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**“Megali Idea” and the aim of inclusion of the Southern
Black Sea Hellenic population in the modern Greek
notion (1896-1922)**

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation was written as part of the MSc in Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean Studies at the International Hellenic University. Aim of this work is to demonstrate that the Greeks of Pontus have been an organic part of Hellenism by examining Greek nation and identity and at the same time highlighting the “Greekness” of the Southern Black Sea Hellenic population (Πόντιοι, Greeks of Pontus).

The period examined ends with the Exodus of Asia Minor Greek population. Before the tragic events in the early 1920s, there were attempts for the end of Ottoman rule in the region of Pontus. These attempts range from autonomy and Ponto-Armenian Federation to independence and inclusion to the Greek state. The Ottoman empire “theater” had many “actors” whose motives and actions shaped history. The chaotic post World War I world and the conflicting interests played its own important role in the outcome of events.

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Keywords: Pontic Greeks, Hellenism, national identity, independence, autonomy

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Introduction

Abdülhamid II's rise to power signifies the end of the Tanzimât period in the Ottoman empire. The age of reforms gives its place to an era in which Turkish nationalism gains its characteristic elements and the multinational Ottoman empire is transformed into the modern Turkish state out of the ashes of war.

In an era when nationalism is the dominant policy all around the world, national homogeneity is everything. The peoples of the Ottoman empire learned this in the most brutal and harsh way. In 1895/6 there are massacres of Armenians in the Eastern provinces of the empire. It is a prelude of what would follow.

The Young Turks movement signifies the beginning of the end. From 1908 onwards the conditions for the Christian populations become harder and harder. In 1911 the nationalist fraction become the driving force inside the movement, in a desperate effort to save the empire. The Balkan wars and World War I speed up its dissolution. Christians attempt to make their own fate and at the same time they are demonized in the eyes of the Turks, as responsible for what is going on. It was clear that Christians and Muslims could no longer co-exist. Turkey had to be Turkified. The Armenian and Pontic Greek genocides aimed to this direction. Asia Minor Catastrophe in 1922 is a new start for both Greece and Turkey.

This work attempts to highlight Pontic Greeks and their movements in what was going to be the last years in their homelands. With the rise of nationalism and the progressive maturing of national identities, Pontic Greeks managed to preserve their Greek identity and fought to free themselves from the Ottoman yoke. It is of course essential to showcase the Greek identity of the Hellenic Southern Black Sea populations, which we Greeks call Πόντιοι (Greeks of Pontus, Pontic Greeks).

Equally important though is to define Greek identity in order to engulf the Greeks of Pontus into it. The elements that constitute Greek identity and afterwards the elements the Greeks of Pontus share with the rest of the Greeks. Since national identity is never without a national state, the key elements of the modern Greek nation will also be presented.

The events of roughly the first quarter of the 20th century cannot be understood without nationalism and pan-movements. An analysis of the phenomenon of nationalism and the most important maximalist movements that were products of it will be examined. In this framework, the Greek counterpart, “Megali Idea” will also be examined, so as to elaborate how Greece claimed its national completeness through a quarter of a century of constant warfare and where the Greeks of Asia Minor stood in that time.

After the end of World War I there is the almost immediate break out of the Greco-Turkish war. In a chaotic post-world war, the Greeks of Pontus tried to create their own future. Under adverse conditions they pursued the dream of ending the Ottoman yoke. Their pursuits and actions are a matter of analysis in the present work alongside the Greek handling of the Asia Minor campaign. In this effort to bring all these elements together under a single work, a general presentation of Pontus in terms of morphology and population was rendered as necessary. It goes without saying that the international factor and interests of the Great powers, but also the Turkish side, are debated as well.

