seeks to see the improvement of the conditions [necessary] to the development of his livestock.²⁷⁶

But it seems that A.T. was perhaps one of the very few commentators at the time who supported the rights of *tseligkes*. Karravidas, in the same article that was mentioned before, claimed that *tseligkes* rightfully disappeared wherever civilized institutions established their presence in the land.²⁷⁷ Syrakis' opinion on the matter was not much different. Throughout his treatise he never missed the opportunity to emphasize the fact that nomad shepherds were completely ignorant and primitive savages who dwelled in huts made of grass and twigs and followed a poor diet that was based on cornbread. Moreover, Syrakis, in either a false reading of what really happened or a conscious attempt to propagate against them, accused *tseligkes* of taking advantage of the turmoil that was caused by the Balkan Wars and the First World War in Macedonia, in order to take over lands that had been left uncultivated and unattended, either by conscripts or by fleeing peasants.²⁷⁸

As the extent of cultivated and arable lands increased, those accessible to the pastures inescapably decreased. Shepherds realized that they did not have many alternatives left. Some of them just migrated to more friendly states, basically relocating their *tseligkata*, as happened in 1925, when thirty families, en bloc, decided to abandon Macedonia and head to Romania (perhaps the immediate result of the

²⁷⁶ A.T., "Dyo Metra kai Dyo Stathma" ["Double Standards"], *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, 28-29/4, 1923

²⁷⁷ Karavvidis, *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, 12/2, 1925.

²⁷⁸ Syrakis, 1925, 673-675.

aforementioned delegate who negotiated with the Romanian government, which had taken place only two months earlier).²⁷⁹ Others, among them the better-off who also probably had strong political ties with local elites, were allowed to buy land to use as their winter pastures.²⁸⁰ Both these courses of action were not so common, though. What seems to have occurred more often were disputes between all possible sides and actors, disputes that significantly intensified after 1925. In one such case, the newspaper *Macedonia* reported on skirmishes between refugee farmers and shepherds in the prefecture of Kilkis and called for the authorities to intervene in order to avoid serious violence.²⁸¹ Moreover, refugees adopted an officially anti-*tseligkes* stance, when the Refugee General Assembly of 1925 explicitly demanded the abolition of rent controls for pastures that favored nomadic shepherds.²⁸² In a similar case, *tseligkes* had to fight against the local agricultural cooperatives in order to maintain their right to the land. This happened in Kolindros, a small village in Central Macedonia, where an *arche-tseligkas* managed to rent a large estate that was claimed at the same time by the village's agricultural cooperative. The author of the article, who signed with the peculiar pseudonym "Accountable" and who openly sided with the farmers also lamented that:

Because of all that, the cooperative spirit of the farmer is impaired without even him realizing it. In fact, if this indifference on the part of the authorities continues [the cooperative spirit] will totally vanish! And then the result will not only be sad for the farmer but also for the state, which will find itself in Jeremiah's position, among the ruins of its labor.²⁸³

Disputes between refugee farmers and *tseligkes* were not the only ones that occurred though. These were almost inescapable due to what many commentators at the time called "the narrowness" of the Macedonian lands and the fact that both farmers and *tseligkes* now had to share equally an ecosystem that could not sustain both of them. What was harder perhaps for the authorities to predict was the tension that rose among the *tseligkata*. As the situation for nomadic shepherds became more difficult by the day, a race broke out for the remaining rentable pastures located in the

²⁷⁹ Unknown, "Vlachoi Ktinotrofoi sti Roumania" ["Vlach Shepherds in Romania"], *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, 4/4, 1925.

²⁸⁰ Unknown, "Eparchiaki Zoi Apo tin Aikaterinin" ["Rural Life from Aikaterini"], *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, 28/10, 1925.

²⁸¹ Unknown, "Eleftherai kai timiai" ["Free and Honorable"], *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, 5/11, 1926

²⁸² Unknown, "I cthesini geniki syneleusi ton prosfygon" [Yesterday's general assembly of the refugees], *Makedonika Nea [Macedonian News]*, 30/1, 1925.

²⁸³ Accountable, "Apo ton Kolindro" ["From Kolindros"], *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, 9/5, 1925.

also few remaining *chiftliks* in Macedonia.²⁸⁴ It seems that some *chiftlik* rulers attempted to exploit this competition to their advantage. In December 1925, in the village Saritsi (present day Valtochori), half way between Thessaloniki and Giannitsa, two large groups of *tseiligkes* clashed with each other with clubs and truncheons. There were even police reports that mentioned a revolver and a shotgun brandished by two assailants. Two shepherds were slightly injured during this rural brawl that could easily have been much worse. The reason was simple enough. The local estate owner, an Ottoman subject named Tahsin Besar, had rented out the same plot of land to two different *tseiligkes*. With one of them, he had made an official contract, while the other relied only on a verbal agreement with Besar.²⁸⁵

Other incidents that took place in numerous parts of Macedonia from around that time made the life of nomadic shepherds even more difficult. These incidents were not always land-related though. This time it was simply a matter of countering Romanian nationalist propaganda. Word had it, ever since Greece had annexed Macedonia, that Romanian nationalists lurked in the dark along with their Bulgarian counterparts, undermining peace and prosperity in the province. This meant that Slavophones did not monopolize the receiving of abusive acts coming from Greek state agents. Romano-phones were also fair game for them. In Chapter 3.1 we saw one such incident, which involved a posse of Greek policemen, entering a village, torturing and abducting villagers while under the command of a paranoid postman. But what was the reason that agitated the tranquility of a small village? Unfortunately, this piece of information is not given. Based on several other incidents that took place on later dates at the same region, which included a cluster of villages that served as permanent residence for *tseiligkes* and their families, the issue between the state and many peasants was that the latter wanted to attend their own Romano-phone mass, in either Greek or exclusively Romano-phone churches.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁴ The legal status of the *chiftliks* was not recognized by the Greek state, but the terminology persisted in the Greek press in order to define the large estates that were still owned by Ottoman subjects. Also, even more importantly, the term *chiftlik* became synonymous with backwardness and oppression and was used by Greek journalists who wanted to emphasize the alleged unwillingness of the state to bring rural Macedonia into modernity.

²⁸⁵ Second Lieutenant Fragiadakis, "Ai skinai tou choriou Saritsi" ["The scenes of Saritsi village"], *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, 28/12, 1925.

²⁸⁶ GRGSA-IAM_ADM001.01_000091_00067-69
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The state's problem was not, of course, of an ecclesiastical nature. Besides, both dogmas were Orthodox. Instead, it was a matter of influence. Both the ethnically homogenous *tseligkata* and the closed religious masses represented organized structures in which Romanian nationalism could thrive and potentially convert "Greek" peasants to its cause. Although in retrospect we can say that Romanian nationalist propaganda received more credit than it deserved from the Greek authorities, small but accumulating incidents like this added fuel to the fire of ethnic hatred. Even as late as 1929, when the scales were tilted in favor of the state and as a large number of *tseligkes* were leaving the country, the Greek secret police continued to target Romano-phones as threats to the establishment. A confidential letter, addressed to the Prefect of Edessa, drafted on August 29, 1929 proves this. It is comprised of two lists, naming all the peasants (and shepherds) that had decided to migrate. The first list contained the names of those who were deemed "non-dangerous", whereas the second marks only the "dangerous" ones, at the same time noting that "most of them fed *Comitadjis*", namely agents of IMRO. Whether this "feeding" refers to actual supplying or giving information is hard to say.²⁸⁷

The sense of their fate was dawning for the shepherds of Macedonia as they were losing the undeclared war that the state had waged against them. At this point, primary sources suggested that the problem was not their wavering or hostile national-consciousness anymore. It is possible that the *tseligkes* had already lost the allies they might have had in the past, in terms of diplomacy. From now on, the biggest issue that the Greek state had with the *tseligkes* was their mobility and the ways they used it. To be more precise, moving between the Balkan states was still allowed for nomadic shepherds but was regulated and agreed upon by bilateral agreements between governments. There were times when *tseligkes* attempted to use that to their advantage or to promote their demands. One common practice they employed was attempting to create artificial meat and dairy shortages in the market, thereby increasing the value of their products. Or at least this was what many commentators who were opposed to them saw. As a journalist wrote in the newspaper *Macedonia*, definitely hostile to the *tseligkes*:

Despite the measures that have been taken by those responsible in order to bring butchers to trial and to punish them, we did not see meat in the market. And why: Because apart from the severity of the

²⁸⁷ GRGSA-IAM_ADM001.01_000071_0002_00014

regulations, a deeper assessment and understanding of the situation is needed. We do not have meat because the carcasses are smuggled by the shepherds to wherever is more profitable to sell them.

Therefore, instead of the simple breadwinner butchers getting punished, the authorities should go against the shepherds [...].²⁸⁸

The remedy that the Greek authorities proposed for such actions that jeopardized the stability of prices in the Greek and especially the Macedonian market was as simple as it was effective. State officials sought to nullify the advantage that *tseligkes* had due to the transnational character of their occupation. As the years passed by, Greek governments started replacing nomadic shepherds with settled ones, either drawing them from the ranks of the refugee populations or encouraging the settling down of nomadic ones. This is illustrated in a small article written in 1926 by Ioannis Karamanos an agronomist and politician who at the time was serving as the Director General for the committee that managed all the refugee resettlement issues in Greece. In the article he claimed that:

It has been reiterated so many times that the restriction of nomadic husbandry will lead to the reduction of the husbandry-related wealth of the country. I insist upon the contrary. And I bring you some numbers taken from what is actually happening. During 1925, the [already resettled] refugees of the Nestos prefecture owned 3 thousand sheep and goats. Today they amount to 11 thousand. They almost quadrupled. And the increase in the number of the big beasts [oxen and horses] is similar.²⁸⁹

While settled husbandry was developing, however, the nomadic one was undergoing serious restrictions. Nomadic shepherds, members of *tseligkata* that decided to continue operating in Greece and not leave for other states, also had to settle down in order to survive. In the best of cases, the *arche-tseligkas*, seeing the brewing storm, had done so while still circumstances were favorable to them, by striking good deals with *chiflik* estate owners who had migrated to Asia Minor, buying parts of their lands for pasture and settling their herds.²⁹⁰ In other instances, both once mighty *arche-tseligkes* as well as mere members of the *tseligkato* were not due a very easy transition. Being forced to give up a life of mobility for one of agricultural sedentariness could have both positive and negative sides. However, having to part ways with the largest part of your herd, in order to fit into the local community's guidelines and capabilities

²⁸⁸ Correspondent, "Elleipsis Kreation" ["Meat Shortage"], *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, 17/6, 1925.

²⁸⁹ Karamanos, "To zitima ton gaion" ["The land issue"], *Makedonia [Macedonia]*, 29/10, 1926.

²⁹⁰ Dionysis Mavrogiannis, *Oi Sarakatsanoi Thrakis, Kentrikis kai Anatolikis Makedonias [The Sarakatsans of Thrace, Central and Eastern Macedonia]*, Athina-Giannena, Dodoni, 1999.

was surely a sign of downward social mobility. Furthermore, the fact that former *tseligkes* had to live in communities with which they had come into conflict with in the past, due to land-related issues, was a sign that they had admitted defeat. Anastasia Karakasidou describes one such an awkward transition that unfolded gradually in a village of Central Macedonia.

Initially, nomadic shepherds benefited from the regime change in Macedonia after 1913. The lands of the village, administered by the local ruling elite, were auctioned for grazing grounds to a large number of Sarakatsan shepherds, as a communally more lucrative business, compared to cultivation. As happened everywhere in Macedonia though, the events of 1922 and 1923 ended this blissful era. The Greek state, on behalf of the RSC appropriated thousands of *stremmata* in order to host the waves of refugees who were set to resettle in the region. Apart from a shortage of pasture, the shepherds also had to face the new refugee smallholders who were now complaining about the crop damage that was being done by the Sarakatsan herds. After 1928 the township had officially forbidden nomadic shepherds from private lands, and there to impose this decision were crop-watchers, an institution that can only be described as a rural police force. Even more importantly, while all those measures were being taken against nomads, a new class of settled stock-breeders started evolving in the village, offering the community the same products as their nomadic counterparts did, but without any of the damage they caused.²⁹¹ Before too long, local herd-owners became capable of actively participating in the decision-making of the village, which gave them the advantage they needed to restrict the Sarakatsan shepherds even further. By 1931 they had managed to gain access to the village's main pasture field, 5,000 *stremmata* wide, at the same time blocking access to the nomads. From that point on, rooting them out was only a matter of time and of a bureaucratic battle that was played out in the country's courts. In an eloquent concluding remark, finally, the author notes that "by 1940, the Sarakatsan leader had only 115 sheep left" having started from many thousands back in the early 1920's.²⁹²

As this small story illustrated, by the early 1930's Macedonian nomadic shepherds had nowhere to go. The resettlement of the refugees had been completed,

²⁹¹ Unfortunately, whether this new class emanated from refugees or former nomadic shepherds is not given.

²⁹² Anastasia N. Karakasidou, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood: Passages to nationhood in Greek Macedonia 1870-1990*, Chicago & London, The University of Chicago Press, 1997, 179-182.

as almost all of them had already settled cultivating small estates either in the plains or in lands that were being claimed thanks to the drainage of swamps, marshes and wetlands throughout Macedonia (most notably Giannitsa Lake and the Philippos Marshlands). The whole province was in fact starting to resemble the productive and lush Garden of Eden that Greek nationalists had fantasized about back in 1913, though less in terms of intensified production than in terms of cultivated lands. There were few regions that could still be perceived as frontiers and, unsurprisingly, it was there where the remaining *tseligkes* tried to find refuge. Most of the times those regions were high altitude plateaus and forests close to the northern borders of the state. However, the long arm of the state would not let them find peace. It tried to encroach on these shepherds' last strongholds, bearing discourses of modernity and civilization, this time using forests as its façade.

It is unknown why so many state officials became all at once so engrossed in forests. Whether they were influenced by similar discourses and publications that at the time were prominent in Europe or they developed a true environmental concern about forests or they even used forests as a legitimizing excuse to further harm the *tseligkes* is debatable.²⁹³ What is undoubtedly a fact is that during the 1930's, especially from 1930 to 1935, the publication of books and studies concerning forests rose sharply. And in order to give a fitting epilogue to this chapter that presented the steady and gradual expulsion of nomadic shepherds from Macedonia I will focus on two publications that strongly emphasized the perils that nomadic husbandry held for Greek forests. In both studies the argument is more or less the same: Nomadic husbandry, especially goat husbandry, was to be blamed for the devastation of forests as irresponsible *tseligkes* kept using high altitude woodlands as grazing grounds, therefore suspending their natural growth. In turn, cachectic forests also negatively affected agriculture and the national economy in general, since their absence would lead to the inescapable formation of torrents that would cause excessive damage to the cultivated lowlands. Those two studies were written in order to address the

²⁹³ Many historians have tackled this particular subject, interestingly, focusing upon discourses and actions that emanated from authoritarian regimes. For a remarkably brief overview see: Marco Armiero, Wilko Graf von Hardenberg "Green Rhetoric in Blackshirts: Italian Fascism and the Environment", *Environment and History*, v 19-3, 2013, 283-311.

Peter Staudenmaier, "Fascist Ecology: The "Green Wing" of the Nazist Party and its Historical Antecedents, *Ecofascism Revisited: Lessons from the German Experience*, 2011, 13-42 and Tiago Saraiva, "Fascist Modernist Landscapes: Wheat, Dams, Forests, and the Making of the Portuguese New State", *Environmental History*, v 21-1, 2015, 54-75.

problem at a national level. However, direct references located in the texts show that Macedonia in particular was on the minds of both authors most of the time.

The more moderate out of the two was written by Antonios Andrianopoulos and published in 1932 in the Agricultural Bulletin of the Ministry of Agriculture, the official publication of the ministry that came out every three months. Andrianopoulos himself was not at all a stranger to the ministry of course. At the time he wrote this piece he was serving as General Inspector of Forests for the Greek government. In his short fifteen-page long study which was titled “The Forest, Agriculture and Husbandry” the author reproduced the already old argument of how modern Greece must seek to abolish “her” backward past and become civilized by the standards of the West. This is why, as we will see, the only points of reference for the author are states like Switzerland, Norway and Germany. In fact, in his opening statement about husbandry he admired Germany’s social ethos claiming that:

Husbandry constitutes an important national capital and generates important national income. No one can ignore this reality; however, in this world the existence and progress of one should not prevent the life and progress of another.

In Germany, the first lesson that a child receives is that the main element and characteristic of the civilized world is that one must not harm the other. [...] Because husbandry, the way it is practiced in Hellas nowadays, harms the forest and the agriculture [...] And because of that we can claim that, on this front we still maintain an uncivilized [barbaric] situation.²⁹⁴

The rest of the study revolves around why *tseligkes* constitute such a threat to the Greek forests, as their goats “can only be fed by tender sprigs and leaves of young trees and bushes” in woodlands, preventing the rejuvenation of the forest, to the point where eventually “the forest disappears”. The proposed solution was an old recipe that we have already seen before: Cutting down, even further, the number of nomadic shepherds. In an effort to defend his position, however, Andrianopoulos argued that the ideal answer to the forest issue would be for the forestry department to just examine and establish certain areas where grazing would be prohibited. However, in the words of the author:

This impinges on two things. First of all, those grazing grounds are located high on the mountains, where no one steps foot, while shepherds almost consider it bad luck not to graze their animals in the

²⁹⁴ Antonios Andrianopoulos, *To Dasos, I Georgia kai I Ktinotrofia [The Forest, Agriculture and Husbandry]*, Athens, National Printing House, 1932, 8.

prohibited locations, which, besides has the best blossoms for their goats. Who will keep an eye on them to prevent them from going into the forbidden land? The forester? If so, the forester must also bring a cape [commonly worn by *tseligkes* at the time] with him and follow the shepherd day and night, and the state should have an equal number of foresters as there are shepherds. But this cannot be done.²⁹⁵

And because this truly could not be done, Andrianopoulos already had the phrase that solved everything in hand. “[...] nomadic husbandry –at least for goats- must vanish and be replaced by stable [settled] husbandry”. This strong assertion of his was furthermore charged by stereotypes of civilization and diligence as opposed to the primitive and slothful life of the shepherds, from ancient times until now.

Andrianopoulos’ study was not pseudoscience. Attributing that label to him would be particularly unfair. In this short text we see him developing issues that were actually relevant at the time and regarded as of immense importance all over Europe and particularly in Macedonia, whose agricultural production had been totally destroyed several times over the course of the previous decade due to excessive floods. Although, while he was not of course a charlatan, the fact that his research about woodland degradation only presented nomadic shepherds as responsible for this could make his credentials seem a little suspicious. Forests at the time were subject to all kinds of manipulation. Illegal logging, both for building materials and firewood, along with rampant land clearings performed by ill-equipped farmers and villagers using fire to claim more arable fields were also very common and equally, if not more, unforgiving towards Greek forests. But this was not the subject of his study. Nor indeed, the subject of any study published from 1930 to 1935. That said we should not expect anything brand new from the next text that will be presented. In fact, the general guidelines are the same, the discourse differs only a little and the recommended solutions move along familiar lines. What changes though, is the language used by the author and the severity with which he talked against the *tseligkes* of Macedonia from his office in Athens.

His name was Anastasios Kofiniotis, the son of Evaggelos Kofiniotis, a prominent intellectual figure of the 19th century. Unlike his father, who was an amateur geography enthusiast, Anastasios Kofiniotis became an agronomist and entered the state apparatus. In 1933 we find him serving as General Inspector of Forests, the exact

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 12.

same position that Andrianopoulos held only one year earlier. It is unknown how many years he remained in that position and it must be said that the political instability in Greece at the time probably did not favor a long career in any ministry. However, during his first year in office Kofiniotis published his one and only study that was titled “Forests and Torrents”. Even though husbandry is completely missing from the title, it is very much present in the content of Kofiniotis’ work, as we will see. What is even more remarkable is that “Forests and Torrents” was published directly by the national printing house of the state and was the result of a Ministerial Decision issued by the Minister of Agriculture, Theotokis. The Decision can be found in the first page of the study and it also provides us with even more information:

Decree

Minister of Agriculture

After taking article 157 of Law 4137 “on Forestry Code [Codex]” into account we approve the pro-Forest propaganda study of our Inspector of Forests Mr. A. Kofiniotis “Forests and Torrents”, to be printed in twenty-five thousand copies (25.000) by the National Printing House and to be distributed free of charge wherever seems fit, for the sake of the development of a pro-forest ethos among the People.

The Minister

I. Theotokis ²⁹⁶

In his study Kofiniotis’ aim is to provide a popularized and practical explanation of how destructive torrents are linked to the decline of forested areas. Judging by the informal language that he used, along with the explicit mention that is found in the Ministerial Decision, the study was intended to be read by as many as possible, unlike Andrianopoulos’ work that probably never left the hands and eyes of state officials. Moreover, in “Forests and Torrents” the author explicitly and from the very beginning introduces the “enemies” -as he called them- of the forest: “[...] these are the fireplace, the land-clearings and especially nomadic husbandry, the latter being the head of this quartet”.²⁹⁷ But even though the other two forest-damaging culprits are evaluated in one or two pages, nomadic husbandry takes the lion’s share of attention and hostility alike. Kofiniotis’ first remarks on the subject are worth citing:

²⁹⁶ Anastasios Kofiniotis, *Dasi kai Cheimarroi [Forests and Torrents]*, Athens, National Printing House, 1933, 2.