1. Pontus: Geography and Population

1a. Pontus: Geography and morphology of the region

The core of the ancient and medieval Pontus was the naturally enclosed area between the river Akampsis (Çoruh) in the east and the river Alis (Kızıl Irmak) in the west¹. It is an area where water is abundant, and its rivers, navigable in their majority, are large². The northern border of Pontus is the Black Sea while in the south two mountain ranges mark its borders³. The first one is the Pontic Alps, a single orographic scheme which extends in a scythe shape from the river Çoruh to the river Iris (Yeşil Irmak)⁴. Outside these borders, in Kolchis, modern day Georgia, the river Rioni (Fasis), marked the border between Europe and Asia according to Aeschylus, in Prometheus in chains⁵.

Three summit lines of the Pontic mountains, that of Lazistan (Pariadros), Zigana and Canik, as well as the middle part of the rivers Çoruh and Kelkit (Lykos), are the first southern natural border of Pontus⁶. Alongside it, defense could be easily organized⁷. Parallel to this range further in the south, crossing the upstream of Euphrates there was another range and if the circumstances allowed it the Pontic borders could extent to that point⁸. The most striking feature of Pontus was the horizontal bisection of the region, into a coastal zone and a mountainous hinterland. The valleys were in constant contact with the coast thanks to the vertical route of the rivers⁹.

The mountains in this area are really high especially in the east where they reach a height just over 3.000 meters, while in the west they reach 2.000-2.500

¹ Καρπόβ, Σεργκέι Π., *Ιστορία της αυτοκρατορίας της Τραπεζούντας*, 40.

² Ξανθοπούλου-Κυριακού, Άρτεμις, Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευριπίδης Π., Χατζηκυριακίδης, Κυριάκος, *Οι Έλληνες του Πόντου και η Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία (1461-1923)*, 23.

³ Καρπόβ, Σεργκέι Π., *Ιστορία της αυτοκρατορίας της Τραπεζούντας*, 40.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ξανθοπούλου-Κυριακού, Άρτεμις, Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευριπίδης Π., Χατζηκυριακίδης, Κυριάκος, *Οι Έλληνες του Πόντου και η Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία (1461-1923)*, 23.

⁶ Καρπόβ, Σεργκέι Π., *Ιστορία της αυτοκρατορίας της Τραπεζούντας*, 40.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ξανθοπούλου-Κυριακού, Άρτεμις, Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευριπίδης Π., Χατζηκυριακίδης, Κυριάκος, *Οι Έλληνες του Πόντου και η Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία (1461-1923)*, 23.

meters¹⁰. If one wanted to cross them, he would have to go through some dangerous cols which were well guarded in case of a land invasion¹¹. The whole area of Pontus is mountainous, with the mountains often reaching the sea. The only important valleys were created by the depositions of the rivers in the west, Kızıl and Yeşil Irmak¹². On an axis from west to the east, as the mountains rise up and get closer to the sea, the only way to cross them is through the rivers forming valleys, where even today it is easier to gain access from the shores, rather than through the mountain cols.¹³

¹⁰ Καρπόβ, Σεργκέι Π., *Ιστορία Της Αυτοκρατορίας Της Τραπεζούντας*, 40.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 41.

1b. Pontus: Population

The question of the population in Pontus and its ethnological composition is particularly complex even before the end of the empire of Trebizond. One must be attentive when dealing with this matter especially when the period he occupies himself with is the late 19th and early 20th century, when people and numbers obtain a national coloring.

The multinational character of the Ottoman Pontus was also a reality during the Byzantine era. During the 13th and 14th century, the main ethnic body of the area were the Greeks and the local Hellenized ethnicities, following the Byzantine era situation¹⁴. The Greek nation was the driving force of every aspect of life. These Greeks were Pontic Greeks, a particular sub-nation which had a distinct ancient dialect¹⁵. Alongside them one could find Greeks from every corner of the Greek world¹⁶.

From the local ethnicities, the Laz were perhaps the second largest element in Pontus, concentrated in the Southeast (Surmene, Rize, Lazica, Heriana)¹⁷. The Armenians were also a powerful element in the southern provinces from Ispir to Baırpurt to Şebın Karahısar and Niksar (Neokaisareia) to the Northwest and West¹⁸.

There were also the Chaldi, a Hellenized population in the southern edge of the once Byzantine thema of Chaldia¹⁹. The Georgians of the empire resided both in the borders of Pontus and in the cities²⁰.

As far as the Turkic tribes is concerned, after their settlement in the periphery and in the empire itself, Oğuz, Kumans, Arabs, Kurds, Persians and Mongols were assimilated with the Greeks of Trebizond, as well as the Turks²¹.

¹⁴ Ibid., 134.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 135.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 134.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 136.

In the empire one could also encounter Venetians, Genoese²², Russians and other Slavs²³. Pontus was one of the most densely populated areas of Byzantium²⁴ and according to Anthony Bryer, the empire of Trebizond was the most important in terms of Greek element, Greek state in the 15th century.²⁵ By the time of the conquest of Trebizond, Bryer estimate the city's population between 4.000-5.000 citizens²⁶, based on the Ottoman Tahrirs and the Greek chronographers, despite the ambiguity that emits from them. For roughly the same period Sergei Karpov gives a slightly higher estimation of 6.000-6.500 people²⁷.

The situation in the first centuries of Ottoman occupation until the 19th century is really obscure because of the lack of sources and the unreliability of the existing ones. Heath Lowry²⁸ provides an interesting study of the population of the city of Trebizond in the 16th century. By 1583, out of a total 10.575 residents, 5.670 were Muslims, 4.055 Greek Orthodox, 615 Armenians and 215 Roman Catholics²⁹.

Until the 19th century the population in Pontus was always under threat by epidemics, which were a constant phenomenon. Reduction of population was therefore a common thing, as was the case in the 18th century³⁰. After 1840s though, there is an increase in population despite the epidemics and the continuous migration, which resulted in the resettlement of areas that had been de-Hellenized long ago and ended up being the most densely populated areas in Asia Minor³¹.

Data increases from the second half of the 19th century onwards, but so do the problems and the ambiguities. In this period, national aspirations and state expediencies led states on an attempt to capitalize on numbers and people. When dealing with the population of Pontus in this era, the parameters needed to be taken

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 137.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Bryer, A. and Lowry, H. W., *Continuity and Change in Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman Society*, 58.

²⁶ Ibid., 121.

²⁷ Καρπόβ, Σεργκέι Π., *Ιστορία Της Αυτοκρατορίας Της Τραπεζούντας*, 138.

²⁸ Lowry, Heath W., *The Islamization & Turkification of the City of Trabzon (Trebizond), 1461-1583*.

²⁹ Ibid., 146.

³⁰ Ξανθοπούλου-Κυριακού, Άρτεμις, Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευριπίδης Π., Χατζηκυριακίδης, Κυριάκος, *Οι Έλληνες του Πόντου και η Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία (1461-1923)*, 114.

³¹ Ibid.

into account are more than a few. First of all, the lack of the way the Ottoman censuses were conducted and the state purposes compromise their trustworthiness³². If one adds the fact that Muslims were pressured to be written down more than once, and that Christians tried to avoid it³³, then matters get even more complexed. The censuses of the Patriarchate or the consulates are at times more detailed, but they do not avoid their own issues³⁴. Further limitations stem from the unclear geographical borders of Pontus and the peculiarities of the Greek- Christian population in the area³⁵. When it comes to the latter, one must define Greek in the region. When we say Greek, we mean Rum (Ρωμιός), the Orthodox Christian Greek³⁶. However, in the body of the “Greek” element, one could include the Greek Catholics and Protestants, who were not part of a distinct ethno-religious community and had Greek consciousness³⁷.

There are also the populations of Islamized Greeks who could be separated in different categories³⁸. Those who alongside their religion had also lost their language, had in general terms been assimilated by the Muslim population which had an Ottoman-Turkish conscious substrate³⁹.