²⁹⁷ It is unclear why Kofiniotis mentions a “quartet” while he presented only three “enemies”. *Ibid.*, 3.

The biggest bane of the Hellenic forest however is *nomadic husbandry* [emphasis original], remnant of man's primitive era, when he domesticated the sheep and the goat and started creating herds in order to tend to his needs. Later [...] he exploited the countryside undisturbed attributed to the laziness of nomadic shepherds.

At this point he employed Aristotle and Homer in his fight against the *tseligkes*:

As Aristotle says in his *Politics* about them: "The laziest are shepherds, who lead an idle life, and get their subsistence without trouble from tame animals" while Homer, in the *Odyssey* states "and the land remained unplowed, unsown, unseeded, yielding no harvest of any sort"

He then added ironically:

This is the nomadic shepherd, the grand tycoon of the countryside.

The well-meant, the lad, the straightforward say those who just exchange a "good morning" with him. The cunning, the suspicious, the boorish, the misanthrope say those who have transactions with him. The tyrant of the countryside, alone or with his dogs and the protector of brigands, by sympathy, need or just habit, say the travelers. The contributor to the increase of the national income [...] say the, wrongly estimating, economists.

A superficial research would keep us from trying to find decorative adjectives and would restrict ourselves to using only one. "*Shepherd the Forest-destroyer*" [emphasis original] [...].

Truly the biggest scourge of the Greek countryside is nomadic husbandry [emphasis original].²⁹⁸

Like Andrianopoulos and many other state agents before him, Kofiniotis favored replacing nomadic husbandry with a family-based low-intensity one, where each family would possess a very small number of milk-producing goats and sheep, along with chickens, geese and rabbits. As he also stated in his text, he did not seek the annihilation of *tseligkes*, but the drastic decrease in their number and restriction of their areas of operation, all these because the well-being of the Greek forests was at stake. As has been mentioned already, the study did not explicitly focus upon a certain region or province. It is quite easy however to see that Kofiniotis was mostly concerned with Macedonia, and especially the region around Giannitsa where at the time a lake was being drained in order for the lands to be distributed to refugee families.²⁹⁹ This is perhaps the reason why he stressed the topic of refugees establishing their own small-

²⁹⁸ Ibid., 5.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 17, 24.

scale husbandry units in order to render themselves independent from the *tseligkes*. As it had happened, in the past *tseligkes* had had a strong presence in the area around the lake, and had threatened the prospective flourishing of the area by ruining the forests surrounding it, thus increasing the danger of flood occurrence. In his effort to make this understood, he even cited a speech given by Mussolini in 1928, during the inauguration of the drainage works in Reggio (probably Reggio Emilia) where the “Italian Dictator” promised that the surrounding mountains would be forested in order for the farmers to go about their tasks undisturbed.³⁰⁰ Finally, the study ended with charts, allegedly proving that Greece, in terms of forest management and afforestation, was the most backward of all the neighboring nation-states, and with photographs illustrating the damages inflicted by torrents.³⁰¹

The list of forest-related publications is nowhere near exhausted with the studies of Andrianopoulos and Kofiniotis. There were many others as well. Some were written by forest specialists and academics, such as Petros Kontos, one of the most prominent forest experts at the time, some were purely scientific and were intended for a knowledgeable readership, while others described Greek forests in a more lyrical and romantic ways that highlighted the importance of woodlands in ancient Greek times. None of them failed to declare *tseligkes* as an element that should be driven out from the Greek countryside, however.³⁰²

Not all *tseligkes* fell under this category though. There was one particular type of *tseligkata* that did not draw fire from state officials, agricultural intellectuals and Athenian bureaucrats. Even more interestingly, this type managed not only to survive but also to thrive while all other *tseligkata* waned. They were the ones who quickly bowed to the intentions of the Greek state, whose economics were to be regulated by the Agricultural Bank rather than by an independent *arche-tseligkas*. Probably not without connections to local political elites, those *tseligkata* were openly promoted and supported by the state in return for their loyalty in achieving the goals of economic growth and national homogenization. In the annual bulletins of the Agricultural Bank,

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 20.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 27-32.

³⁰² Petros Kontos, *Dasi kai Ktinotrofia eis Ellada [Forests and Husbandry in Hellas]*, Thessaloniki, Triantafyllou Bros. Press, 1932 and Anastasios Stefanou, *Oi Dryades ton Archaion Ellinon kai ta Dasi ton Neoteron [The Dryads of the Ancient Hellenes and the Forests of the Modern]*, Thessaloniki, Triantafyllou Press Co., 1932.

a specialized bank, founded in 1929 in order to aid the state in rural financial affairs, we find references to those *tseligkata*. More precisely, in 1931 the Agricultural Bank boasted that the loans it provided to nomadic shepherds civilized some of those *tseligkata* by urging them to build sturdier sheepfolds for their herds, protecting them from rough weather at the same time securing better dairy products.³⁰³ The next year's bulletin was in fact even less modest asserting that:

Husbandry-wise, the efficiency of those improvements was made clear in 1932, when they were implemented in four exemplary *tseligkata*. Through the permanent sheepfolds, the sanitization and irrigation of pasturelands and the cheese making by the shepherds themselves, the income of those husbandry enterprises doubled. [...]

But [nomadic] husbandry was literally rescued because of the Bank's interference during the harsh winter of the previous year, when the bank undertook the import of tax-free corn which it granted on credit, mainly to shepherds in order to feed their herds, while the rest went to wheat and tobacco-producing farmers who had suffered a stroke of bad luck in the previous years.³⁰⁴

Undoubtedly, what the Banks's author wrote could actually be true. By providing loans to failing *tseligkata*, the Agricultural Bank had now become a crucial agent in the Macedonian countryside, with headquarters located in the center of Athens. At the same time however, the indebted *tseligkata* were abolishing the one characteristic that rendered them a self-sufficient community, namely their economic independence. This doleful transition, from a robust closed-circuit system of dairy-production to a bank dependent operation meant that the *tseligkata* ended up being nothing more than an empty husk of their former self; and that is exactly how this chapter must be concluded.

What has been presented here is the story of how nomadic shepherds, or *tseligkes*, were denounced by the Greek state as being a social group that was incompatible with the state's grand vision for the prosperity of Macedonia. It is interesting to see how the debate and course of action around *tseligkes* evolved. There are two major turning points we must consider in this story. The first one took place in 1923, with the advent of hundreds of thousands of refugees who were set to settle in Macedonia and become independent farmers. As A.T. at the time wrote in the newspaper *Macedonia*, *tseligkes* while not considered Greeks back then, were seen as a

³⁰³ PIOP, *Agrotiki Trapeza Tis Ellados, Apologismoi 1930-1935, Apologismos Ergasion 1931*, 16.

³⁰⁴ PIOP, *Agrotiki Trapeza Tis Ellados, Apologismoi 1930-1935, Apologismos Ergasion 1932*, 13-14.

special group worth saving. And while not Greeks, in the eyes of A.T. they had to be supported since their occupation and mode of production was rather profitable for the state's coffers. The situation changed very quickly in 1924, which constitutes the second turning point for the *tseligkes*.

This was the year when the much forgotten "Politis-Kalfov Protocol" was signed, that agreement between Greece and Bulgaria according to which Greece would have to grant minority rights to the non-Greek populations of Macedonia. Even if the Protocol was never ratified, Greek state officials realized that at any given time certain communities, for example *tseligkata*, would be able to play the minority card in order to put pressure on the Greek government for the fulfillment of their demands, as Faltaits asserted in his speech in the hall of the Parnassos Literary Society. The stance towards the *tseligkes* changed almost overnight. In 1925, when Syrakis published his very detailed inquiry on the *tseligkes*, his words were chosen very carefully. According to Syrakis, almost all of the *tseligkes* were true Greeks, but not Greeks worth saving. For they were primitive, their mode of production was not modern and their habits were barbarous. In practice it was a total reversal of A.T.'s argument. Of course, it was expected that a high state official like Syrakis would not recognize the existence of minorities in a state-funded book, but the paradox of the situation is worth noting.

From then on circumstances became grim for the *tseligkes*. Now, after being labeled as primitive remnants of the past, they were required either to abandon Greece –and some of them did- or to cope with everything they could salvage in a country that did not favor them. Fending for their interests did not get them anywhere. On the contrary, it seems that their half-hearted resistance fueled even more the state's determination to remove them from the Macedonian countryside. This is why in the final scene of this play we saw them being demonized as destroyers of the forests, probably the last ecosystem in which they could operate.

We see three different ideas being linked to the *tseligkes* over the course of ten years: Nationality, financial interest and modernity. All the arguments both for and against them revolved around those three discursive pillars. It is very hard, almost impossible even, to discern which one of them was the most decisive to the point that rendered the war that was waged against them by the state so crucial. It is also equally impossible to find which of those arguments were used as a convenient façade and

which constituted the actual reason that rendered *tseligkes* unwanted by the state or unfitting for the nation. Was it because they were “Romanians”? Was it because they were nomads? Or was it because they were “primitive”? Most likely, this question will remain unanswered. Either way from 1940 onwards, shepherds’ crooks in Macedonia had decreased substantially.

Chapter 4: The Structure and Infrastructure of National Consolidation

Chapter 4.1-Reclaiming National Soil: Environmental colonialism in a southern Macedonian swamp

This last chapter of the thesis is dedicated to a case study that examined meticulously the Giannitsa Lake and its reclamation. This reclamation constituted a huge environmental engineering project that went hand-in-hand with radical changes in the social composition of the settlements that surrounded the lake and resulted in a completely new ethnic status quo, which served the interests promoted by the Greek nation-state. The aim of this chapter is to explain how technical works, such as extensive land reclamation projects, were used to leverage political goals, despite the fact that historians often treat such projects as neutral and technocratic aspects of development. Furthermore, this chapter seeks to put such works as well as the social, political and economic repercussions they brought into a new theoretical framework, that of environmental colonialism. After stripping this concept down to its least common denominator, we will see that it describes top-down processes where states, or elites tied to a state apparatus, manipulate an environment in such a way as to favor a desirable population or indirectly to impose policies or agendas that disadvantage an unfavorable one.

Scholars have rarely used this particular term in the study of history. In the few cases that “environmental colonialism” has been preferred over other terms, the magnifying glass is sternly focused on traditional imperialist powers exploiting the natural resources of subjugated lands. Similarly, -using a more postcolonial reasoning- they might even emphasize western institutions and NGOs that try to administer environmental projects in “underdeveloped” states.³⁰⁵ Additionally, other researchers have described processes of environmental colonialism in their work, without, however, referring to the term, thus preventing the establishment of the concept as an analytical tool for historians. Francoist Spain for example has received

³⁰⁵ Nelson, R.H., 2003. Environmental Colonialism: ‘Saving’ Africa from Africans. *The Independent Review*, 8(1), pp.65-86.

much attention on this front. Historians have stressed the importance of the technical works Franco spearheaded in order to consolidate his rule over post-civil war Spain during his long dictatorship. Erik Swyngedouw in particular has repeatedly underscored the impact of hydraulic works on rural Spanish societies in regard to Franco's popularity.³⁰⁶ Similarly, Santiago Gorostiza and Miquel Cerdà very recently examined the fishing reforms that the dictator introduced in his effort to achieve the greatly desired -for every interwar dictator- autarchy, oppressing and alienating local fishermen along the way in a struggle to commodify production.³⁰⁷

In an almost identical example, Mussolini's aspirations as a dictator could also be seen through the same prism. The Italian dictator famously led the initiative to drain the Pontine Marshes near Rome in 1926, which included the extensive reclamation of lands for agricultural purposes. It was hardly only about that though. In fact, the Pontine Marshes reclamation was a monumental project that allowed Mussolini, who only recently had been appointed as Prime Minister, to resettle a large number of settlers from Northern Italy –most of them of pure fascist convictions- in an area where his dedicated followers were few, while at the same time exploiting the works-in-progress to boost his public image as a “man of the people”.³⁰⁸ In a somewhat different case-study, Jeffrey Wilson examined how the Prussian administration attempted to Germanize the people of the Kashubia and Pomerania, provinces located on the unruly Polish border that had been ceded to Prussia not long before. Even though Wilson utilizes the term “environmental chauvinism” the story that he narrates is one where German foresters strive to civilize the local peasantry by introducing the principles of modern forest management, consequently clashing with them over the abandonment of traditional logging practices.³⁰⁹ As we shall see, the same type of power dynamics applied to the Macedonian case of Giannitsa Lake: A state succeeded in controlling the fate of an “unwanted” population by altering the

³⁰⁶ Swyngedouw, E., 2007. Technonatural revolutions: the scalar politics of Franco's hydro-social dream for Spain, 1939–1975. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 32(1), pp.9-28., 9-28 and Swyngedouw, E., 2014. 'Not a drop of water...': State, modernity and the production of nature in Spain, 1898-2010. *Environment and History*, 20(1), pp.67-92.

³⁰⁷ Gorostiza, S. and Cerdà, M.O., 2016. 'The unclaimed latifundium': the configuration of the Spanish fishing sector under Francoist autarky, 1939–1951. *Journal of Historical Geography*, 52, pp.26-35.

³⁰⁸ For a detailed view on the Pontine Marshes case-study in Fascist Italy see: Caprotti, F., 2006. Malaria and technological networks: medical geography in the Pontine Marshes, Italy, in the 1930s. *Geographical Journal*, 172(2), pp.145-155.

³⁰⁹ Wilson, J.K., 2008. environmental Chauvinism in the prussian east: Forestry as a Civilizing mission on the ethnic Frontier, 1871–1914. *Central European History*, 41(1), pp.27-70.

environment in which this population functioned, using an army of experts to realize a work of both environmental and social engineering. For this argument to become clear, however, one must follow the thread of the story from the beginning.

Giannitsa Lake has not always been a lake. In antiquity the whole area was a bay directly connected to the Aegean Sea, on the banks of which flourished the Hellenistic Macedonian capital city of Pella.³¹⁰ Through the centuries, the mouth of the bay gradually closed, thus reducing the volume of the water that passed through, a process that eventually shaped Giannitsa Lake in its final form before its reclamation. Located in southern Macedonia almost fifty kilometers west of Thessaloniki, the major port-city in the province, the lake dominated the region in terms of economic activity and environmental impact. Even in modern times, however, Giannitsa Lake was hardly a lake. Its irregular banks and seasonally unstable depth (apart from a deep core of 5 meters) would more easily classify it as a swamp. Around its wetlands extended an open plain, devoid of vegetation, that was crossed by four rivers: The Axios, Aliakmonas, Echedoros (or Gallikos) and Loudias. The abundance of flowing waters in the area on the one hand made the plain very fertile and virtually invulnerable to droughts, some of which had destroyed southern Greece's yields during the late 19th century.³¹¹ On the other hand, however, large pieces of land on the plain would instantly flood after heavy rainfall, which was a very frequent phenomenon in the area and had prevented any lush vegetation in the plain from flourishing. In light of this it is easy to see why the Greek state regarded Giannitsa Plain, or as it became known after the reclamation, Thessaloniki's Plain, as a valuable asset, but one that had to be "tamed" first in order to become profitable.

The imperial administration of the Ottoman Empire had carried out some preliminary steps in its effort to achieve that. Plans for the reclamation of the lake had been devised as far back as 1892 by two British mechanics, Kinniple and Jaffrey. The turmoil in which the whole province was plunged in the late 19th and early 20th

³¹⁰ Astaras, T.A. and Sotiriadis, L., 1988. Evolution of the Thessaloniki-Giannitsa Plain in Northern Greece During the Last 2500 Years--From the Alexander the Great Era until Today.

Syrides, G., Albanakis, K., Vouvalidis, K., Pilali-Papasteriou, A., Papaefthimiou-Papanthimou, A., Ghilardi, M., Fouache, E., Paraschou, T. and Psomiadis, D., 2009. Holocene Palaeogeography of the Northern Margins of Giannitsa Plain in Relation to the Prehistoric Site of Archontiko (Macedonia-Greece). *Zeitschrift für Geomorphologie, Supplementary Issues*, 53(1), pp.71-82.

³¹¹ Petrakis, P.E. and Panorios, H., 1992. Economic fluctuations in Greece: 1844-1913. *Journal of European Economic History*, 21(1), p.31.

centuries however put the plans on hold. Even though some efforts to realize these same plans were put forward again during the reign of Abdul Hamid II in the first decade of the 20th century, the looming sense that the borders of the Balkans were about to be redrawn halted any further development. As it turned out, this was the case indeed. The end of the two Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 found southern Macedonia occupied by the Greek forces. Even though this occupation led to the ceding of the province to the Greek state a year later, in ethnic and economic terms, rural Macedonia was still a very distinct entity, an alloy of agricultural or stockbreeding communities that had been formed under the Ottoman administration. The area around the Giannitsa Lake was not an exception to that rule. In fact, it presented a very telling example of what was happening all over the province.

What is essential to remember for the purposes of this chapter is that the forty or more settlements that spread across Giannitsa Plain, as well as the town of Giannitsa, were inhabited by a considerable number of Slavic-speakers who, as we have already seen, were completely apathetic or even hostile toward the nation-building agenda actively promoted by the Greek government in the region. While many Greek nationalists, from the beginning of the Macedonian Question in the late 19th century swore to the allegedly indisputable “Greekness” of Southern Macedonia, historical demographics proved them wrong. By the late 19th century, namely by the time nationalists started branding communities and individuals alike with nationalities, a large part of Macedonia was inhabited by populations that in Ottoman times had simply been defined as Christian for administrative reasons. However, with regard to their linguistic orientation Konstantinos Karavidas wrote somewhere between 1917 and 1922 that:

Beyond Loudias the Greek language stops and the Bulgarian starts, few exceptions aside. The prefectures of Giannitsa, Kilkis, Gevgeli, Vodena, Karatzova and even those zealous Muslims of Karatzova, apart from very rare exceptions, speak Bulgarian.³¹²

The same Karavidas concluded that the Slavic character of Macedonia was even more accentuated in the countryside of the province. According to him, Greeks had a natural tendency to be drawn to cities, as they preferred the pursuit of commerce rather than working the soil, which had left rural Macedonia open for migrating Slavs

³¹² ASCSA/GR GL KDK 049/Folder 04/Subfolder 01/Document 01, ‘Peri Epoikismou Makedonias’ [‘On the Colonization of Macedonia’].

through the centuries.³¹³ Even though his racial argument today seems far-fetched, the fact remained that across the fields and valleys of Macedonia, Slavic dialects and languages were far more common than either Greek or Turkish, which were used mainly as lingua franca in trade and administrative matters respectively.

What is also important to remember is that the plain's peasants were accustomed and attached to systems of production that were not favored by the Greek authorities, as they were deemed unprofitable. In this case, "unprofitable" was simply another term –one that adhered to the modern state's mentality of maximizing yield– that described communities which had grown to become sustainable and therefore exhibited minimal interaction with the capitalist market. The information we have for the way that these particular rural communities functioned comes from numerous, albeit diverse, sources. On an organizational level we safely know that the whole area that surrounded Giannitsa Lake was split between different *chifliks*, both small and large. A detailed table that was composed in 1919, for the Colonization Directorate for agricultural affairs in Thessaloniki reported on the status of each of those *chifliks*. Matters of productivity were of course highlighted along with a list of the owners (consisting mainly of Ottoman subjects and in a few cases Orthodox Monasteries) and including the ethnic or linguistic composition of the settlements. At the end of the table, the author had included remarkable facts about each *chiflik* which almost always noted the frequent floods that occurred, particularly for the *chifliks* of the Giannitsa Plain.³¹⁴ We also know that the town of Giannitsa and its adjacent lands, grazing grounds and cultivated fields as well as part of the Giannitsa Lake itself were *waqfs*, meaning that they were inalienable assets that had been granted to individuals or public utilities for religious or philanthropic purposes. In the case of Giannitsa, the first of those *waqfs* was founded by an early Ottoman general, Gazi Evrenos, back in the 15th century and had remained under the control of Evrenos' descendants up until Macedonia became part of the Greek state.³¹⁵

³¹³ ASCSA/GR GL KDK 049/Folder 10/Subfolder 01/Document 'Anakefalaiotikai Paratiriseis epi tis egkatasaseos prosfygon stin Makedonia' ['Recapitulating Notes on the resettlement of refugees in Macedonia'].

³¹⁴ ASCSA/GR GL KDK 049/Folder 03/Subfolder 04/Document 'Pinax Tsiflikion Perifereias Thessalonikis'.

³¹⁵ Demetriadis, V., 1981. Problems of land-owning and population in the area of Gazi Evrenos Bey's wakf. *Balkan Studies*, 22, pp.43-57.

On the ground, one of the best sources for valuable information on affairs on the Giannitsa Plain under Ottoman control, is also a very interesting one for other reasons. The source is Ioannis Vlachos, a nationalist undercover agent, who – it seems- took up this role for himself, serving as a doctor in Macedonia during the course of the Macedonian Struggle (1903-1908), a significant part of which was played out for control of Giannitsa Lake. In his secret correspondence with Panagiotis Dagleis, a colonel of the Greek Army who at the time was directing the movement of the undercover staff participating in the Macedonian Struggle, Vlachos described the everyday life of the communities around the lake. More precisely, the doctor presented details of the economic activities that took place in the area, in attempt to convince Dagleis to send help his way in order to take hold of the local productive enterprises for the good of the nation. He proposed that Greek armed guerilla fighters along with Greek-minded businessmen should “seize” the production of the lake’s resources, rent them out to anyone interested and use the money and resources to further fund the Struggle.³¹⁶

His, arguably naïve, even childish, recommendations amounted to nothing, since the lake had already for some years been the theater of armed antagonism between Greeks and Bulgarians, and thus hardly offered easy pickings. Nevertheless, Vlachos’ writings reveal the significance of the lake for a very large number of peasants that resided on or close to its banks. In terms of sustenance, Giannitsa Lake provided peasants with fish, most notably with eels that were abundant in its waters, and “quite tasty” for that matter, as a travelling Greek surveyor would note a few years later.³¹⁷ In fact, it seems that fishing was a fundamental activity for the nearby settlements to such a degree that, had Greek guerilla forces somehow managed to control it, it would automatically have given them a significant advantage over the Bulgarian *comitadjis*, as Vlachos emphatically argued.³¹⁸

In addition to fish however, the dense lake brush that covered the bank of the lake sheltered large populations of waterfowl species, which complemented the basic staple diet of the locals.³¹⁹ The naked fields around the lake, especially the ones

³¹⁶ General Dagleis Archive, Folder 22, 10-11.

³¹⁷ Palamiotis Georgios, *Agricultural Census of Macedonia*, Athens, Greek Agricultural Society, 1914, p.59-64.

³¹⁸ General Dagleis Archive, Folder 22, 12.

³¹⁹ General Dagleis Archive, Folder 22, 14-15.

susceptible to flooding that had been left uncultivated, were inhabited, at least seasonally, by nomadic shepherds, who used to rent them from the local *chiflik* owner during the summer months for their herds. The shepherds' interaction with the local populace, albeit limited, was vital for the livelihood of both groups, as each supplied the other with goods that it could not possibly produce itself. Overall, Vlachos' narrative indicates that the lake's settlements were stable communities that could easily sustain themselves over the decades. He mentions that some of them even practiced advanced forms of horticulture, others possessed their own communal limekilns, while in some more commercially minded settlements, certain individuals engaged in leech picking, in order to export the worms to the Austro-Hungarian Empire.³²⁰

It must be noted that the above does not simply constitute an ethnographical parenthesis. It is evidence suggesting that the lake's settlements had evolved through time into sustainable communities and had been established as such and in accordance with the ecosystem in which they were located. The Ottoman Empire's affairs and the Sublime Porte's rulings left the villagers unfazed for the most part, as long as they met the yearly yield requirements toward their *chiflik* landlord. These days of relative tranquility came to an end, however in 1904. It was then that the region of the Giannitsa Lake came into play for the first time:

The [Bulgarian] gang that has occupied the Giannitsa Swamp [...] due to its inefficient persecution by the military detachments that have been appointed to the area over time, has become some kind of state within a state in Giannitsa's prefecture, prosecuting, arresting, interrogating, judging and punishing every religious or political difference that may occur between the residents of the surrounding settlements [...]³²¹

This is what a Greek journalist reported in 1904 when the swamp was overtaken for the first time by Bulgarian nationalist activists who realized its strategic importance due to its inaccessibility and the fact that it was situated on the eastern crossroad linking Thessaloniki to all the major towns of eastern Macedonia. On this particular occasion it was the Bulgarian government-led nationalists of IMRO that had occupied the swamp, in an effort to continue their activities in secret, after the Porte had crushed the Illinden Uprising one year earlier. This renewed interest in the area –

³²⁰ General Daglis Archive, Folder 22, 16-17.

³²¹ Anonymous 1904, 'Terrorism of Giannitsa Gang', *Skrip*, 28 June p. 4.

which the Greek state considered well within its own sphere of interest - awakened even the most dormant nationalist circles in Athens. Quite quickly, intellectual and military heads demanded swift action against the *comitadjis*.

As the encroachment of Bulgarian fighters in the swamp continued, the Greek government decided to intervene. In order not to be caught in a *de facto* situation, where Bulgaria would be able to straightforwardly claim the area, and possibly even Thessaloniki, military authorities in Athens reacted in an assertive manner. They formed armed paramilitary warbands, drafted mostly from the Greek army. While having their minds swollen³²² with national pride and stories of savage Bulgarians torturing their enslaved brothers and laying waste to the primordially Greek lands, dozens of Macedonian Strugglers (*Makedonomachoi*), as they came to be known, crossed the borders and invaded Ottoman Macedonia in 1905, with the sole purpose of rooting the *comitadjis* out of the swamp. What ensued was a brutal four-year undercover war that took place mostly in and around Giannitsa Lake between Greek and Bulgarian nationalists who fought under the not-so-watchful eye of the Ottoman gendarmerie in Macedonia. This unorthodox war included a vast array of notable features: *Plavas*, namely flat-bottomed swamp boats, were used as a means of transportation in the swamp; fortified huts that belonged to fishermen were seized by warbands and functioned as floating citadels while some locals, either hired or coerced, acted as guides to the mazelike waterways of the swamp, leading the guerillas away from or against each other.³²³ In between all this, the residents of the nearby settlements were caught in the crossfire as armed men from both camps habitually invaded their villages in order to plunder their livestock and terrorize them into declaring for one or the other national identity to any demographer that was

³²² The indoctrination of the Greek public against Bulgarian expansionism was obviously spearheaded by the press. Almost daily reports, published in the most well-known newspapers at the time, like *Empros*, gave gruesome details about alleged civilian massacres and attacks on "Greek" villages. While in early-20th-century Macedonia, violence was indeed a normalized part of the everyday life in the countryside, the validity of the claims published by the press was questionable.

³²³ Out of the inexhaustible list of literature on the Illinden Uprising and the Macedonian Struggle there are two memoirs of journalists and one ethnographic study that covered these events which are particularly worth reading:

Sonnichsen Albert, *Confessions of a Macedonian Bandit: A Californian in the Balkan Wars*, New York, Cosimo Classics, 1909

Howden Smith Arthur, *Fighting the Turk in the Balkans*, New York and London, The Knickerbocker Press, 1908 and

Brailsford Henry Noel, *Macedonia: Its races and their future*, London, Methuen & Co., 1906.

passing through the area.³²⁴ The Young Turk revolution of 1908 put an end to this secretive war, after the Turkish nationalist revolutionaries demanded the deportation of all other nationalist agitators from Macedonia, a request that was partly fulfilled with the departure of the openly nationalist diplomats and consuls from Thessaloniki, like Lambros Koromilas.

After the province was ceded to Greece, following the First Balkan War, the Giannitsa Plain became the subject of a persistent discourse on modernization. State experts or experts appointed by institutions that cooperated with the state, such as GAS, surveyed the land and estimated the profit margin that the development of agriculture should bring. During their stays, however, they did not form particularly positive opinions about the existing settlements on the Giannitsa Plain. Their attitudes became apparent in the reports they sent back to the Ministry of Economy. According to them Giannitsa Plain had the potential of acquiring a true productive momentum if agricultural intensification and commodification would be applied, under their vigilant eyes and according to their plans. One of these experts was once again, Pilavios Papageorgiou of GAS who emphasized two elements that had to be countered if development were to take place. The first was the slothful attitude of the people. As he wrote in one report:

[The locals] lack any idea of place, time and [market] price., Due to being many years under slavery and distress, all of them, with no exceptions, are suspicious and cunning, not to mention that they bear the characteristic slowness (*yavaş yavaş*)³²⁵ in terms of thinking, working, walking and trading.³²⁶

The second, even more difficult problem to resolve, was the environment of the region, dominated by the swamp. Precisely what the locals had learned to live with, even to use to their own advantage, Palamiotis regarded as pathology. To him the dense vegetation of the swamp was not the breeding ground of game waterfowl, but a spewing hatch for millions of crows that would “raid”, as he called it, the nearby sowed fields. A state cull would suffice, he suggested. Similarly, the frequent floods were not a necessary evil that, however, signified the presence of fish, but a serious

³²⁴ For an interesting analysis on adulterated censuses see: Kostopoulos Tasos, Counting the 'Other': Official Census and Classified Statistics in Greece (1830-2001), *Jahrebook Für Geschichte und Kultur Südosteuropas*, v. 5 (2003): 55-78.

³²⁵ “*Yavaş yavaş*” is a Turkish expression that translates into “slowly slowly”. The phrase was transferred into Greek as a demeaning comment upon the, presumably, Ottoman mentality towards work.

³²⁶ Palamiotis Georgios 1914, Kazas Giannitson, ‘*Oikonomiki Ellas*’, 6 July, p.321

impediment that rendered agricultural production unpredictable and the transportation of goods between markets impossible. At this point in history, however, experts and engineers did not recommend too drastic a solution. They did not yet discuss draining the lake in order to eradicate the swamp. Instead, they proposed general adjustments to control the flow and floods to the benefit of the locals, who were still seen as a population that needed to be convinced rather than coerced into conforming to their new nation-state.³²⁷

As Chapter 3 concluded, however, this was not to happen. The general unwillingness of the people to follow the goals that the Greek state set for them, as well as the mutual distrust that both exhibited toward the other, crippled the chances of cooperation, if ever there were any. The population exchange of 1923 and the subsequent plan to resettle an enormous number of Asian Minor and Pontic refugees in the region around Giannitsa Lake was, in fact, the last nail in the coffin. While, the colonizing process may have started as early as 1913, with the first refugee-settlers moving into partially abandoned villages, such as Chalastra, the colonization of Giannitsa Lake was immeasurably intensified after 1923.³²⁸ It was only then, when it became clear that the appropriated *chiflik* estates would not be nearly enough to cover even the basic needs of the refugees, that the final decision to reclaim the lake was taken.

The turmoil that characterized Greek politics at the time however, as well as the economic difficulties faced by the state prevented this big project from proceeding. Two whole years had passed since the population exchange, and nothing happened concerning the reclamation. To make matters worse, the resettlement process for thousands of refugees resumed, even though the government had no more disposable lands available to distribute to the newcomers. This led to the accumulation of a landless, impoverished and aid-dependent mass that surrounded the lake's settlements, thus making cohabitation with the locals difficult at times. Indicatively, in only one of the three prefectures into which the Giannitsa Plain was split, more than

³²⁷ Palamiotis Georgios 1914, Kazas Giannitson, '*Oikonomiki Ellas*', 6 July, p.321.

³²⁸ Anonymous 1913, Refugee Resettlement, '*Makedonia*' 13 June, 3.

forty thousand individuals alone were accepted, which meant that, overall, more than one hundred thousand new residents probably flooded the plain and its settlements.³²⁹

In the meantime, back in Athens, the democratic government that had negotiated the reclamation of Giannitsa Lake was overthrown by General Theodoros Pagalos, who imposed a dictatorial conservative government. As already mentioned, like other dictators before and after him, Pagalos too tried to imprint his legacy on a grand work of public utility. On this front, the newspaper *Macedonia* reported that Pagalos' Minister of Agriculture, Giorgos Sideris, left no stone unturned in his search to find Greek investors to fund the reclamation project, at the same time condemning them for a "lack of entrepreneurial spirit".³³⁰ The only choice, the Minister underlined, was for the government to seek funds from abroad in order to realize such a monumental work.

Of course Pagalos' attempt to leave anything remarkable behind as a legacy failed miserably, when his dictatorship fell apart after only one year in power. However, he and his short-lived cabinet had succeeded in formalizing the final agreement regarding the reclamation of Giannitsa Lake –despite the fact that Pagalos' predecessors had already done most of the negotiating. After an extended period of even more bargaining between the government and representatives of foreign companies capable of undertaking such a large project, the contract regarding the reclamation works, was signed. In the end, the Greek government negotiated with "The Foundation Company" (henceforth Foundation), an American New York-based company, specialized in hydraulic engineering, which undertook the totality of the technical jobs for the next decade.³³¹

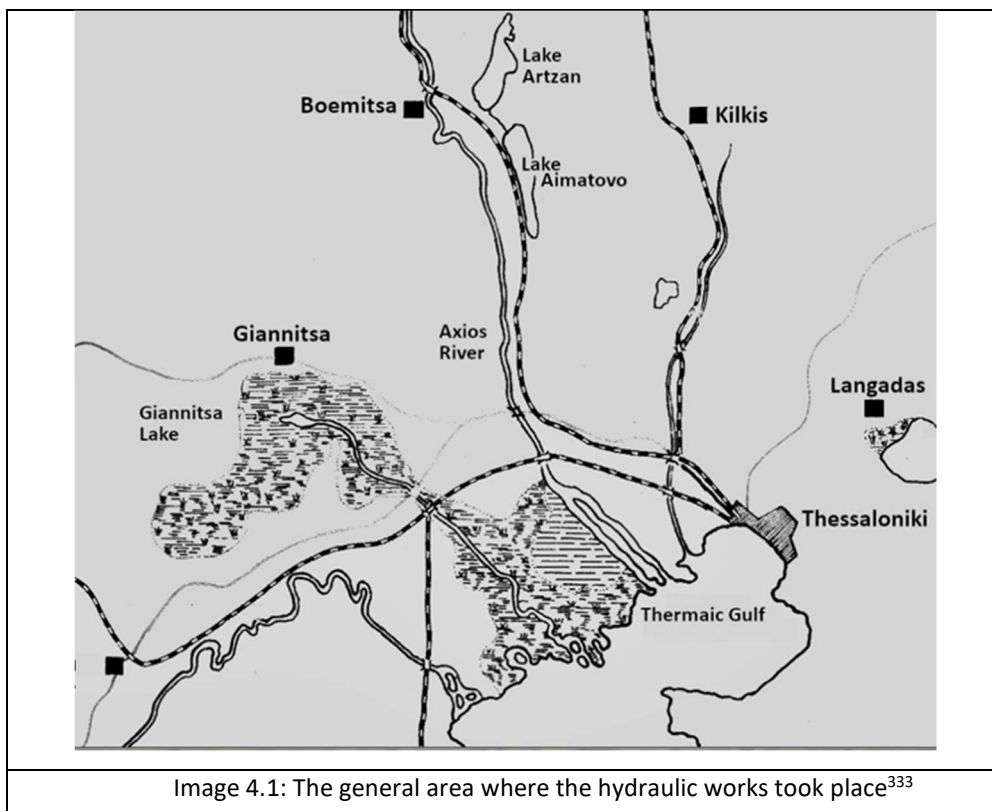
As the contract stated, the "great productive works" would be completed in three stages. The first included a "complete detailed survey of the whole area west of Thessaloniki" as well as the eradication of two smaller lakes north of the Giannitsa Plain, lakes Aimatovo and Artzan, which fed the rivers that were responsible for the frequent flooding of the plain. The second stage concerned the re-directing of three out of the four rivers that crossed the plain, at the same time erecting extensive flood

³²⁹ Koliadimou Agni, *Prosfyges sto nomo Pellas [Refugees in Pella Prefecture]*, Thessaloniki, Unpublished PhD Thesis, 2014, p.111.

³³⁰ Anonymous 1923, 'The development of production and the revolution', 13 March, p.1.

³³¹ Anonymous 1925, 'The Military Movement prevailed everywhere in Greece', *Makedonia*, 25 June p.1.

bank barriers. More importantly, this stage would also include the actual draining of the Giannitsa Lake. The water volume of the lake would first be collected in a central basin and then be released into the Thermaic Gulf, aided by a main drainage ditch. The whole project would conclude with the diversion of the Axios River mouth away from Thessaloniki, whose alluvia threatened the city's port (Image 4.1). What was interesting though was the estimated extent of the reclaimed or secured-from-floods lands that the Greek government would allegedly gain as a result of the works. Foundation's mechanics claimed that the land would amount to or even surpass 130,000 hectares, undoubtedly making Giannitsa Plain the largest plain in Greece. Of course, such a grand work came with an equally high cost. The Greek government agreed to pay almost twenty-seven million US dollars for the completion of the works, which today –considering the inflation rates- translates into a staggering 366 million US dollars.³³²



³³² Hellenic Republic 1925, 'On the ratification of the contract regarding the execution of hydraulic works Thessaloniki's Plain', *Efimerida tis Kyverniseos [Government Gazette]*, 8 October, 2020-2022. It is also important to note here that the funds for this project came from two loans which the Greek government obtained from the Hambro credit house, especially for this reason.

³³³ CHA, Map E6369: Barbaritis K., *Carte Du Paludisme En Macedoine*, 1:450000, Athens, Commission d'etablissement des refugies, 1927

The scheduled reclamation enjoyed the unanimous support of both the general public and the political parties in Greece. A few days before the contract was officially published in the government's Gazette, the newspaper *Macedonia* could not hide its enthusiasm for the finalized agreement between Pagalos and Foundation. Featured on the first page of the paper we find an article titled "Foundation: The first grand benefactor of central Macedonia" as well as a smaller one suggesting that the dictator Pagalos, with this hydraulic project, would, at last, overwhelm the "enemies of the nation". Whether this ambiguous statement was meant as an innuendo against the peasants of Giannitsa Plain, who were thought of by many as Bulgarian agents, or the natural elements that had condemned Giannitsa Plain into misery, remains unclear.³³⁴

At last, the reclamation works began in the summer of 1928. The situation in Giannitsa Plain would gradually be enhanced as regards the state's vision for the area in the coming months. The first improvements became noticeable quite quickly. Shortly after commencing the works, the Foundation pledged to hand over 8000 hectares of arable land to the Greek state by the end of 1929.³³⁵ During the same year it began the reclamation and draining of the two small lakes to the north of the swamp. The event drew the attention of the newspapers and was covered thoroughly. In fact, Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos himself was present at the opening ceremony where he triumphantly exclaimed that:

The small Greece, the destroyed Greece of 1922 managed, with its wounds still open, to undertake these colossal works, part of which we inaugurate today. In five years, the works in Thessaloniki's Plain [Giannitsa Plain] will have been completed, handing over for cultivation 500 thousand *stremmata*³³⁶, securing 750 thousand more and irrigating up to 800 thousand. Here, around us, a small Egypt will arise, fertile and hygienic, capable of protecting the prosperity of the population in Central Macedonia. [...] after the completion [of the works] Macedonia will certainly be the most enviable region in the East.³³⁷

³³⁴ Anonymous 1925, 'Foundation: I proti megali euergetis tis kentrikis Makedonias' ['Foundation: The first grand benefactor of central Macedonia'], *Makedonia*, 20 September, p.1
Anonymous 1925.

³³⁵ Anonymous 1928, 'I statherotis tis Thessalonikis' ['Thessalonikis' stability'], *Makedonia* 7 September, p. 6.

³³⁶ One *stremma* equals one tenth of a hectare.

³³⁷ Anonymous 1928, 'I nea Epochi' ['The New Era'], *Makedonia* 25 November, p.1

It was only then that the locals felt the -negative to them- social impact that the reclamation would have on their lives. The more the works progressed, the more refugees were granted land that yielded much more than that of the locals, and the more the latter were left with only two choices. Either conform to the new circumstances, namely live and produce as loyal Greek subjects, or emigrate. Emigration between Greece and Bulgaria had been facilitated after the non-compulsory population exchange that was contemplated in the Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine signed between the two countries in 1919. Despite the fact that the treaty had offered this option, it was only after 1923 that Slavic-speaking populations in Macedonia started emigrating to Bulgaria. From 1923 until 1932, according to data collected by the General Directorate of Macedonia, 6.670 Slavophone locals had abandoned the prefecture of Giannitsa for Bulgaria. This amounted to almost half the Slavophone population that had been recorded in a classified census back in 1923.³³⁸ Three indirect yet effective mechanisms, all coordinated and supervised by the Greek government, contributed to the final conformity of all who remained.

The first can be traced back to the period when the conditions included in the contract with Foundation were being formed. It concerned the manual labor force that was required for the works. The 11th Article of the final agreement between Foundation and the government states:

Selection of Staff: With the exception of qualified foreign engineers and experts which the Contractor shall employ for the proper execution of the works, the contractor shall recruit all the remaining technical assistant and labour personnel by preference amongst the Greek subjects, i. e. in so far as this is possible and practicable, at least one-fifth of whom shall be employed from men who have taken part in wars in so far as any competent men are available.³³⁹

This piece of information discloses something that was not clear at first sight. Apart from the obvious preference for war veterans, the loyalty of whom had been tested on the battlefield, the other part of the article mentions “Greek subjects”. This was not in itself problematic. Both locals and refugees were naturalized Greek citizens, which theoretically meant that Foundation could draw workers from both tanks. However,

³³⁸ Ioannidou Alexandra, ‘Ta slavika idiomata stin Ellada: Glossologikes sigliseis, politikes apokliseis’ [‘Slavic Idioms in Greece: Linguistic convocations, political deviations’], *Taytotites sti Makedonia*, Athens, 1997, p. 123-142

³³⁹ Hellenic Republic 1925, ‘On the ratification of the contract regarding the execution of hydraulic works Thessaloniki’s Plain’, *Efimerida tis Kyverniseos* [Government Gazette], 8 October, 2003

while this might have been the case, the possibility of these laborers being drawn exclusively from the ranks of the refugees is high. In fact, this is not so much a matter of mere percentage derived from the number who resided in proximity to the works, as one of the organized, albeit informal, labor associations, that had been formed. These were the Refugee Groups, as already stated, the mostly homogeneous groups in which the refugees had been sorted by the government to make refugee populations more manageable.³⁴⁰ The ultimate goal was to bind together and resettle coherent communities, the members of which already knew and trusted each other. This effectively resulted in the consolidation of an information network among refugees, which spread news regarding the opening of manual labor positions, and badly paid.

The Foundation's practices towards its labor force were also not so noble. The fiery proclamation of the conservative newspaper "The Scream" which in August of 1932 announced its **release** by publishing the following advertisement is indicative:

Workers, clerks, farmers, professionals, craftsmen, slaves of Foundation and all the other Companies that drain your blood like leeches: The Scream comes to stand by your side, honest defender of your interests, selfless champion of your faction, public podium for the exclamation of your rights, whip in your hands for the lashing of every social and political immorality.³⁴¹

Similarly, the newspaper of the communist party, *Rizospastis (The Radical)* published in 1933 a letter of complaint sent in by Foundation workers which reported on the miserable working conditions at the reclamation site, claiming that:

The fines [on Foundation] are an everyday phenomenon. Each worker is forced to clear 75 square meters of grass and dirt per day while receiving a payday of 50 Drachmas. The water that we drink is stagnant and green in color. To drink it we must first get rid of the turtles and frogs [...]

Workers should not tolerate the oppressive regime that had been enforced upon them, but standing united they should demand that the dismissals, fines and intimidation should end, the provision of decent food and water, an increase in pay and the establishment of an 8-hour work day.³⁴²

While it would be wise to take both of these pieces of information with a pinch of salt –after all both were both publicized for reasons of propaganda- they show the

³⁴⁰ Koliadimou Agni, *Prosfyges sto nomo Pellas [Refugees in Pella Prefecture]*, Thessaloniki, Unpublished PhD Thesis, 2014, p. 346.

³⁴¹ Makedonia, 8/3/1932, p. 4.

³⁴² Rizospastis 27/8/1933, p. 5.

Foundation in a particularly bad light. However, let's not forget that the 50 drachmas per day that the communist laborer mentioned were still 50 drachmas per day more than what the Slavophone fisher, whose lake had already been drained, earned. They were also 50 drachmas more than what a weaver that used to collect reeds from the lake earned and even 50 drachmas more than what a farmer whose plot was close to the works earned, as the Foundation had thwarted any agricultural activity that needed to be carried out near its heavy machinery. It is safe to assume then that in an area where all production had ceased because of the ongoing reclamation works (as specified in the contract with the Greek government), refugee workers were much more likely to absorb most of the income provided by the Foundation, which in turn sowed the seeds of their imminent social and economic supremacy in the region.³⁴³

The second subjugation mechanism is strongly connected to the Refugee Groups too. As the tables were turning in their favor, refugees were being transformed steadily from landless rabble to tillers of the reclaimed lands. Once that happened, Refugee Groups evolved into more stable and organized institutions. Directed by the state apparatus, and more precisely by the Ministry of Agriculture, they formed agricultural cooperatives. Even in cases where the cooperative was dormant, inefficient or straightforwardly crooked, as the case studies in Chapter 3.3 showed, still the mere presence of the cooperative in a village entailed a couple of very practical advantages for refugees. Firstly, there was the ability to obtain loans at low interest rates and highly favorable conditions of repayment, especially after the Agricultural Bank of Greece was founded in 1929 upon exactly these premises. That way, the members of the agricultural cooperative were able to avoid the loan sharks that had tormented the Macedonian countryside since 1913, an advantage that the non-members of the cooperative did not have. Secondly, the members of the cooperative had access to more advanced equipment - sometimes even including heavy machinery- which was bought and shared collectively by the cooperative, thus significantly reducing costs. As with the first mechanism, agricultural cooperatives were not exclusive to refugees. Locals could legally participate on absolutely equal terms with them. The only problem was that they did not do so, probably due to the bad blood persisting between the two communities. The data is quite compelling on

³⁴³ Hellenic Republic 1925, 'On the ratification of the contract regarding the execution of hydraulic works in Thessaloniki's Plain', *Efimerida tis Kyverniseos* [Government Gazette], 8 October, 2000.

this. The participation count for the more than one hundred agricultural cooperatives that were active in the area by 1929 was 3,388 refugees. The corresponding number for the participation of locals was the underwhelming 282.³⁴⁴

Finally, the last subjugation mechanism was perhaps the most straightforward and it had to do with the distribution pattern that was followed for the reclaimed lands. As we saw, by 1936 when the reclamation project was completed, the government had more than one hundred thousand hectares at its disposal, which were to be granted to the residents of the area, both new and old. Not everybody was considered an equally good candidate though. On the contrary, there was a priority list that had to be followed, defined by the Colonization Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture. At the top of it sat those who had helped the Greek cause in times of war: War veterans or the families of the fallen, from all the military mobilizations in which Greece had participated between 1912 and 1922. They were many, since the country had been continuously in a state of war throughout that period. The candidates from this category were rewarded generously with lands, receiving a minimum of three acres of land per family, granted in one large plot, compared to all those who had been granted land from the appropriated *chiflik* estates in the past, and whose plots had been split over four or five smaller patches across the whole region. That phenomenon had raised the production cost of the latter's agricultural goods and lowered their expected profit.³⁴⁵

Agricultural expertise was also rewarded. Large tracts of land were given to certain agronomists and agriculturalists that originated from Macedonia or were willing to move to the Giannitsa Plain from "Old Greece", in order to pave the way for its efficiency and productivity. More than that, their role would also be one of specialized scientists addressing the everyday issues of local farmers. The distribution of land they received was implemented on a merit-based system, according to the educational degrees they held. Those who had been awarded a university degree, either from Greece or from abroad, qualified for 250 *stremmata* of reclaimed land. Those with a lower degree were assigned 150 *stremmata* or even only five in case

³⁴⁴ Anagnostopoulou Georgiki Perigrifi, 75-79

³⁴⁵ Konstantinidis Konstantinos, *Ta eggeioveltiotika erga stin pediada Thessalonikis [The land-improving works in Thessaloniki plain]*, Thessaloniki, ETYEM, 1989, 94.

their degree was only slightly above a basic education.³⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the resettled refugee population received the lion's share of the reclaimed lands that surrounded the now drained Giannitsa Lake as well as the former lake itself. Interestingly, among the refugees, larger parcels of land were given to those who were married, a clause that apparently pushed many of them hastily to start new families in order to receive the advantages.³⁴⁷ What is also worth noting at this point is that locals were not left out of the distribution. Because of the fact that they had claimed and had been granted the less fertile non-irrigated lands of the former *chiflik* estates on which they used to work as laborers during the Ottoman days, they were given only smaller plots.

The new, engineered environment was capable of only sustaining the equally engineered ecosystem. With the lake gone and its aquatic environment destroyed, all those who relied upon it were now in distress. Fishermen, hunters, leech-gatherers and weavers witnessed a change in their livelihoods as the dense wild swamp turned into an endless cultivated field spread as far as their eyes could see. In an effort to salvage what they could, these environmentally unemployed founded their own association in 1932 that numbered more than 200 members. In a similar fashion to that of the refugees, they requested land and support. Unlike the refugees, however, what they got from the Colonization Directorate was a lukewarm response. Although their pleas were heard and their case was included in the official law concerning the manner with which the reclaimed lands would be administered, the law specified that they were to be given lands "insofar as there are available", putting them at the very bottom of the priority list for the Greek state.³⁴⁸

Within only one decade, from 1926 to 1936, Greece had succeeded in what it had failed to accomplish since the day it had annexed Macedonia: to subdue the local population of the Giannitsa Plain and eradicate any possibility that other states might lay claim to the land. For this she had the weak and impoverished refugees to thank. This subjugation had not been accomplished with violence. As I have already mentioned, however, violent incidents took place all around the province. However, they resulted from the arrogance and nationalist hot-headedness of certain individuals in key positions of power. Violence itself was not used strategically as a means of

³⁴⁶ Konstantinidis Konstantinos, *Ta eggeioveltiotika erga stin pediada Thessalonikis [The land-improving works in Thessaloniki plain]*, Thessaloniki, ETYEM, 1989, 95.

³⁴⁷ *Prosfyges sto nomo Pellas [Refugees in Pella Prefecture]*, 246.

³⁴⁸ *Prosfyges sto nomo Pellas [Refugees in Pella Prefecture]*, 248.

subjugation on an institutional level. On the contrary, it was the manipulation of a certain environment through hydraulic engineering that subjugated populations. The reclamation of Giannitsa Lake and the subsequent manner with which the state managed this reclamation was relentless. The façade of technological advancement in the interest of the many, did not leave any space for anyone to doubt the good intentions of the state and to claim that this state scheme intended to hit two birds with one stone by gaining massive tracts of new land that could be granted to loyal populations, thus rejuvenating agricultural production in the long run, while at the same time overwhelming the local communities by destroying the environment from which they had derived their economic power and social coherence.

Chapter 4.2-The Body Productive: Anti-malaria discourses and campaigns in the Giannitsa Plain

Life had been pretty easy and tranquil on the original banks of the Giannitsa Lake, that is if you were a mosquito. The coming and going of fishermen was nothing more than a mere nuisance, or at times a chance for a walking meal. The dense reeds of the lake, combined with the frequent rains and the creation of massive puddles of stagnant water, sometimes located even very far away from the core of the lake, were reassuring signs for a mosquito's life. Add to that the mild lowland winters and humid, warm summers and you have an *anopheles'* paradise on earth. The nationalist skirmishes that plunged the area into chaos from 1903 to 1908, had not disturbed the life cycles of the insects at all, neither had the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 nor the First World War that had raged on until 1918. Unbeknownst to the mosquitos, however, the century that was just dawning was about to see the most serious curb on or in some cases the total annihilation of the disease that those little creatures spread, tormenting the nation's countryside: Malaria.

Although ancient and modern societies had been faced with malaria, both in the northern and southern hemispheres, it was only in the middle of the 19th century that the necessity to confront the disease -rather than to avoid it- appeared. The most decisive step in this long road was the development and popularization of quinine, which had been established as the most accessible and effective preventive drug against malaria already by the 1850's.³⁴⁹ The first years of the 20th century, however, defined, the fight against the disease in terms of medical priorities. Almost simultaneously, many European states inaugurated a fierce anti-malarial struggle, which consequently spread from the European mainland to the overseas colonies and beyond. Its positive results were not always certain though. Historical medical archives concerning Britain, for example, show that malarial mortality and morbidity had been following a downward path from 1895 onwards, reaching a point where malarial infections were kept at consistently very low levels during the interwar

³⁴⁹ Peter B. Boland, Holly A. Williams, *Malaria Control during Mass Population Movements and Natural Disasters*, Washington DC, The National Academies Press, 2003, 145-150.
Paul Briquet, *Traite therapeutique de quinquina et de ses preparations*, Paris, Victor Masson, 1853.

decades.³⁵⁰ The same cannot be said for the British colonies. In India, the jewel in the crown of the British Empire, one encounters similar attempts to sanitize the countryside, as Nandini Bhattacharya informs us. The first experimental anti-malarial actions in the country were carried out between 1902 and 1909, with little success, while racial theories on how the disease affected different races with lighter or darker skin color on plantations mitigated further progress.³⁵¹ Despite some few efforts to restrain the spread of the disease in Assam with the use of drainage for stagnant waters, India as a whole was very much still a malaria-ridden colony in the 1930's.³⁵² In another related story, da Silva and Benchimol examined the medical interactions between German and Brazilian medical experts during the first three decades of the 20th century on the quinine resistance of workers exposed to malaria in Brazil. This was obviously not a selfless act for the Germans, as malaria had been an obstacle that imperial doctors wanted to overcome in order to put their experience to the test in both their colonies in Africa as well as the untamed German-annexed East Prussia.³⁵³

An interesting pattern links the above cases in a way that is not noticeable at first glance. By 1900, malaria was not a disease that plagued “civilized” countries. It was not Berlin or London that suffered from it. It was the “underdeveloped” countries or the “uncivilized” colonies -both abroad and those adjacent to the state- that still suffered from malaria, as it allegedly thrived in “sinister” locales: in Indian plantations, inside West African mines or in the stagnant waters of Prussian swamps. This peculiar correlation has led a number of historians to argue that in fact colonial empires were to be blamed for the rapid spread of malarial infections, as a result of the extensive social engineering policies that imperial technocrats and statesmen imposed on their colonies in order to serve their empire's interests.³⁵⁴ According to them, crowding a disproportionate number of people together in an area with no proper sanitation infrastructure while pushing its ecosystem to the limits of its

³⁵⁰ Kuhn, K.G., Campbell-Lendrum, D.H., Armstrong, B. and Davies, C.R., 2003. Malaria in Britain: past, present, and future. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 100(17), pp.9997-10001.

³⁵¹ Bhattacharya, N., 2011. The logic of location: Malaria research in colonial India, Darjeeling and Duars, 1900–30. *Medical history*, 55(2), pp.183-202.

³⁵² Watts, S., 1999. British development policies and malaria in India 1897-c. 1929. *Past & present*, (165), pp.141-181.

³⁵³ da Silva, A.F.C. and Benchimol, J.L., 2014. Malaria and quinine resistance: a medical and scientific issue between Brazil and Germany (1907–19). *Medical history*, 58(1), pp.1-26.

³⁵⁴ Samanta, A., 2002. *Malarial fever in colonial Bengal, 1820-1939: social history of an epidemic*. Firma KLM.

Sinha, S., 1998. *Public Health Policy and the Indian Public: Bengal, 1850-1920*. Vision Publications.

sustainability in order to force increased productivity, had been a recipe for disaster. The trade-off for commodification, they argued, soon became the increased toll on human lives. The truth is that this point of view might be too enticing for Marxist historians to simply pass up. In Macedonia, the bad malaria problem of the country did not come under any scrutiny until the First World War though. And when it did, it was not because of state concern for local health. Despite the fact that local communities had long been struggling with malaria, the problem became noticeable both for Greek and international observers only when malaria stung the troops deployed along the Macedonian Front.

Like other areas where the encroachment of anti-malarial medicine was minimal, southern Macedonia with its massive swamps and flooded plains in 1916, was in the middle of a malaria outbreak the likes of which westerners had rarely experienced. The numbers were staggering. While there is no safe estimate of overall mortality and morbidity, several medical experts who kept field accounts gave a very grim image of the number of casualties caused by the disease. The most optimistic of them suggested that more than one third of the combined overall army of the Allies in Macedonia was stricken by malaria, leading to largely incapacitated personnel, amounting to 160,000 soldiers, a few thousand of whom subsequently died.³⁵⁵

Dr. C.S.P Hamilton, a Regimental Medical Officer deployed on the Macedonian Front from 1916 to 1918 described his traumatic encounter with patients on Macedonian soil. His testimony serves as a valuable indicator of just how life with or fear of malarial infection was. In his pursuit to develop a deeper understanding of the disease, Hamilton commented on the topography of the region, verifying what Greek agronomists and engineers already knew very well:

Macedonia consists of two types of country; One, the low-lying, thickly vegetated and swampy valleys, on which are scattered villages made up of mud brick houses. The other, the mountainous areas traversed by deep nullahs. The mountainsides are thickly covered with brushwood and undergrowth,

³⁵⁵ Busvine, J., 2012. *Disease transmission by insects: its discovery and 90 years of effort to prevent it*. Springer Science & Business Media, 125-126.

whilst in these nullahs scattered stagnant pools are found amongst the undergrowth. Shaded spots are few and far between, therefore during hot weather one has to rely on artificial sun shelters.³⁵⁶

He continued by analyzing the reasons why suddenly a large part of the British Army suffered from the disease, tracing the causes, among others, to the environment and the specific climate of Macedonia:

Thus we have the causes of infection: Mosquitoes in their thousands, fatigue, mental depression, changeable climate with occasional extremes in temperature, and a family history in many which did not tend to increase their resistance, but as we shall see later, played an important part with regard to complications.[...]³⁵⁷

[...] Especially noticeable was the fact that a change in climate caused a great number of relapses, more in proportion to continual period of heat or cold.³⁵⁸

In his account, Hamilton also mentioned the consequences of malaria on the individuals he examined. His reports show not only the physical exhaustion caused by the disease, enough to send soldiers back home, but even the mental issues that it caused:

In August, 1918, three men reported sick [...] In all three instances the symptoms complained of were headache, lassitude, loss of appetite, slight cough, sweating at night. Temperature normal, Blood films were taken, and in each case the report ran: 'Benign tertian, blood full of parasites.' These three men were -sent home under the 'y' scheme.³⁵⁹

[...]There were three cases of certifiable insanity, sent down from the Battalion, due to malaria. A mental specialist at the base told me that he had a fairly large number of cases in insanity as complications of malaria, and in eighty per cent (this is from memory, but the figure is correct, I believe) he was able to trace a family history of insanity or epilepsy.³⁶⁰

Hamilton then drew his didactic conclusion:

War has its price. Those who wage it in malarious climes must remember that, in spite of most rigid precautions against disease, the cost must be a heavy one.³⁶¹

³⁵⁶ Hamilton, C.S.P., 1921. Malaria: Two Years' Experience on the Salonika Front. *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, 36(5), 361.

³⁵⁷ Hamilton, C.S.P., 363.

³⁵⁸ Hamilton, C.S.P., 363.

³⁵⁹ Hamilton, C.S.P., 367.

³⁶⁰ Hamilton, C.S.P., 369.

³⁶¹ Hamilton, C.S.P., 369.

The reports that reached London did not differ at all from the ones that were sent back to Paris. What Hamilton presented in his ten-page medical report, French General Sarrail said in one emblematic phrase: “Mon armée est immobilisée dans les hôpitaux”.³⁶²

The malaria epidemics of the Macedonian Front contributed greatly to consolidating the province’s infamy as a land untouched by civilization. Giannitsa Lake had played a major part in this. A recent article published by a group of medical experts on the subject of epidemiology closely examined the occurrence of malaria among the soldiers all over the province, based on the medical reports that had been composed at the time.³⁶³ Presented with a very informative map of the region, the group concluded that, in general, malarial incidents were equally distributed across the whole front and were particularly accentuated in areas where the water element was prevalent, although rarely rising to as much as 50% of the personnel. What is remarkable though, is that the Giannitsa Lake region stands out on the map. Despite the fact that the military staff stationed there from 1915 to 1918 did not see any real action in terms of warfare, the region had by far the highest percentage of malarial morbidity, only occasionally falling below 50% (Image 4.2).

This chapter however, is not about showcasing how widespread malaria was or how it afflicted soldiers and peasants alike across the Giannitsa Plain; it will not even present the defensive measures taken against the disease. Many scholars have already done that in the literature about modern Greece. The very recent publication on the subject, by Katerina Gardikas, titled “Landscapes of Disease: Malaria in Modern Greece”, undoubtedly leaves no questions about this topic unanswered.³⁶⁴ Instead, what this chapter will attempt to do is to investigate whether the anti-malarial fight waged by the Greek authorities against the disease in the Giannitsa Plain exhibited similar patterns to the ones that have been presented in this thesis until now; namely patterns that would allow us to see whether the eventual annihilation of the disease in

³⁶² Morillon, M., 2015. Centenaire de la Guerre de 14-18. *médecine et armées*, 44(1), pp.62-68.

³⁶³ Migliani, R., Meynard, J.B., Milleliri, J.M., Verret, C. and Rapp, C., 2014. Histoire de la lutte contre le paludisme dans l’armée française: de l’Algérie à l’Armée d’Orient pendant la Première Guerre mondiale. *Médecine et Santé Tropicales*, 24(4), pp.349-361.

³⁶⁴ Gardikas, K., 2018. *Landscapes of Disease: Malaria in Modern Greece*. Central European University Press.

the area coincided with its sought-after economic prosperity, the pursuit of which, as we saw in the previous chapter, was intensified after the population exchange of 1923.

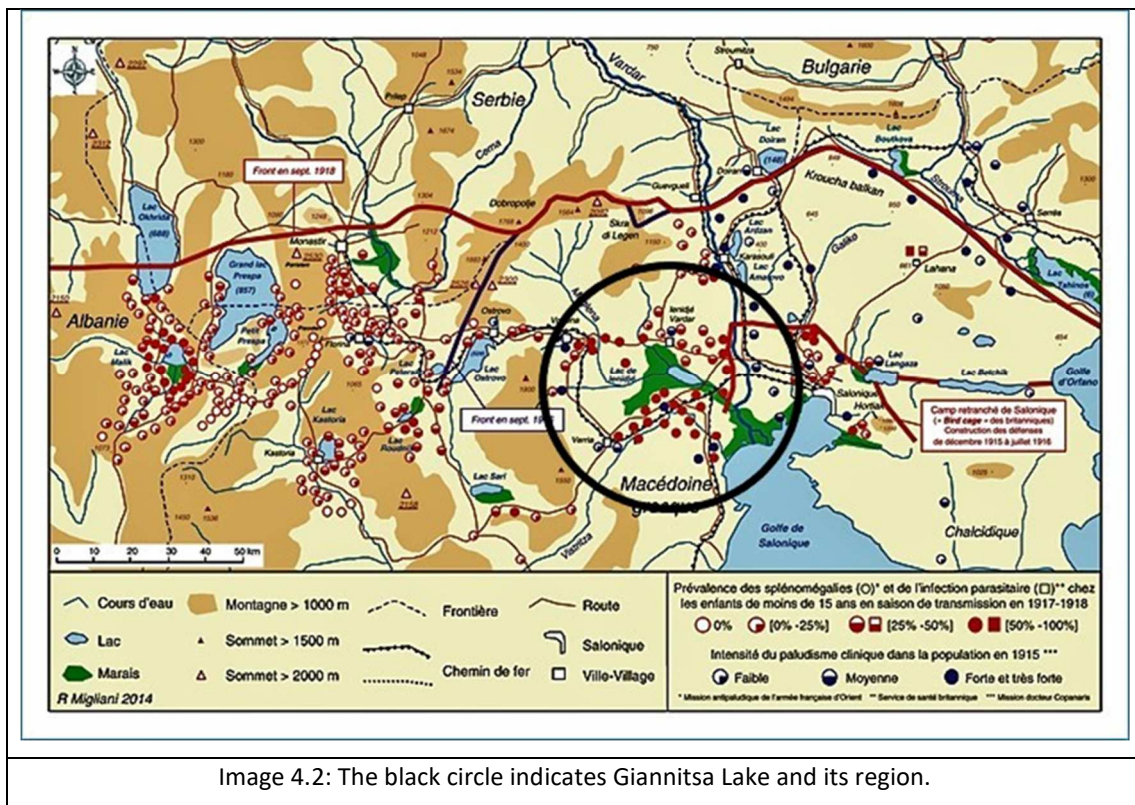


Image 4.2: The black circle indicates Giannitsa Lake and its region.

A small article appeared in *Makedonia* on May 10, 1913, the first sentence of which proudly announced the advent of a certain individual in Verroia, the small town situated on the western fringes of Giannitsa Plain, at the time occupied by the Greek Army:

Against Malaria, Veroia May 8

The famous writer, well-known not only to the Greek medical world for his splendid and innovative research on the biology of mosquitoes, the carriers of the protozoa [responsible for] the malarial fevers, but also to foreign doctors and to the medical societies and the Academies of France, England and Italy for his monographs, Mr. Ioannis Kardamatis, former professor of the National University, secretary general (sic) of the anti-malaria League, once under the protection of the Late National martyr King George etc. etc., now an auxiliary captain under the command of our Respected Government comes into the newly occupied, by our brave army, regions in order to study the ground regarding the etiology of malaria and in order to give lectures on the subject of the newest scientific knowledge and preventive methods against malaria.³⁶⁵

The sentence's structure obviously is confusing. What the journalist was trying to notify his compatriots about was that Dr. Ioannis Kardamatis was coming to the soon-to-be Greek town of Verroia to study the reasons why malaria was so widespread in the area and to give advice about how to avoid being infected. Being an auxiliary captain of the Greek Army had obviously nothing to do with it. In fact it could even be expected, as Greece was still in the grip of the Second Balkan War which means that the doctor's (auxiliary) military rank is mentioned here simply to underscore his loyalty to the nation-state. Apart from that though, what this article also mentioned that is important to this chapter was an institution, the actions or inaction of which will be the main protagonist of this chapter: the Greek Anti-Malaria League.

The Greek Anti-Malaria League (henceforth GAML) followed a familiar pattern regarding its foundation, similar to many Societies and Leagues at the time. Due to the severe economic challenges faced by the state, GAML did not seek to be put under its control. Instead, the founding committee of the League chose to become a non-governmental organization, at the same time requesting the protection of His Majesty, the King of Hellenes, undoubtedly a move that gained official acknowledgment of the organization.³⁶⁶ The first steps towards the establishment of GAML had been taken in 1903 when a renowned Greek doctor who studied in the best medical academies of Europe, Constantinos Savvas published a short pamphlet titled *Instructions toward countering malarial fevers* which contained, as the title suggested, information on how malaria sufferers could cope better with the disease. The pamphlet became a success, in fact to the point that its printing was undertaken

³⁶⁵ Kamvounis, 1913, *Against Malaria, 'Makedonia'*, 10/5, p. 4

³⁶⁶ Kardamatis, I., 1928, *Ta Pepragmena (1914-1928)*, Printing Shop Leonis, pp. Z'.

by the National Printing House and its distribution –in the thousands as Savvas noted– by the government. The publication was sent to every city and town in Greece (which at the time did not yet include Macedonia, Thrace and Crete).³⁶⁷ Savvas' dedication stirred the medical community, which was now more willing to participate and contribute to a more official anti-malarial organization. Thus, on February 18, 1905 a committee consisting of a high-ranking official from the Ministry of Economy (who later became the Minister of Economy), a prestigious entrepreneur from one of the most prominent families of Greece, a well-connected politician who served in numerous high-ranking positions over the years and a number of university professors who provided their scientific expertise gathered together in Athens to found GAML.³⁶⁸ The league's goals were crystal clear from the beginning, as Savvas recalled:



Image 4.3: GAML's insignia: Hercules defeating Hydra

[...] at the same time I also pointed out the measures that, in my judgment, could assist us in restraining the disease, which I summarized as these three: 1) The popularization of knowledge concerning malaria, 2) the sanitization of the settlements [situated] close to swamps, particularly small ones, and 3) [applying pressure] for the state to undertake the selling of quinine at a low price.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁷ *Ta Pepragmena*, pp. Σ'.

³⁶⁸ *Ta Pepragmena*, pp. Ζ'.

³⁶⁹ *Ta Pepragmena*, pp. Ζ'.

Additionally, in an attempt to make its iconography familiar to the broad audience, the League chose to adopt the image of Hercules cutting down the heads of Hydra – the mythological monster that resided in a Peloponnesian swamp- as its official insignia (Image 4.3).³⁷⁰

Unlike the other civic institutions that have been presented in the pages of this thesis, the success of which could be described as moderate at best, GAML's story was truly a triumphant one, especially considering the limited means that the League had at its disposal. In 1907 it initiated a campaign to sanitize the Marathon region, a cluster of villages located northeast of Athens. The situation there was hopeless. As Savvas and Kardamatis reported, the morbidity rate of Marathon's inhabitants to malaria was somewhere between 80-90%, while child morbidity, based on a sample they took from the local junior school was 100%.³⁷¹ A task force of GAML set up camp in the area performing a number of actions that to their knowledge could bring the situation under control. The nearby river mouth and the pools of stagnant water were sprayed with petrol, which at the time was used as an insecticide against mosquito larvae, while three GAML doctors provided quinine to the more than one thousand villagers of the Marathon hamlets.³⁷² Kardamatis (at the time secretary general of GAML) reported in a contented tone that morbidity rates after only a few weeks had fallen below 50%.³⁷³ The League's fruitful campaign continued also during the next year and was now even accepted by the locals:

Instead of the mistrust that they exhibited last year at the beginning, the now joyful and affable peasants greeted us, unshakably convinced that by setting up our laboratory, for the second year in a row, we had no other goal other than carrying out the utilitarian work of sanitizing their village, which is undertaken by the League.³⁷⁴

Indeed, even more prepared and confident now, after a four-month stay in the summer of 1908, GAML managed to almost eradicate malaria in Marathon, reducing the overall percentage of malarial infections to an astounding 2%.³⁷⁵ Their dedication in

³⁷⁰ *Ta Pepragmena*, pp. 1α'.

³⁷¹ Kardamatis, I., Savvas, K., 1909, *Ai Eksygiastikai ergasiai en Athinai kai Marathoni*, Printing Shop Leonis, p. 1.

³⁷² *Ai Eksygiastikai ergasiai en Athinai kai Marathoni*, pp. 1-2

³⁷³ *Ai Eksygiastikai ergasiai en Athinai kai Marathoni*, p. 1.

³⁷⁴ *Ai Eksygiastikai ergasiai en Athinai kai Marathoni*, p. 3.

³⁷⁵ *Ai Eksygiastikai ergasiai en Athinai kai Marathoni*, p. 9.

doing so becomes even more obvious by the inventiveness they used to convince even small children to take their daily dose of quinine, which apparently had a terribly bitter taste, by mixing the drug with chocolate or sugar, producing candy which then was given to them as a non-suspicious treat.³⁷⁶

Regardless of the newly-found national enthusiasm that emerged when Greece's borders were extended to the north in 1913, GAML remained unaccountably introverted about the new lands. We have seen that many non-governmental societies and organizations were more than eager to scour the new lands in order to add experience and prestige to their institutions, at the same time expressing faith in their ability to "Greekify" Macedonia, each in its respective field. GAML, however, decided against that. The only evidence that we have of GAML's presence in the province prior to 1922, comes from the small article cited above, verifying the Kardamatis' lecture in Verroia in 1913, as well as a thank you note published in the newspaper "Macedonia" two months later, written by a group of soldiers participating in the second Balkan War who had been wounded in the Kilkis Battle and had been treated by Kardamatis in Thessaloniki.³⁷⁷ Instead of expanding its influence to Macedonia, it seems that GAML chose to practice its expertise in more familiar grounds. In 1914 for example, while other institutions and non-governmental organizations were tasting their first bitter defeats in Macedonia, as presented in the previous chapters, the League organized the anti-malarial defense of Athens, focusing on the sanitization of the city's suburbs -at the time humble agricultural villages inhabited only by a handful of people.³⁷⁸ And even when GAML decided to "branch out" toward other parts of Greece, it did not choose Macedonia to do so. Rather than that, Kardamatis, most likely after leaving Thessaloniki where he had served as a doctor until the final phase of the First World War, became involved in a grand sanitizing mission for the city of Volos in Thessaly, contributing to a less malaria-prone life for the city's residents.³⁷⁹

It could be argued that one simple reason why GAML did not bother with Macedonia was because it was not needed there. From 1914 to 1918 the province was in the hands of the Allies as well as those of the more than capable doctors of the allied forces. As we have seen, however, those same capable doctors could actually

³⁷⁶ *Ai Eksygiastikai ergasiai en Athinai kai Marathoni* p. 7, p. 24.

³⁷⁷ Trifyllis, A., Smyrnas, E., Katsomoggelis, C., 1913, Thanking letter, *Makedonia* 7/7, p.2.

³⁷⁸ Kardamatis, I., 1928, *Ta Pepragmena (1914-1928)*, Printing Shop Leonis, pp. 353-406.

³⁷⁹ *Ta Pepragmena (1914-1928)*, pp. 483-495.

have used all the help they could get, since their anti-malarial tactics failed to stop the decimation of their troops by the disease. It was not only the troops who suffered, though. This misconception continues due to the fact that military casualties at the front are given priority in documentation over civilian ones. However, both in times of peace and in times of war, Macedonia was by far the most malaria-ridden place in Greece. The Giannitsa Lake largely contributed to this infestation. The informative map created by the group of medical historians presented above (Image 4.2) already suggests that morbidity rates among locals in the area were particularly high. The same goes for the one lecture that Kardamatis gave in 1913 in Verroia.

It is very difficult to find accurate data on the matter before 1923. A better understanding of the situation in the Giannitsa Plain could be achieved though, by piecing together different fragments of information coming from disparate sources, thus revealing the real size of the problem. We do know, for example, that a significant number of Macedonian Strugglers contracted malaria during their gloomy stay in the Giannitsa Lake between 1903 to 1908. In fact, one of them was Tellos Agras (*nom de guerre* of Sarantos Agapinos), the most famous Macedonian Struggler, who just before retiring from the fight due to severe malarial fevers, was captured and executed by Bulgarian nationalists.³⁸⁰ Another clue pointing to the commonality of malaria among the people of the Giannitsa Plain was a major survey, conducted by Kardamatis -who by that time had been promoted to the position of Health Inspector of the Ministry of Transportation- in 1924 which registered *all* the stagnant bodies of water in Greece.³⁸¹ The fact that the survey was carried out by a GAML veteran tells us that its primary aim was to sanitize the countryside from malaria spewing swamps and not its use for other exploits, as for example agricultural prospecting. This extensive survey stated that the Giannitsa Lake and all the surrounding swamps that were fed by the lake were the biggest problem that stood in the way of the Ministry. Tellingly, four out of the first ten entries included in the list, covering a total of more than 20,000 hectares of land, were directly connected with the Giannitsa Lake, a fact that makes it unlikely that the whole area could be freed from the perils of malaria.³⁸² The frequent advertisements for specific doctors and drug stores found in the

³⁸⁰ Dakin, Douglas. *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia: 1897-1913*. Vol. 88. Thessalonīke: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1966.

³⁸¹ Kardamatis, I., 1924, *Statistikoi Pinakes ton Elon kai tis Sychnotitos tis Elonosias en Elladi*, National Printing House.

³⁸² *Statistikoi Pinakes ton Elon kai tis Sychnotitos tis Elonosias en Elladi*, pp.13

newspaper “Macedonia” also hints at the normalization of the disease. As one advertisement of 1913 suggested, malaria, or “swamp fevers” as it was more widely known outside medical circles at the time, was one of the most common conditions one could encounter:

Dr. Mr. Giannoudis

After studying in Paris the microscopic investigation of illnesses, he investigates microscopically and diagnoses most of the acute and chronic diseases. Especially consumption, syphilis, gonorrhoea, swamp and typhoid fevers, meningitis [...] Treatment through injections [...] ³⁸³

Even Kardamatis confirmed a malarial endemic in the area, though only retrospectively. In 1926 he confessed that by 1914 the Greek state apparatus had known about the medical emergency in the Giannitsa Plain. As he wrote:

Since then and up until the year 1920, the intense and extended outbreaks continued in those provinces, following the abundant rainfalls [that occurred] during late spring and early summer of this year, which resulted in a great expansion of malaria, of which intense outbreaks and elsewhere even pandemics were observed not only in Thrace and Macedonia but all over the country. ³⁸⁴

If the presence of malaria in the Giannitsa Plain was not a subject of mere speculation, but a grim reality, then why did GAML refuse to tackle Macedonia’s needs with a capable medical staff? The answers might range from the problem of internal accounting to a personal inability to command such a titanic operation in a war-torn area so far away from the organization’s headquarters. Still, an informed hypothesis is in order. More importantly, it should be a hypothesis that also allows us to explain why GAML eventually went to Macedonia when it did, and why it became actively involved with fighting malaria, after the population exchange of 1923. In 1923 and 1924 Greece witnessed the worst malaria outbreak in its history. In hindsight, this was to be expected. The Greek state at the time had experienced a bitter defeat in Asia Minor, an economic and political collapse, and a massive population exchange. The overwhelmed government started packing thousands upon thousands of people into areas where the sanitation infrastructure was inadequate. As

³⁸³ Anonymous, 1913, Doctor Mr. Giannoudis, *‘Makedonia’* 25/8, pp. 3.

³⁸⁴ Kardamatis, I., Greek Red Cross, 1926, *I Diapaidagogisis pros katapolemin tis elonosias en Elladi: Drasis en Thraki kai Makedonia*, National Printing House, pp. 22.

we have already seen, the Giannitsa Plain was obviously one of them. As I will argue, the density of the refugee settlements was directly proportionate to the severity of the disease in the area, thus the already bad malaria problem flared up causing mortality rates to rise sharply, particularly in the southern half of the plain (Image 4.4). It was only then that GAML initiated its Macedonian campaign in 1923.

When examining the published material of the organization that coincides with its advance into the province one thing becomes very clear: although GAML had been initially founded with the goal of relieving Greece from malaria, from 1923 onwards we come across a change in tone that in the following years becomes more and more pronounced. The rhetoric of GAML's founder, Kardamatis, gradually acquired strong nationalistic undertones. Curing and preventing malaria was no longer a goal in itself but rather a step toward maintaining the vigor of the nation. The texts that support such a claim are numerous. In the preface of the 1923 survey regarding the swamps of Greece, the main body of which consisted only of the name and extent of each swamp, we find the following:

[...] Because, one statistical investigation based on such foundations, apart from providing solutions to the most crucial sanitary problems, to the identification of the various damages that this disease inflicts upon the State and the Race, will greatly contribute to the establishment of the agricultural and financial policies of the State, the actual betterment of the economic, industrial, commercial etc. progress as well as the private wealth in general.³⁸⁵

³⁸⁵ *Statistikoi Pinakes ton Elon kai tis Sychnotitos tis Elonosias en Elladi*, pp. 4.

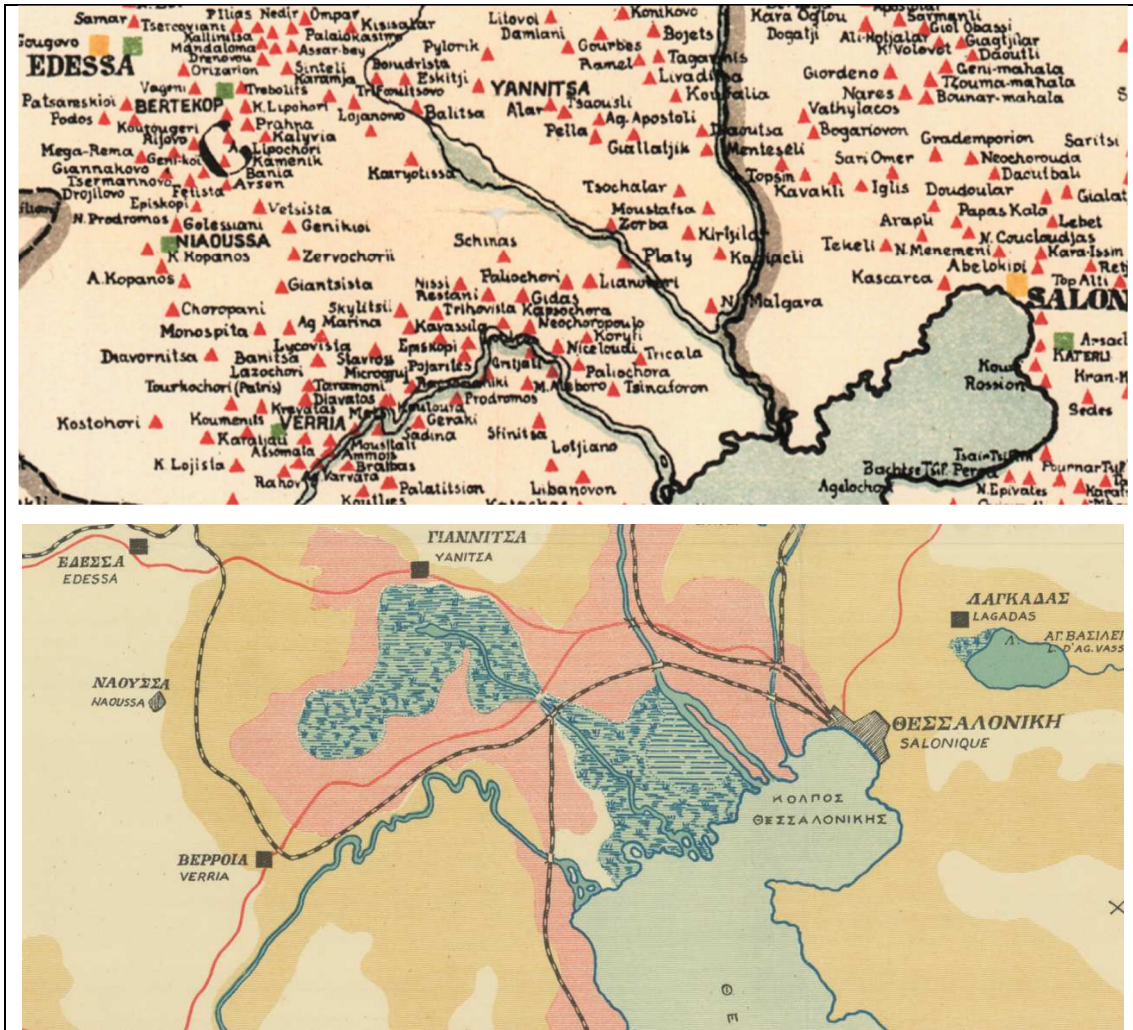


Image 4.4: The top map shows the distribution and place names of the refugee settlement across the Giannitsa [Yannitsa] Plain, noted with a red triangle. The bottom map shows the extent of malarial infections in the Giannitsa Plain, the red color signifying intense infections and the yellow color moderate infections.

GAML -basically led singlehandedly by Kardamatis- had already championed the anti-malarial efforts in Macedonia. Even though the worst had passed and the 1923-1924 outbreaks had been countered to a certain degree, the disease still claimed many lives. By the summer of 1926 GAML had managed to set up medical camps in all the towns and cities that surrounded the Giannitsa Plain in a joint operation with the state apparatus and the Greek chapter of the Red Cross.³⁸⁶ Giannitsa, Edessa, Verroia, Naoussa and obviously Thessaloniki, each had its own camp with trained staff, while remarkably, smaller camps established in refugee villages, as for example

³⁸⁶ *Statistikoi Pinakes ton Elon kai tis Sychnotitos tis Elonosias en Elladi*, pp. 6.

Nea Pella, capable of handling the basic medical needs of its residents.³⁸⁷ The adhesion of Kardamatis to a clear nationalist reasoning persisted as well. In the introduction to a short publication that reported all the preventive measures that had been taken against malaria in Macedonia and Thrace, the doctor wrote:

Our mission across the National peripheries [or frontiers], apart from having merely a sanitary goal, it also had a civilizing one, that way proving in practice the State's great interest, from which stemmed the [already] decided permanent and final sanitization of the newly-established settlements from malaria, the residents of which fell prey to this anachronistic disease, during the first years of their rough resettlement, which [the disease] worked its way not only through the physical damage and moral corrosion, but also mitigated the multiplication of the State's inhabitants in general, through the gradual but certain degeneration of the race.³⁸⁸

It seems that Kardamatis' pattern of connecting a serious public health problem -that was made worse due to the recklessness of the state- to the collective vitality of the Greek nation, instead of simply empathizing with the tormented patients, was gladly taken up by many other nationalists. It was not long before public discourse was filled with statements that promoted the ideal of being healthy *for* the nation-state. From 1928 on, when the first patches of reclaimed land in the former Giannitsa Lake were being distributed to refugees, local journalists frequently emphasized how loyalty to the nation was inextricably entangled with one's capability to produce for the state. After all, the healthy body of the Macedonian refugee-colonist reflected the diligence of the Greek race, measured easily in Greece's positive gross domestic product index. That is why the journalist who wrote the main article for the newspaper "Macedonia" on September 17, 1928 noted cynically that in the course of reaching a "True Renaissance," the state ought to eradicate malaria which "costs a fair amount of billions [in Drachmas] and some thousands of lives each year".³⁸⁹ In the same spirit, this was how a journalist presented the Thessaloniki International Fair of 1928, an exhibition of considerable importance that constituted an influential political and economic event of the Balkans:

³⁸⁷ *I Diapaidagogisis pros katapolemisin tis elonosias en Elladi: Drasis en Thraki kai Makedonia*, pp. 12-13.

³⁸⁸ *I Diapaidagogisis pros katapolemisin tis elonosias en Elladi: Drasis en Thraki kai Makedonia*, pp. 6.

³⁸⁹ Anonymous, 1928, *I Alithini Anagennisis, Makedonia* 17/9, pp. 1.

Once, when Greek vitality was being wasted away in the struggle against outlanders and malaria, only the fatalist grain of the Turk and the red pepper of the Bulgar were growing in the fertile plains of Macedonia and Thrace. Beyond that there was only the mosquito's uncultivated hell. Now, that the sweat of the salvaged race is mixed [with the soil], we cultivate cotton, sesame, silk, premium tobacco, blond wheat, rye, vegetables, opium.³⁹⁰

If we did not know any better, judging only by the optimism and national pride with which the above journalist presented the situation, we would assume that the anti-malarial campaign in Macedonia had already been triumphant and that mosquitoes and their diseases had been eradicated under the victorious hoes and plows of the refugee-farmers. At least that was what was supposed to happen.

Although the anti-malarial campaign in Giannitsa Plain started under very challenging circumstances, we must remember that it was undertaken by two prominent medical institutions: the Greek Red Cross and GAML. GAML's previous successes in "Old Greece" foreshadowed a positive outcome in Macedonia, while the superior equipment of the Red Cross, which even included a film crew, made for a good start. The plan was to hit malaria where it thrived, namely in the countryside, a stark contrast when compared to the academic lecture that Kardamatis had given a dozen years earlier in Verroia. This time the process was much more organized, to the point that it resembled a synchronized military operation, rather than a medical one, as indicated by its work schedule:

- a) On-the-ground instructions to the local doctors regarding the part covering the etiology of malaria [...]
- b) On-the-ground search of the causes of the endemic-epidemic malaria [...]
- c) Clear tutoring on the causes of endemic malaria for the specific city, town, village or hamlet to the Administrative authorities, the medical personnel, the intellectuals etc. [...]
- d) Election of a sanitizing committee [...] responsible for the exact implementation of the sanitary works that we have indicated.
- e) Division of the settlement into zones for mosquito patrol [...]
- f) Countryside lectures and tutoring for the broad masses [...] accompanied by the showing of the relevant movie clip along with an explanation in the language of the people of the images they see.
- g) Propaganda for [the use of] quinine and especially for the State's quinine [...] ³⁹¹

³⁹⁰ Anonymous, 1928, Triti Diethnis Ekthesi, *Makedonia* 30/9, pp. 1.

³⁹¹ *I Diapaidagogisis pros katapolemisin tis elonosias en Elladi: Drasis en Thraki kai Makedonia*, pp. 7-8.

Kardamatis also concluded that in order for this endeavor to work, three things were needed that went beyond his control: Pure quinine controlled by the state as opposed to the adulterated version sold by drugstores, the horsepower of dredges to drain the vast swamp and, the most peculiar of all, intensive cultivation of the fields.³⁹² Using empirical observation instead of actual scientific data -very unlikely for him- Kardamatis also asserted that only a plowed plot was a sanitary plot:

Because Agriculture and any other cultivation of the soil, potent servants in the restriction of malaria, exercise great influence on the overall sanitization of the country, as was proven in 1915 when malaria was restricted substantially, partly by the intense cultivation of the land at the time, due to the port blockades [of Thessaloniki and other ports of Macedonia by the Allied Navy].³⁹³

Strangely enough though, this particular argument did not appear in a 1940 report to dictator Metaxas (at the time Prime Minister of Greece) which assessed the former efforts of Kardamatis' campaign in Macedonia. By then, GAML had been disintegrated; its staff had been absorbed by the state's many different newly-established departments that were now fighting malaria, while the League's head, Constantinos Savvas, had died in 1929. The positive mark that the League had left on the Greek countryside was undisputed. Even if it had not managed to avert the crises of 1923-1924 it seems that it had succeeded in handling the situation well during the next years. At least this is what the 1940 report suggests. Here, the protagonist was not Kardamatis. The fact that he would die two years later shows that he was in no position to direct the anti-malarial defense of the state anymore.³⁹⁴ Instead, this time the report bore the names of two equally prominent individuals; that of the head of the Sanitary University of Athens and professor of malariology, Grigoris Livadas and that of Dr. Ioannis Sfaggos, a hygienist employed by the John Hopkins University.³⁹⁵

The research they conducted on the subject of malaria in the Giannitsa Plain during the period of 1933-1939 shows that the disease had not yet vanished. In fact, it was not even close to vanishing. One positive outcome could be confirmed though.

³⁹² *I Diapaidagogisis pros katapolemisin tis elonosias en Elladi: Drasis en Thraki kai Makedonia*, pp. 30-40

³⁹³ *I Diapaidagogisis pros katapolemisin tis elonosias en Elladi: Drasis en Thraki kai Makedonia*, pp.27-28

³⁹⁴ Tsiamis, C., Piperaki, E.T. and Tsakris, A., 2013. The history of the Greek Anti-Malaria League and the influence of the Italian School of Malariology. *Infez Med*, 21, pp.60-75.

³⁹⁵ Livadas, G., Sfaggos, I., 1940, *I Elonosia en Elladi (1930-1940)*, Pirsos.

The mortality rates had gone down significantly. Apart from that, the investigation showed that the disease had alternating periods of outbreaks and recessions. Using more advanced indicators, for example, Sfaggos and Livadas observed that the town of Giannitsa as well as a couple of villages of the Giannitsa Plain suffered substantially during the period of 1938-1939, despite the fact that the situation had improved from 1933 to 1936.³⁹⁶

On the subject of the GAML's efforts, it also seems that the agricultural work ethic that Kardamatis had attempted to convey to the refugee-colonists also sat well with Livadas and Sfaggos. This is what an official of the Ministry of Agriculture, Haralampos Anagnostopoulos, also believed when he was sent to the prefecture of Giannitsa to see for himself how the colonization process was proceeding *vis-à-vis* the lake reclamation and the colonists' recuperation from malaria. His long mission lasted two-and-a-half years, from 1929 to 1932 and despite the fact that the differences he saw with the past were significant, he did complain about a couple of points. First was the affinity that the people of the Giannitsa Plain showed toward alcohol. Anagnostopoulos wrote back to his superiors in regard to the effectiveness of the anti-malarial medicine in the area:

The bad habit that they have in consuming great amounts of alcohol (in the form of *ouzo*, etc. wine, liquors) functions in a very harmful way on the health situation of the residents; they even justify it as a necessary perquisite to supposedly fight malaria. This very bad habit and its false justification must be countered in every way possible as a means of stopping the residents from being exhausted and incapable of being eager to work and to resist the disease.³⁹⁷

And in order to make a point about the refugees' indifference to becoming the motivated "agricultural powerhouses" he wished them to be, he later recounted a story that involved himself, some locusts, and the disinterested alcohol-loving, malarious refugees. While Anagnostopoulos was in the prefecture of Giannitsa, the farmers attempted to hide from him the fact that a swarm of locusts had been going through the fields, obviously to prevent him from making a big fuss out of it. It seems that they failed though, to which Anagnostopoulos responded:

³⁹⁶ *I Elonosia en Elladi (1930-1940)*, pp. 147-149

³⁹⁷ Anagnostopoulos, H., 1933-1934, National Printing House, pp. 185-186

But even when our service discovered it [the swarm], despite their [the refugees] previous attempt to hide it, when they came to work on it they exhibited a dreadful picture of laziness as well as unimaginable and classic indifference to the danger that was threatening them in the area, to such a degree that the writer of these lines was forced to start using by himself a flamethrower [to destroy the swarm] hoping that this would urge them to engage with the task at hand zealously, but to no avail.³⁹⁸

To conclude however, we must return to an issue that was posed earlier: assessing why Kardamatis and the GAML left native Macedonians to their own devices from 1913 to 1922 and chose only to interfere following the advent of the refugee-colonists. No answer to this question could count as definitive. As this chapter has shown, GAML, the Red Cross and the Greek state stepped in to fight the battle against malaria in Macedonia when they were needed the most, and in fact they succeeded in controlling the situation sufficiently. The outbreaks of 1923 and 1924 were not repeated. The complete absence of the League from Macedonia during the previous decade though, might suggest the unwillingness of both GAML and/or the state to come to the aid of a population that had demonstrated stubborn unwillingness to conform to the vision of their new rulers. As this chapter has suggested, for Kardamatis, curing malaria was not about fulfilling the Hippocratic Oath, but rather, a prerequisite for achieving the high agricultural yield goals that the state had set for Macedonia. Wasting resources, staff and money on healing peasants that were reluctant to assist the Greek state was not a priority, especially when at the same time GAML could accomplish that in other provinces of the country. To some extent, this interpretation of the organization's occasional indifference toward Macedonia might seem callous.

However, being obsessed with matters of productivity rather than serving a righteous humanitarian cause just for the sake of it was not simply Kardamatis's quirk. It was the fundamental lens through which personal health -especially that of the laboring masses- was seen in many national and imperial contexts. This was what Didier Deleule and François Guéry demonstrated in their classic book "The Productive Body" in 1972;³⁹⁹ and this was what Frank Snowden, much more recently, repeated in his work concerning the anti-malarial efforts in Italy during the 20th century.⁴⁰⁰ In fact, it was exactly that Italian anti-malarial mentality that had

³⁹⁸ *Agricultural Bulletin 16-17*, pp. 207-208.

³⁹⁹ Guéry, F. and Deleule, D., 2014. *The productive body*. Winchester: Zero Books.

⁴⁰⁰ Snowden, F., 2008. *The conquest of malaria: Italy, 1900-1962*. Yale University Press.

fascinated Kardamatis and Savvas, the latter explicitly stating in 1928 that GAML “was based on the Italian League of my good friend, Professor of Hygiene in Rome, Angelo Celli”, the practices of whom he had seen himself during his journey to Italy in 1904, only one year prior to the foundation of GAML.⁴⁰¹

⁴⁰¹ The history of the Greek Anti-Malaria League and the influence of the Italian School of Malariology. *Infez Med*, 64.

Chapter 4.3-Brick, Cement and Stone: Macedonian ekistics and urban-planning in Giannitsa

Walls of mudbricks, roofs of thick thatch bundles, clay tiles here and there, floors of beaten earth. Both for houses, storage shacks and pens. That was what a traveler in the Giannitsa Plain would have come across during the early 20th century. This would also be the reason why he would condemn the locals for their primitiveness, given that he probably would have been a civilized city dweller, a carefree *flâneur* of the country. Truth be told though, across the Macedonian countryside not much had changed in the way that rural settlements were developed and constructed for centuries. Yet, there was hardly any reason why such a change should occur, as long as the humble mud huts were sturdy enough to cover the residential and productive needs of their residents and as long as the reed huts of the Giannitsa swamp provided reliable shelter for their hunting and fishing dwellers. Indeed, save for a very limited number of cities in southern Macedonia -Thessaloniki being one of them- the rest of the settlements throughout the province followed the same pattern of reproduction: that of the organic village that expanded irregularly according to the needs of the community and the loose guidelines that this community set for its members, using as its building material the resources that were at its disposal. As this chapter will demonstrate, the same went even for the largest town on the plain to a certain degree, namely Giannitsa.

The arrival of the refugees after 1923 acted as a potent catalyst that would change the way Macedonian ekistics would be handled. Following the fulfillment of the refugees' main priorities, the ones that were needed to secure their livelihood in the long term, the Greek governments of the post-population exchange era were faced with the problem of making their stay as lucrative as possible. As I have repeatedly emphasized in this thesis, such attempts entailed heavy state interventionism to ensure that everything would go according to plan. From the provision of livestock and agricultural tools, to the establishment of institutions that were intended to aid the consolidation of the refugees in their new homeland, the state had always been the regulator of the refugees' lives, despite the numerous setbacks that had mitigated such attempts. This chapter examines one last aspect: the process of constructing and planning the new settlements of Macedonia. This task was neither symbolic nor value

neutral. The manipulation of space rarely is. On the contrary; the interwar town planning of Macedonian settlements was an essential part of what would complete the intended incorporation of both the refugees and the province into the Greek state.

This phenomenon is in fact very common in the international literature. Many scholars, especially during the 1980's and 1990's stressed how urban planning constituted a powerful tool in the hands of the planners, in enforcing a certain vision through technocratic means upon the population of the city, town or village that was going to dwell there. Interestingly most of those works examine urban planning in colonial contexts where the newly-founded settlements of the colonizers, most of them exhibiting the western/civilized pattern of development, stood in vivid contrast to the indigenous villages or even the untamed wilderness of the land. Patricia Seed in her *Ceremonies of Possession: Europe's Conquest of the New World, 1492-1640* dedicated the first chapter to narrating how British colonists, as soon as they landed on the coasts of America, engaged in the construction of quasi-urban environments. Albeit elementary, with cottage houses, fences and gardens, all conveying the notion of property, these environments signified that the colonists were not simply passing through. Instead, they were there in pursuit of new property.⁴⁰² Even earlier, Edgar T. Thompson delved into the historical sociology of the European colonists at a time when the traumatic memories of colonization were still fresh. Thompson concluded that plantations, namely the colonial agricultural units of production and at the same time the first samples of European civic planning and oppression in the colonies were designed:

(1) as a way of settling and concentrating a population of mixed origins on a frontier, a broad and moving area in transition from a lower to, presumably, a higher form of civilization; (2) as a way of producing an agricultural staple for a metropolitan market within geographical limits fixed by the means of transport;(3) as a way of disciplining a population for labor under the authority of a planter; and (4) as an institution which develops in time through collective activity a distinctive style of life or culture.⁴⁰³

Similar to Thompson's assessment was the statement of David Hamer. In his 1990 book titled *New towns in the New World: images and perceptions of the nineteenth-*

⁴⁰² Seed, Patricia. *Ceremonies of possession in Europe's conquest of the New World, 1492-1640*. Cambridge University Press, 1995, 16-39.

⁴⁰³ Thompson, Edgar Tristram. *Plantation societies, race relations, and the South: the regimentation of populations: selected papers of Edgar T. Thompson*. Books on Demand, 1975, 39.

century urban frontier Hamer contributed greatly to the subject, determining that urban planning was not only the process of imposing western notions on a multitude of “inferior” peoples. It was also a process that demonstrated the subjugation of nature to civilized man in the starkest way possible. This was what drove the first Americans he claimed:

There was a powerful urge to develop order in the landscape. Straight streets did not occur in nature, and a town’s grid, when so prominently displayed, for example, in bird’s-eye views was the ultimate symbol of imposition of human order on the wilderness.⁴⁰⁴

Although Macedonia was not exactly the early-17th-century Americas and thus no Macedonian town could ever be compared adequately to Tenochtitlan, Santo Domingo or Jamestown, there are certainly many parallels to be drawn. The path from an ‘organic’ settlement to a fully planned city or town, functioning as a completely engineered system (both socially and environmentally) is bound to be the same everywhere across the globe, simply because the same powers are set in motion, overpowering the desire for self-determination of the local populace. There are hardly better words to express this fact than the ones that Robert Home used in 1997 to underscore this point:

While the concept of the colonial city is still useful for the development of theory, all cities are in a way colonial. They are created through the exercise of dominance by some groups over others, to extract agricultural surplus, provide services, and exercise political control. Transport improvements then allow one society or state to incorporate other territory and peoples overseas. The city thus becomes an instrument of colonization and (in the case of the European overseas empires) racial dominance.⁴⁰⁵

The planting of urban environments was not of course prioritized by the Greek state immediately after the annexation of Macedonia. Besides, what good could they do given the utter chaos that followed the collapse of the front in Anatolia? The constant arrival of caravans of refugees occupied every inch in, out and around the towns and villages of Thrace and Macedonia after their safe passage to Greece. Camps of makeshift shacks appeared along the trail they followed, whether they entered Greece via sea or land. Fearing loss of control of the situation since the

⁴⁰⁴ Hamer, David Allan, and David Hamer. *New Towns in the New World: Images and Perceptions of the Nineteenth-Century Urban Frontier*. Columbia University Press, 1990, 198

⁴⁰⁵ Home, Robert. *Of planting and planning: The making of British colonial cities*. Routledge, 2005, 2

refugees might well flood the cities of Macedonia seeking medical care and jobs, the technocrats of the Greek state apparatus decided to take preemptive measures to avert the creation of slums and other unpleasant urban scenarios. Because of the fact that this danger suddenly became real, the year 1923 signifies the point in Greek history when the state saw the necessity of regulating the development of cities and towns, which until then had been done only in an erratic fashion wherever it was deemed fitting.

Thus, on the 19th of May 1923, in the Government Gazette we find a decree mostly intended for the refugees, but also for war invalids and widows, concerning the erection of ‘affordable houses’. The decree also specified that the houses would be erected by private companies on behalf of the state, which would guarantee the complete compensation of those companies, who would sell the houses as cheaply as possible to those willing to buy them. More importantly, as is stated in the decree, the houses were to be erected on lots, fields and even quarries, the appropriation of which had been regulated by a 1922 law that enabled the state to make urgent requisitions whenever this was needed.⁴⁰⁶ Similarly, the Parliament voted another law, even more important than the previous one. It was titled ‘On city, town and settlement planning of the State and their construction’ and it constituted the first set of strict guidelines that would help control the development of residential matters across the country for the next decades. The first article of the law set the tone by making it clear that from now on, urban planning was a state matter:

Article 1

1. Every city and town of the State ought to be arranged and developed on the basis of a plan defined and approved according to the principles of the present decree, ensuring that it covers its foreseeable necessities, conforming to the imposed conditions in terms of hygiene, security, economy and aesthetics.⁴⁰⁷

There are times in the study of history when the taking effect of a law does not translate into pragmatic results that a historian can easily observe. This was definitely not such a case. The laws were followed by intensive construction projects in Athens and the whole of Macedonia. The first steps seemed to be quite inconsistent, as the

⁴⁰⁶ Greece. The Cabinet. *On the erection of affordable houses*, First Issue, 19/05/1923.

⁴⁰⁷ Greece. George II. *On city, town and settlement planning of the State and their construction*, First Issue, 16/08/1923.

relief apparatus had not yet been organized enough to cope with the size of the problem. As it was not exactly easy to find companies and contractors willing to undertake jobs on such short and uncertain notice, the state was forced to rely upon private generosity for the erection of the first elementary houses. “We accept donations in stone, bricks, tiles, lime and nails” was the call published in the daily newspaper of the province.⁴⁰⁸ It was not long before the situation was regulated to a certain degree and Greece stopped resembling a failed state, but not without the significant help, mostly in organizational matters, by the RSC, which undertook the resettlement process of the refugees in the countryside in its totality. The sudden boom in the expansion of towns and villages and the foundation of thousands of new settlements is very easy to follow, simply by browsing the pages of the Macedonian press. The demand for bricks, tiles and timber rose rapidly and despite the fact that in the beginning contractors believed that they could only rely on building materials produced by Macedonian small industries, they soon found out that this was impossible due to the sheer amount of sheds that had to be built in order to host the refugees. The reports coming from the countryside, attesting to the imminent construction of hundreds of refugee houses all at once, became very frequent. In only a very brief sample research on the matter from 1924 and 1925 we find the following:

In order to erect 1000 shacks intended for the temporary accommodation of refugee families we accept offers for every hundred shacks, only for labor as all the materials will be granted by the Settlement services on the spot.⁴⁰⁹

We announce that the auction of sealed proposals that was scheduled for the 20th of June for the construction of seven hundred double sheds will take place on the 2nd of July...⁴¹⁰

Mr. Zachariadis, inspector of the Settlement’s technical department, returned yesterday from his tour across the prefecture of Serres [...] In the aforementioned prefecture 300 sheds were erected [...] Of them [the sheds] of the first two are made out of stone while the others out of brick.⁴¹¹

The situation of the Verroia’s refugees, settled in agricultural settlements is rather good. [...] Both the service and the refugees are now preoccupied with the lack of the residential land that is needed to

⁴⁰⁸ Anonymous, “Refugee Care Fund” *Macedonia*, 21/09/1923, 2

⁴⁰⁹ Anonymous, “Declaration” *Macedonia*, 14/06/1924, 3

⁴¹⁰ Anonymous, “Announcement” *Macedonia*, 26/06/1924, 2

⁴¹¹ Anonymous, “The Settlement’s measures” *Macedonia*, 04/06/1925, 3

store the products of their labor. 1300 sheds are being constructed and will be handed in before winter begins.⁴¹²

In some less needy areas, the building of the new elementary sheds was taken up by the refugees, which added a more ‘grassroots’ twist to the whole process, although the building materials were again provided by the Settlement services and the RSC:

The erection works for 20 sheds in Nares will begin in the upcoming week. Also in the upcoming week, the erection of 90 sheds will commence in Ano Volovot [present day *Nea Santa*]. All the above sheds will be erected by the refugees themselves, who have been given the necessary funds in compliance with the latest decision by the General Directorate of Settlement.⁴¹³

By 1925, the Greek state and all its adjacent mechanisms that were entrusted with tackling the needs of the refugees had in their hands the first numbers that roughly sketched out what had been achieved and more importantly what else needed to be done. Fifteen thousand sheds had been constructed for the agricultural resettlement of refugees across Macedonia, a number undoubtedly impressive as it meant that a plethora of new villages had sprung in the countryside, while old hamlets and towns received a dramatic expansion. As the pro-government newspaper *Makedonia* noted, however, with a mild criticism of the government for which it was rooting, this was not nearly enough. In fact, the RSC, as a reporter noted, needed to construct fifteen thousand sheds *more* in order to house adequately all the still-homeless families.⁴¹⁴

Dwelling for a moment on these not-entirely-perfect pieces of news actually might be useful. As *Makedonia* was a heavily pro-Liberal party newspaper, all the positive developments regarding residential matters were presented in such a way as to praise how the party -at the time governing Greece- was handling the situation. On the one hand this suggests that taking such news at face value might be a foolish thing to do. On the other, it means that every tiny trace of negative news could hide beneath it whole icebergs of mismanagement and corruption capable of rendering a more genuine description of the circumstances in Macedonia. The collapse of a shed’s roof

⁴¹² Anonymous, “The refugees of Verroia” *Macedonia*, 18/08/1925, 2

⁴¹³ Anonymous, “New settlements” *Macedonia*, 23/05/1925, 3

⁴¹⁴ Anonymous, “Agricultural Residence” *Macedonia*, 13/08/1925, 4. On that same matter, Elizabeth Kontogiorgi has noted that the overall number of constructed refugee sheds all over Greece by the end of the 1920’s was above forty thousand. The difference between this number and the one stated in the text is not surprising if we take into account that despite the fact that Macedonia accepted the majority of the refugees, a large number of them ended up in Thrace, Crete and more importantly in Athens.

in Thessaloniki that killed two refugees was only one of the many incidents that fueled suspicions about the way operations were conducted.⁴¹⁵ In reality, the tendency of Greek officials to be completely incompetent managers of public funds or, even worse, malicious embezzlers, had been exhibited well before the defeat of Greece in Asia Minor. More precisely in 1922, the royalist newspaper of Macedonia ‘The Light’ revealed a case of economic irregularities that had occurred in the town of Verroia, regarding the resettling process of the refugees there.⁴¹⁶ Even though the newspaper avoided taking sides, it published the –alleged- complaints of a large number of refugees who accused the Settlement Supervisor –a local official responsible with watching over the resettlement process- of pocketing the allowance that was destined to be spent for their housing needs. The scam he devised was simplistic. When 65 refugee families from Verroia appeared before him asking for their housing allowance, amounting to 250 Drachmas, the Supervisor withheld the money and instead ordered them to return to their houses and wait for the allowance to arrive via mail. Indeed, a few days later each refugee family received an envelope, which however contained not 250 Drachmas but 225 Drachmas. As the refugees asserted, the rest of the 1650 Drachmas in total that had gone missing had been pinched by the Supervisor to repay a loan of his, thus forcing the refugees to take to the streets and to the press, contacting a certain Mr. Taxinopoulos, who published the story.⁴¹⁷

The less than 2000 drachmas that the Supervisor –allegedly- embezzled were however just a drop in the ocean of mismanagement compared to what would surface in 1925, only a few months after Greece had managed to obtain a very costly loan that was meant to alleviate the refugees’ situation. On January 23rd 1925, Konstantinos Malouchos, a young intellectual and agronomist submitted his resignation from the position he had held until then as a high-standing Technical Consultant of RSC. He decided to go out with a bang though. In his letter of resignation to the Committee Malouchos suggested that the RSC was not only the idealist non-governmental organization that would soften the blow of the population exchange, but also yet

⁴¹⁵ Anonymous, “The ones responsible ought to investigate” *Macedonia*, 08/07/1924, 2.

⁴¹⁶ It must be recalled at this point that as Greece had been in a constant state of war since 1912, there had been many different waves of refugees who had come to Greece mainly from Bulgaria, Serbia, Russia and the Ottoman Empire. However, their number paled next to what was to come.

⁴¹⁷ Taxinopoulos, “What do the refugees complain about” *The Light*, 15/02/1922, 3.

another excuse for Greek officials to become richer at the expense of settling the refugees. Malouchos wrote:

For a long time now, the RSC's organization has been going through an organizational and moral crisis, the symptoms of which became apparent even to the public and which occurred on the one hand due to the bad handling of the settlement matters and on the other due to the absence of stern and enlightened leadership and honest administration [...].⁴¹⁸

It was as though he could foresee the breaking of a storm, and Malouchos managed to leave the ship before it sank. In the coming months several smaller or bigger scandals made their appearance in the pages of both local and national newspapers. What Malouchos had warned about was gradually becoming real. Most of those scandals involved shady business and non-transparent deals with contractor companies that were favored by the one or the other RSC official. In simpler words, this meant that the construction contracts for the thousands of refugee sheds were not earned by the lowest bidder in open auctions, as the law demanded, but were instead assigned with a higher-than-normal price to companies that had the necessary connections within the RSC's apparatus.

By far the largest scandal in this very intricate (and basically unresolved) case involved a contract with the German construction company DHTG. DHTG's specialization was erecting wooden house frames, which the refugees could then complete on their own using whatever materials they had at their disposal.⁴¹⁹ The DHTG solution was chosen as a viable one simply because it was meant to be cheaper than the construction of whole houses and it constituted the most popular alternative since the company was entrusted with the erection of a few thousands of skeletons mainly across Macedonia.⁴²⁰ It turned out though, to everyone's surprise, that the cost of those frames ended up being unjustifiably immense. As many journalists, in fact, verified, the Greek government, at the time run by the inept dictator Pangalos, had spent a good chunk of the 1924 refugee loan on purchasing the DHTG's sheds. It is unclear whether this was an honest mistake that should be attributed to the RSC's Secretary General Karamanos' inexperience –he ended up serving time in prison for this scandal- or to a well-played out scheme by several officials to embezzle money

⁴¹⁸ ASCSA, Karavidas Archive, Folder 9, Subfolder 1, Document 1

⁴¹⁹ Giavrasoglou, "An answer" *Macedonia*, 23/5/1925, 3

⁴²⁰ Anonymous, "The famous German sheds" 4/10/1926, 4

and get away with it. In any case, the RSC's reputation, as an incorruptible international organization was dragged through the mud never to fully recover.⁴²¹ Even though such mistrust was justified and was constantly exploited by the royalist opposition (after all, Karamanos was a stern supporter of Venizelos) and despite the fact that the RSC was very often accused of poor economic management, there was hardly any criticism with regard to the quality of the residences it erected.⁴²² The RSC's main goal was to create living conditions for the refugee peasants of Macedonia in which they would survive, thrive and, most importantly, produce.

As I have hinted at throughout this thesis, Giannitsa was a peculiar town. It was considered a sacred place by the Ottomans. The reason was that on its grounds were buried, apart from Gazi Evrenos, the town's founder and a most competent early Ottoman general, several other prominent individuals of the Ottoman past.⁴²³ During the 17th and 18th century, the town had flourished and had become a significant religious center and commercial hub located in Thessaloniki's immediate periphery. Yet, despite its significance for Muslims, Giannitsa was not a homogenous "Turkish" town. As Schinas duly noted in his military-oriented travelogue of 1886, Giannitsa was at that moment inhabited by 800 Ottoman families and 400 Christian ones divided into different quarters. The Turkish quarter lay on the western part, where the market was located; above it, on a small hill stood, in a crown-like shape, the Christian quarter, called *Varos*, and even higher above that and in a very visible position the crumbling Metropolitan church is located. The church, despite being made out of stone and solid, is built among houses.⁴²⁴

Of course, it was not the Christian minority that had the upper hand. In fact, as the locals asserted, the Christians of the town had been pushed to *Varos*, north of the center of Giannitsa, in order for them to constitute a separate community from the

⁴²¹ For some more information on the accusations leveled at the RSC over the years see: Sotiria Vasileiou. 'To prosfygiko zitima mesa apo tin efimerida *Fos*.' *Oi Prosfyges sti Makedonia, apo tin tragodia stin epoptia* (2009): 156-206.

⁴²² For readers interested in following the patchy story of this scandal out of historical curiosity through the pages of the newspaper Macedonia, see:

Anonymous. 'To ergon tou Epoikismou' *Macedonia*, 6/1/1925, 3

Anonymous. 'Oi oikiskoi Ntechatege' *Macedonia*, 9/1/1925, 3

Anonymous. 'Alithis Elegchos' *Macedonia*, 20/2/1925, 1

Giavasoglou. 'I proodos ton anakriseon' *Macedonia*, 23/5/1925, 3

⁴²³ Schinas, Nikolaos. *Odoiporikai Simeioseis, Issue A'*, Athens, Messenger D'Atenes, 1886, 194.

⁴²⁴ Schinas. *Odoiporikai*, 194

Muslim one; and this was not all. Giannitsa's typical imperial multiculturalism was accentuated even more by the presence of a strong Uniate community. These Eastern Catholics, mostly Slavophones, who saw the opportunity of founding their own Church following the Tanzimat reforms of 1856, were directed by the French propaganda, spread by the presence of Catholic missionaries hosted at the French hospital. As was the case with the other two confessional communities of Giannitsa, the 'Uniates', as they became known, resided in the easternmost quarter of the town, though adjacent to the rest of the Christians.⁴²⁵

To the eyes of a traveler walking through the town, however, the supremacy of the Ottoman element would have been evident. In stark contrast to the handful of "crumbling" churches, in Giannitsa there stood more than forty mosques, the imposing burial monument of Gazi Evrenos and his lineage, a tall clock-tower as well as the public buildings of the imperial administration, all of which were concentrated in the Muslim quarter and constituted the actual heart of Giannitsa. As was the case with the Macedonian countryside, the town of Giannitsa did not appear to have a strict pre-devised urban plan. The fact that it never became a densely populated city combined with its decline in the 19th and 20th century, meant that Imperial urban planners had not showed any interest in modernizing the town's irregular form, and this had resulted in its expansion in an 'organic' fashion, branching outwards according to the confessional needs of the communities that resided there. This is the point of departure from which we must examine the transition of the town to a 'modern' one, after Giannitsa was captured by the Greek Army in 1912.

The first mark that the Greek state left on the town was undoubtedly a horrific one. As Giannitsa was a key town on the way to Thessaloniki, the Imperial military authorities had decided that the Ottoman Army had to defend its position. The deadly battle that followed for control of Giannitsa, and the eventual defeat of the Ottoman forces resulted in the occupation of the town. What had previously happened to nearly all the major towns that had surrendered to the Greek Army happened again. As the Carnegie International Committee reported:

⁴²⁵ For more, albeit biased, information on the infamous Uniate community of Giannitsa see: Timotheadis, Timotheos. *I Ounia ton Giannitson kai I politiki tou Vatikanou cthes kai simera*, Verroia, Melissa, 1992 and Chatzis, Christos. *Giannitsa, Istoriki Episkopisi*, Giannitsa, 2003, 81-83, 96-99.

All the towns and the villages of the region were laid waste and the population sought safety in flight. Flight too was the resource of the Moslem population of the towns in the Yenidje valley, especially Voden, Negouche (Niansta), Karaferia (Veroia), Yenidje Vardar. This last town suffered most of all; the whole market and the Moslem quarters were laid in ruins.⁴²⁶

The spatial eradication of the quarters where the ‘enemy’ used to live was a usual practice that was executed routinely in times of war during the interwar Balkans. The city of Izmir/Smyrna experienced the same fate after the collapse of the Greek front in Anatolia in 1922. The same went for the Greek quarter of Serres which the Bulgarian Army had eradicated back in 1912. It was not a merely symbolic gesture done to signify the supremacy of the new owners over the previous ones. On the contrary, it demonstrated in a very emphatic way that the residents who supported the enemy ought not to return, despite the fact that once the war was over they had every right to do so (as well as the right to ask for reimbursement for their damaged property). As the majority of Giannitsa’s populace took flight toward the Ottoman Empire, Serbia or Bulgaria (in the case of the Slavophones who feared that at some point the wrath of the Greek soldiers would fall on them) the town was left deserted to the point that it resembled a small insignificant village. It remained like this for over a decade, up until 1924-5 when the new wave of refugees arrived in search of land and residence.

Based on the information provided by Schinas earlier in this chapter, it is estimated that just under 1000 families fled Giannitsa from 1913 to 1922. Of them 800 were Muslim and approximately 150 more were Slavophone Christians. In their stead came no less than 1,300 families⁴²⁷ of Orthodox Christians from Anatolia, Eastern Thrace and the Caucasus region.⁴²⁸ Faced with vagrancy, as they were both homeless *and* landless, the first refugees occupied the abandoned houses of the Muslims and the Slavophones. They were in fact, the same houses that the Greek Army had reduced to rubble a few years earlier, adding a whole new layer of irony to the situation. From there, once the refugees got hold of the ruins of the old town, began the most interesting process that would give Giannitsa its final shape. The town’s previously open land was patched up with new, modern and planned quarters and straight roads. Giannitsa was thus introduced to the modern grid plan.

⁴²⁶ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan War*, Washington D.C., 1914, 201.

⁴²⁷ For statistical purposes, Greek authorities at the time assumed that each family had four members.

⁴²⁸ Koliadimou, Agni. *Prosfyges sto Nomo Pellas, 1912-1967*, Thessaloniki, PhD Thesis, 577-592.

The first planned new quarter was erected by refugees who came from Thrace and had arrived in Giannitsa in 1925. After an extended period during which they were sheltered in other facilities, such as churches, the Thracian refugees undertook the completion of several half-finished houses themselves.⁴²⁹ This first elementary neighborhood acted as a core around which more houses were erected soon in rectangular town blocks (Image 4.5) on the western outskirts of the town. Interestingly, this first refugee quarter contained a large number of the sinister DHTG sheds, some of which also came with a small auxiliary shed that was used as a stable, reminding us that even though Giannitsa was gradually acquiring an urban skeleton, its essence was still exclusively agricultural.⁴³⁰ The construction of houses became an intensive routine in the next three years.

We can safely assume that the bulk of the homeless refugee population was eventually housed from 1925 to 1928. In the spring of 1925 the RSC commissioned the erection of 100 new two-family houses, which were located east of the old Ottoman quarter, beneath the Orthodox quarter of *Varos*.⁴³¹ We also find that by 1928 the construction of 40, this time single houses had been ordered, although the sources do not offer much information on the exact locale where these works took place.⁴³² We know however that the building activity continued even in the 1930's with the establishment of the dense quarter of *Tsali* which was populated exclusively by refugee families of Pontic origin in the outer northeastern part of the town.⁴³³ Estimating the total number of the new houses is a difficult task. We can only be sure about the building projects that were somehow announced in the RSC reports that documented the progress of the Settlement affairs every three months. Based on this precious source Giannitsa was enriched with 350 new sheds and houses from 1924 to 1932, distributed among three completely newly-founded quarters (four if we count the renovation of the old ruined Ottoman quarter).⁴³⁴

⁴²⁹ Chatzis. *Giannitsa*, 147

⁴³⁰ Chatzis. *Giannitsa*, 143

⁴³¹ League of Nations, *6th RSC's quarterly report*, Athens, 7

⁴³² League of Nations, *19th RSC's quarterly report*, Athens, 22-23

⁴³³ Giannitsa Appropriation Committee, *Apofasis tis Epitropis Apallotrioseos Giannitson peri tou synoikismou Giannitson*, 13/4/1935

⁴³⁴ It must be noted that the RSC was disbanded in 1929 and its responsibilities were taken up by either the Agricultural Bank of Greece or the Greek state. The number of houses that were constructed from 1929 to 1932, therefore, was found in newspaper reports.

The transition of Giannitsa from an Ottoman town to a Modern Greek one should not be boiled-down only to the new ‘Greek’ populations that came to live there and to the form that their quarters acquired. The first official town plan that was issued by the Ministry of Transportation and published through the pages of the Government Gazette in 1932, gives us an abundance of additional information about which direction Giannitsa should take to realize that shift (Image 4.5). In terms of aesthetics, Giannitsa’s urban planner (unfortunately neither his name nor the name of the superior who instructed him were as resilient as their work on Giannitsa and have since disappeared) struggled to keep Giannitsa up-to-date with the developments of urban planning in Europe. While not as much of an avant-garde visionary like Baron Haussmann or those of interwar Berlin,⁴³⁵ the humble Greek town planner of Giannitsa did a fine job representing on paper how a civilized town of diligent farmers should be organized. The new Giannitsa had a considerable number of open squares. Two of them were located in the old town, in or near the old Ottoman quarter, both probably redrawn and renovated to fit in with their new planned surroundings. Another square was built around the Metropolitan Orthodox Church, while even more interestingly each of the new refugee quarters had its own neighborhood square, either located in the center of the quarter (as is the case with *Tsali* neighborhood) or toward its edges.

Open urban green spaces also made their appearance in Giannitsa. Two new parks were designed accompanied by a large field that the urban planner demarcated as ‘Sports Arena’ and ‘Gymnasium’ (Image 4.5). The commercial heart of the town remained virtually untouched, as did the small hill on which the weekly open market and animal market had been taking place. They were left free for the custom to continue, while the town plan suggests that stalls were even inserted to be used for the everyday Municipal Market. Giannitsa’s streets were also another matter that the urban planner took under very serious consideration. The process of rebirthing Giannitsa out of its Ottoman ashes relied to a certain degree on the straightening of its streets. This was done to bring order to the allegedly chaotic land registry, which was a prerequisite to the creation of well-defined and easily accessible town blocks. In fact, this task can be discerned on the actual town plan, where the straight line of the

⁴³⁵ Mullin, John Robert. ‘Ideology, Planning Theory and the German City in the Inter-War Years: Part II.’ *Town Planning Review* 53, no. 3 (1982): 115-130.

new design comes in stark contrast with the irregular street of the Ottoman era which can be seen imprinted on the plan (Image 4.6).

In this brief analysis, however, it would be a mistake not to include the material manifestations of the Greek state around the renovated town. As explained in a previous chapter, this should not be done merely in abstract terms. For example, the 'Black Statue' of Giannitsa, the monument to the fallen soldiers of the 1912 battle for Giannitsa, could not have functioned by itself as a powerful symbol of the state's power. Especially in a town where too few individuals could possibly sympathize with the dead of a battle that had taken place a decade before they even arrived in Greece. A military camp located just outside the town's center and just to the south of one refugee quarter was a much more definite way to say that the state had not forgotten about Giannitsa (Image 4.5). A few meters to the north of the camp was also the building that hosted perhaps the most effective institution that represented unity in the town, Giannitsa's only school, where the Thracian and Pontic youth, mixed now with that of the native Orthodox and Uniate communities received the exact same education in exactly equal terms (Image 4.5). The same went for the Town Hall of Giannitsa, in the courtyard of which both new and old inhabitants gathered in 1929 to see Eleftherios Venizelos (at the time Prime Minister of Greece) and to hear him proclaim the founding of the Agricultural Bank of Greece, as mentioned in an earlier chapter.

What needs to be underscored, with regard to the intention of the urban planner of Giannitsa, is his effort to balance between two opposing conditions. On the one hand, as we saw, it was the RSC's plan to resettle the refugees in homogenous settlements, which also entailed homogenous quarters in towns. On the other, the homogeneity of Giannitsa's quarters could produce the mutual alienation of the many communities that now inhabited the town as a whole, a situation very similar to that of the Ottoman era. But while the Ottoman Sultans had been fairly satisfied with segregated towns, the Greek state wanted unity under the national flag. Segregation would not do the trick. That is perhaps the reason why special attention was given to the construction of the new Giannitsa as a continuous urban web that was meant to diminish the cultural and economic differences of the many ethnic and religious communities of the town. The same tactics were, in fact, followed in the construction of refugee villages in and around the Giannitsa Plain, where the new settlements were

built in the simplest manner possible, resembling most of the times a compact rectangle comprised of houses, one small square and one school (Image 4.7).

Was this a successful process, though? The main goal of this ‘flattening-out’ urban planning was to synthesize a community capable of producing agricultural goods undistracted and unburdened by its people’s previous regional identities, the ones they had carried in their exodus from the Ottoman lands. It is hard to say when the town of Giannitsa began functioning as one, and not as merely the sum of four communities, if this happened at all. Judging from the little evidence that we have, this was not achieved during the interwar period. Already by 1928, the quarter of *Tsali* for example, had its own Agricultural Cooperative, named after the quarter. Its first member list, which has survived in the archives, indeed indicated that most, if not all the members, were of Pontic descent.⁴³⁶ Even more compelling is the report of a journalist, who signed his article as *Impartial* probably to confer some sense of validity on his claims. The writer visited Giannitsa in 1931 during the Greek Mardi Gras season and documented the everyday reality of the town, painting the brotherly affection that each community exhibited toward the others in rather unfavorable colors:

GIANNITSA, February.- Giannitsa is a large village that is comprised of other smaller villages. For anyone who has visited the town or is familiar with it, this description of Giannitsa does not seem odd. The town has a sausage-like shape, comprised of three disparate quarters each of which lives in a different way, moves in a different way and celebrates in a different way.

[...] And now toward the New square. This is the subject of much pondering and the consideration of a large number of people [...] It is a beautiful sight. Nice new houses are built on the one side, in which almost all the public services are hosted. Adjacent to them are the new houses of the settlement service and the houses built by the ministry of Welfare that convey a unique feeling, pushing the life of the town toward a new direction. The locals see all these unfavorably, because so much nagging and so many quarrels went by between locals and refugees, with regard to the area where the new market would take place [which would constitute] the commercial core and generally the heart of the town.[...]

Then we come before the highest point of the town, the locals’ quarter, the acropolis of Giannitsa. Once again, one encounters different customs, different types, different people and different tastes here.

⁴³⁶ Agricultural Cooperatives’ Register, Agricultural Credit Cooperative of Tsali Giannitsa, Agricultural Credit Cooperative Statute, *Name List*

They too move in their own environment, in their own social traditions, they live differently, celebrate differently. [...]

Hours are passing by quietly, engrossed in a sense of melancholy, as if they too are following their own unfair fate that had brought misery around us. Alas! What have we become? Our smile fades away before it even forms. Our voice is caught in our throat and disappears without being heard at all. Every householder, every man that is burdened with family obligations, buys reluctantly a loaf of black bread, carrying it under his arm and walks, indifferent to everyone and everything around him, directly toward his house, his wife and his children.

This was the Mardi Gras this year and this was the bitter truth.⁴³⁷

⁴³⁷ Impartial, 'Ai dienekseis kai o oikonomikos marasmos' *Macedonia*, 25/2/1931, 2

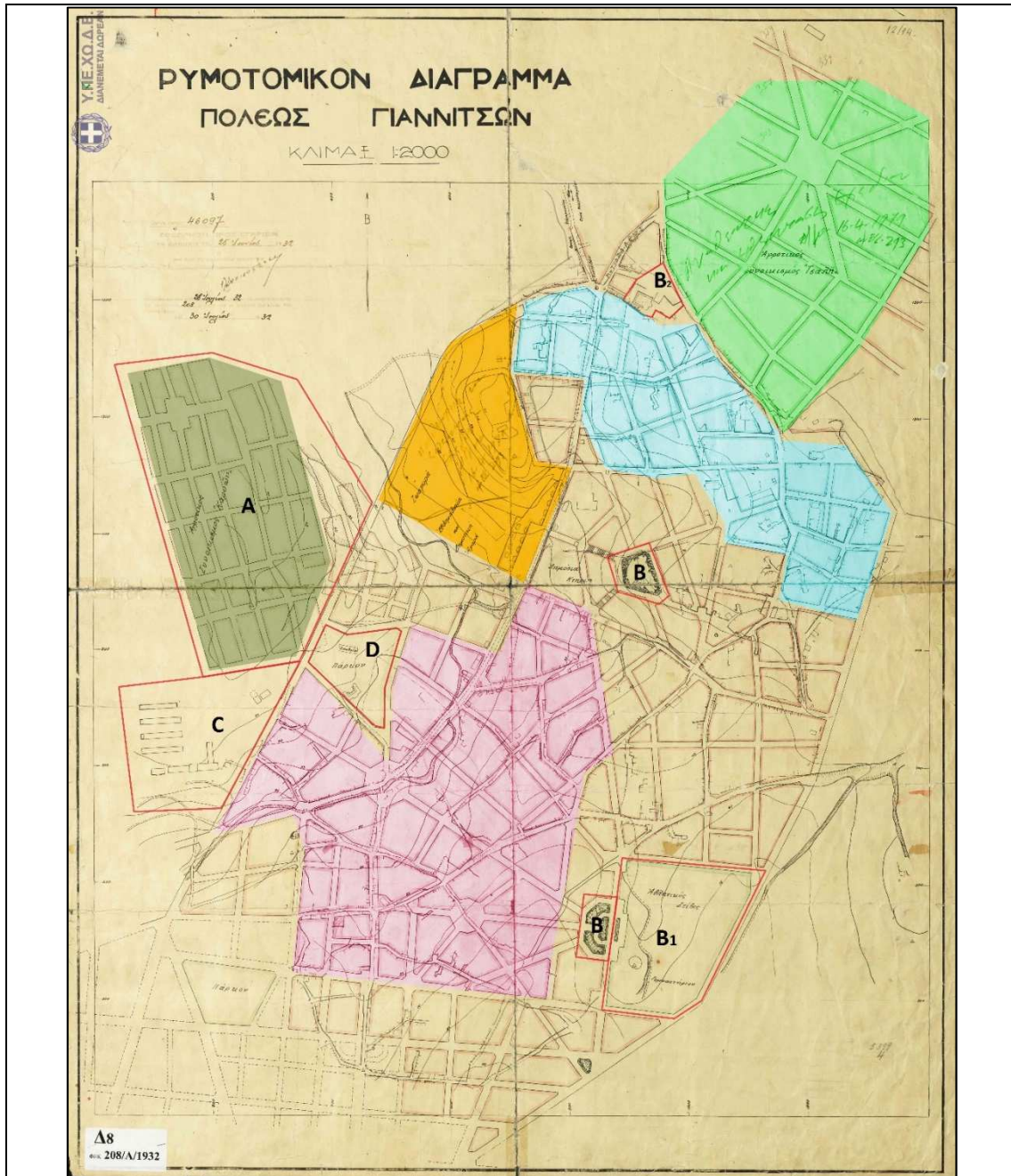


Image 4.5: The official Town Plan of Giannitsa, dated 1932

- A) The first new quarter of the Thracian refugees.
 - B) The two parks. B1) Open green space. The text reads *Sports Arena* and *Gymnasium*. B2) The location of the Metropolitan church and its square.
 - C) The Military camp.
 - D) The location of the Giannitsa school.
- Light Green: Tsali Quarter. Light Blue: Old Orthodox quarter. Magenta: Old Ottoman quarter. Orange: Open markets hill.

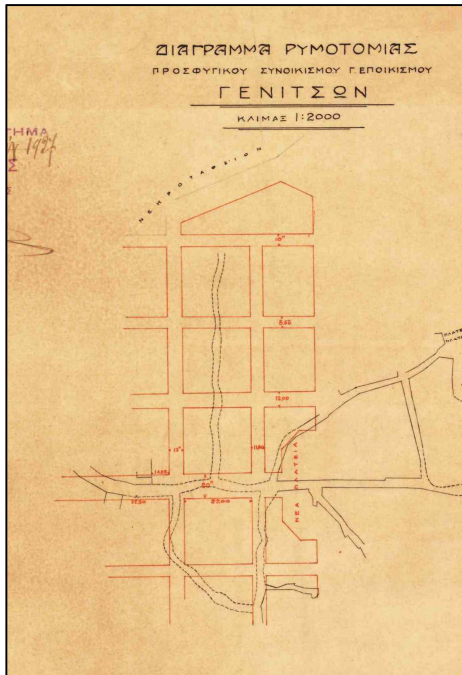
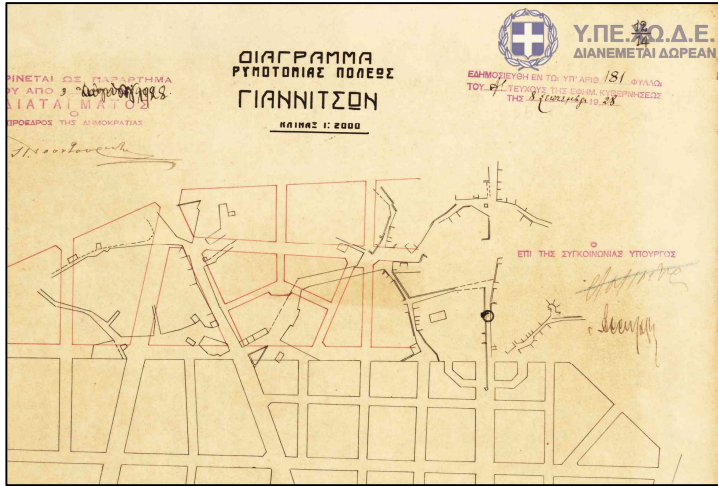


IMAGE 4.6: Two maps of Giannitsa with details concerning the renovation of the town's form. The black irregular lines represent the old town plan while the red ones the new town plan that introduced the modern grid plan.

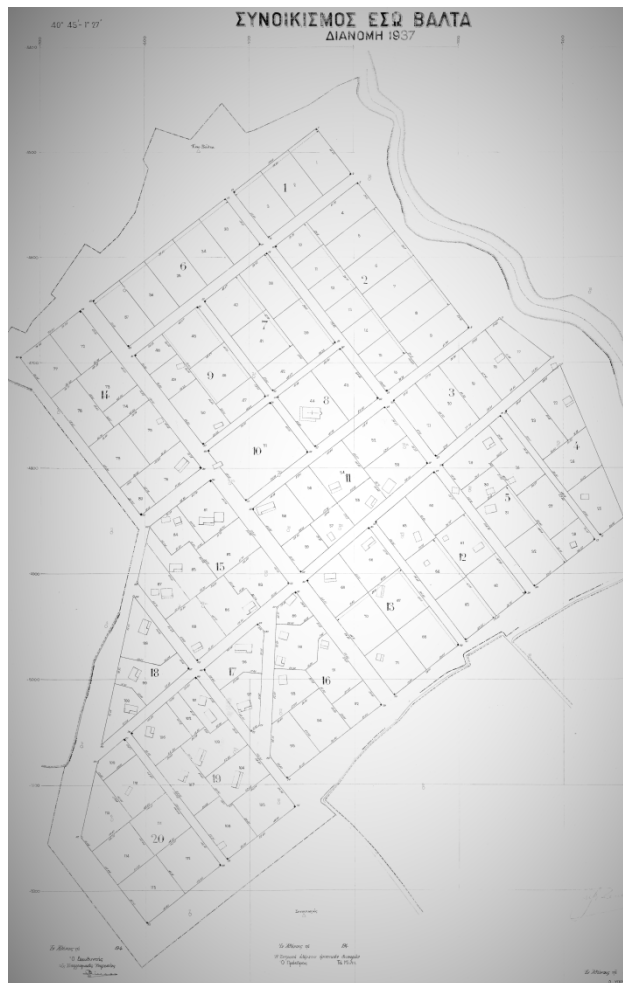


IMAGE 4.7: The first urban plan of the refugee settlement of Eso Valta, located on the Giannitsa Plain. The village's simple shape is a typical example of urban planning in rural Macedonia for refugee settlements.

Epilogue

The 14th of February 1992 was not like other Fridays for Thessaloniki. The city had become unusually lively due to the presence of a massive crowd comprised of people who had rushed there from all over the country. The shops did not open on that day. They remained closed, not out of fear of turmoil, but because their owners were mingling with the others. Speeches were given in schools and subsequently all the students, accompanied by their teachers and school staff, gathered in the city center, as did Orthodox monks and nuns who decided that for that moment they had to leave their metaphysical concerns behind and engage in political matters. Even the Municipal Band of Thessaloniki had joined the cause, while its colleagues all over Macedonia would show their solidarity with them by playing military marches each in their respective town.

The outside observer who would happen to be in Thessaloniki on this restless day would not have had a very tough time recognizing the ideological direction of this uneasy rendezvous. After all, everything was clad in white and blue, Greece's national colors while the flag covered almost every available surface, from drums to newspaper cover-pages reporting on the 'Grand national mobilization'.⁴³⁸ It was estimated that one million people -one tenth of Greece's overall population at the time- had flooded Macedonia's capital on this day, in an unprecedented rally the likes of which Greece had never seen before or even after.⁴³⁹

But what had drawn all these people to come to Thessaloniki? It could be argued that it was a new Macedonian Question, one that began with the breakaway of the southernmost part of Yugoslavia in 1991. What all these people had been protesting about was the mere name that the new state was intending to use: Republic of Macedonia. A terrible wave of scaremongering spread by ultranationalist circles all over northern Greece claimed that the newly-founded, almost bankrupt and completely disorganized country to the north was setting an irredentist agenda that would claim Greek lands in the future. On a political level, the reaction was not much more restrained than that of the average rally goer. In 1994 the Greek government

⁴³⁸ Anonymous, 'Thessaloniki/Saloniki/Solun/Selanik is shaken by the national alarm', *Makedonia*, 14/02/1992, 1.

⁴³⁹ It can only be compared to the anti-memorandum rallies of 2011-2012.

imposed a punitive unilateral embargo on its landlocked neighbor, demanding the change of its national flag (which at the time was the Hellenistic symbol of the Star of Vergina) and its Constitution, and a definite acknowledgement that the borders of the two countries were indisputable.

The years passed with this diplomatic abscess making its return from time to time. Greece had succeeded in forcing the country to use the name “Former Yugoslav Republic Of Macedonia” (henceforth FYROM) in international settings, even though the majority of the world had openly recognized it simply as the Republic of Macedonia. The ones most offended were of course the Macedonians; those Greek citizens of the Greek province of Macedonia, half of whom were the sons and daughters of the displaced Orthodox populations of Anatolia and Thrace that the Greek state saved in order to use them for the production of an agricultural surplus. The rest of them were descended from the often oppressed native Macedonian populations that had remained in the province. These enormous rallies were the evidence that the ‘old’ dichotomies had vanished into thin air.

In fact, with the turn of the 21st century it became clear that Greek Macedonia had become an unapologetic stronghold of aggressive nationalism. Indicatively, in the national elections of September 2012 the neo-Nazi party of Golden Dawn received almost 100,000 votes from the citizens of Macedonia, putting it in the third place percentages-wise in most of the prefectures of the province, with a higher average than in the rest of Greece. On May 19th 2018 the liberal mayor of Thessaloniki Yiannis Boutaris was the victim of a lynch mob attack attributed to his overall ‘anti-national’ attitude on a number of issues. On January 2018 the grand rallies of 1992 saw a revival, as hundreds of thousands of, primarily, Macedonians gathered in Thessaloniki to protest, this time against the intention of the government to come to an agreement with FYROM/Republic of Macedonia regarding a name that would be acceptable to both countries.⁴⁴⁰

These incidents are not mentioned here simply to give a journalistic overview of the situation. They are mentioned to give the reader of this thesis an insight into the subject of this work that is rooted in real present-day situations. It is beyond doubt

⁴⁴⁰ On June 13 2018 the dispute came to an official end when both governments signed the Treaty of Prespa which concluded that the official name of the country would be Republic of North Macedonia, which would be used for all purposes, both domestic and international.

that the Hellenization process of a Macedonia in the iron grip of the Greek state had been a success. Perhaps it was more successful than it should have been. As the recent news suggests, nationalist consciousness was cultivated, internalized and then reproduced, in increasingly extremist forms, by the different peoples of Macedonia, who now stood united -if not subdued- under the same national doctrine.

This is not however, what this thesis has demonstrated. If anything, in the past two hundred pages the reader probably gets the feeling that most of the Hellenizing attempts were in vain. The Hellenization of Macedonia, as recounted/analyzed here, was a process that had been twisted, obstructed, avoided or exploited for personal gain time and again. Whether this was exhibited in the sabotage of an archeological excavation site, the deliberate economic mismanagement of a rural agricultural cooperative or in the offices of a large construction company, or even the cold apathy that the people showed to the bearers of the national idea, it does not matter. What matters is that there is an abysmal gap between the nationally indifferent communities of late 19th/early20th-century Macedonia and the present-day militant nationalist movement one encounters there.

There are two possibilities to consider that help to explain this matter. The first suggests that the Hellenization of Macedonia was not achieved irrevocably until the defeat of the Communist-led Democratic Army of Greece (henceforth DSE) in the Greek Civil War from 1946 to 1949. While seemingly not related, the outcome of this war in fact decided the fate of all those who had refused until then to accept the supremacy of Greece over Macedonia: the communists of DSE and a substantial part of the Slavophones of Macedonia who in 1945 had founded the National Liberation Front (henceforth NOF). After a complicated series of events that were directly affected by the power struggle between the Soviet Union and Tito's Yugoslavia over the control each sought to exert in the Balkans, in 1946 the DSE and the NOF had formed an often uneasy alliance.⁴⁴¹ With their fates intertwined, the two organizations fought and lost the Greek Civil War against a Greek Government which was assisted by Great Britain and the USA in an attempt to keep Greece in the western camp. There was no other course of action for the losers of the war other than to flee the country, eventually leaving Macedonia "clean" of alternative narratives.

⁴⁴¹ Indicative literature: Sphetas, Spiridon. 'Anepithimiti simmakhi kai anexelngti antipali: i schesis KKE kai NOF sti diarkeia tou emphiliou (1946-1949). *Valkanika Simmikta* 8 (1996): 211-246.

The next possibility and the one that will conclude this thesis, is that this Hellenization process in fact was never fully completed. The enormous nationalist rallies of the early 1990's triggered one peculiar reaction, the establishment of a political party representing all those who still, after 80 years of Greek dominance refused to reject their Slavic Macedonian roots:

On September 8th, 1995, the members of the ethnic Macedonian political party in Greece, the RAINBOW PARTY, opened an office in the city of Florina.

On 19th January 1997 the Second Conference of the 'RAINBOW' party was held in Florina. The Conference was attended by 76 delegates of all local units.

At that time, it adopted a Political Manifesto and Organizational Principles, in addition to electing a Central Council comprised of 19 members.⁴⁴²

Even though it is a party that promotes the rights of ethnic Macedonians, the Rainbow Party does not abide by the logic of nationalism (at least on paper), asserting that it was the nationalist forces of Greece that had persecuted their ancestors in the 20th century. The first political manifesto of the party in 1997 states:

RAINBOW considers - as does the European intelligentsia - that nations have been created in recent years parallel to a certain evolutionary stage in history; in the history of production, labour organization and political systems in the world. It is also believed that every nationalist / racist view on national issues is inevitably linked to the stealing of ancient history, which is not only contrary to scientific principles but also politically endangering to peace and democracy.

RAINBOW differentiates between national dignity, the right to a joint ethnic identity and nationalism / chauvinism. We further believe that permanent ideological and political activity is a prerequisite in order to highlight and subsequently sever ties between national and nationalist ideology.⁴⁴³

While initially exhibiting a definite left-leaning or even communist direction, this position of the party changed in recent years as it joined the European Free Alliance (henceforth EFA), a coalition of regionalist or secessionist parties. Subsequently Rainbow became an open supporter of the representation of "stateless nations" on the European political scene, advocating for a radical decentralizing reform that would lead to regional polities steered by their peoples, defined by their ethnic identity:

⁴⁴² Anonymous, 'Introduction to the Rainbow Party', European Free Alliance Rainbow, http://www.florina.org/rainbow/about_e.asp (22/2/2019)

⁴⁴³ Anonymous, 'Political Manifesto of the Rainbow Party', European Free Alliance Rainbow, http://www.florina.org/rainbow/manifesto_old_e.asp (22/2/2019)

The age of the traditional sovereign state is over. But we reject as its replacement a monolithic EU, with power in the hands of the largest member states. The challenge now is to achieve an ever broader participation of all peoples in the political process. Political devolution, leading to self-government and the recognition of particular identities, is the natural synthesis for our political struggle.⁴⁴⁴

As is typical of regionalist parties though (the recent Catalan case excluded), the political power and influence that the Rainbow conjures is minimal. And that is true even on the local level, as the party has rarely received more than 5,000 votes in national and European elections over the span of more than 23 years.

The question remains. Is Hellenization or any other nationalization process over? Have the nation-states won this round so emphatically that there is no other possible voice other than the national one? Thankfully no. There are still scholars, academics and researchers on an international level who still try to underline the fallacy that has been nationalism. Unfortunately though, their position is disadvantageous. The work of the secluded erudite intellectual is futile if it does not contribute to a change in his or her reality; and this today is more evident than ever. Although the romantic essentialist theory about nationalism has been academically ‘undone’ for over 30 years or even more, thanks to the 1980’s trinity of Hobsbawm, Anderson and Gellner, the rise of monolithic nationalism in Europe and the world is becoming more menacing by the day, a true testament to how feeble academics have been in their struggle against it.

The reason is that nationalism is not merely a political opinion that materializes in the elections of any given parliamentary democracy. It is much more than that. It is a worldview deeply embedded into the collective imagery of the people as a legitimate and effective form of governance, the nation-state. As long as the nation-state is defended, not only by nationalist or conservative political forces but also by liberals and leftists, nationalism will remain relevant. As such it is never completely abandoned. It might be forgotten for a while, but it easily incarnates into extreme political movements the moment when democracies appear inadequate, unjust or corrupted.

⁴⁴⁴ Anonymous, ‘European Free Alliance (EFA) New Manifesto, for the June 2004 European elections’, European Free Alliance Rainbow, http://www.florina.org/rainbow/manifesto_old_e.asp (22/2/2019)

List of Abbreviations

IMRO: *International Macedonian Revolutionary Organization*

TASA: *The Archeological Society at Athens*

GAS: *Greek Agricultural Society*

RSC: *Refugee Settlement Committee*

GAML: *Greek Anti-Malaria League*

ASCSA: *The American School of Classical Studies at Athens*

GRGSA-IAM: *Central Service Archives- Archives of Macedonia*

NAMD: *National Archive of Monuments Directorate*

PIOP: *Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation*

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