Those who had kept their language pose an even greater challenge. They are separated in two categories as well. The cryptochristians and those who do not seem to have been such, but also entirely Turkish speaking cryptochristians were to be found⁴⁰. A special allusion needs to be done about the cryptochristian issue. The phenomenon of cryptochristianism appeared more or less in the same way in every region. Shortly after the conquest of a certain area the process of islamization began. Part of the population accepted the new faith and was thus eventually assimilated,

³² Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., “Τα Πληθυσμιακά Στοιχεία Για Τον Πόντο (1870-1912): Κριτική Προσέγγιση Και Συγκριτική Παρουσίασή Τους,” 200.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 203.

³⁵ Ibid., 201.

³⁶ Ibid., 202.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., 203.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

another part retained its faith and a final third one accepted Islam superficially, keeping its connection to Christianity⁴¹.

In Pontus the islamization began in 1461. The pressures imposed though by the Ottoman regime during the first islamization period until the mid17th century were light, when compared to other regions⁴². Ottoman leaders starting from Mehmet II (1451-1481) until the Köprülü dynasty of the Great Vezyrs and Sultan Mehmet IV (1648-1687) were oriented towards the west, not imposing thus in Pontus, the laws that were a reality for most of the occupied Christian territories⁴³. The situation changed dramatically however, from the mid17th century onwards. The increase in power of the Derebeys signaled the end of the up to a certain point mediocre Ottoman administration in the area⁴⁴. Hattı Humajun in 1856 was the start of a period of general improvement for the cryptochristians that lasted until 1911⁴⁵. Despite the limitations of the Ottoman administration, thousands of people declared their Christian faith⁴⁶. For example, in 1857 a Great Powers committee presented the following data for the Korum (Κρώμνη) region: in 55 villages of the region including Gümüşhane (Αργυρούπολη), Dumanlı (Σάντα), Uğurtaş (Σταυρί) and Olucak köyü (Ιμερα), resided 9.535 Muslims, 17.260 cryptochristians and 28.960 Christian Greeks⁴⁷.

After 1911 though, things started to get worse not only for Christians but cryptochristians as well⁴⁸. The end of World War I was followed by the Greco-Turkish war of 1919-1922 and the Lausanne Treaty in 1923. The exchange of populations was a kind of solution, that exclusively took into account the religious factor. After all, the notion of nation in the Ottoman empire was religious rather than cultural. During the empire's lifetime there was a gradual bond developed between "Turkness" and

⁴¹ Φωτιάδης, Κωνσταντίνος Ε., *Οι Εξισλαμισμοί Της Μικράς Ασίας Και Οι Κρυπτοχριστιανοί Του Πόντου*, 195.

⁴² Ibid., 214.

⁴³ Ibid., 215.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 227.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 229.

⁴⁷ Balance, S., Bryer, A., and Winfield, D., *Nineteenth-Century Monuments in the City and Vilayet of Trebizond*, 272.

⁴⁸ Φωτιάδης, Κωνσταντίνος Ε., *Οι Εξισλαμισμοί Της Μικράς Ασίας Και Οι Κρυπτοχριστιανοί Του Πόντου*, 238.

Islam⁴⁹. In any case, only the cryptochristians that had formally declared their faith were transferred to Greece⁵⁰. One should bear in mind there were programs of Turkification before and during the Turkish Republic, that had a Sunni- Turkish background. Despite the absence of systematic measures taken towards Turkification and Islamization after 1919, the Greeks that did not “become Turks/Muslims” and cannot migrate to Greece though they are forced to for a number of reasons, changed their names⁵¹. During the period 1919-1925 these Greeks and particularly women and children, started living with Sunni/Turkish families, thus initiating the assimilation progress⁵². With this Sunni/Turkish nationalization plan that goes on until today, non-Muslims were oppressed and forced to create new lives⁵³. Despite these facts, it is possible that cryptochristians remained in Pontus even after 1923.

Not everyone in Turkey agrees of course. Some deny the existence of forced islamizations and claim that even if they did happen, they were voluntary and very few to be seriously taken into account⁵⁴. Thus, they also deny the existence of cryptochristians.

⁴⁹ Kaya, Mert, “1919-1925 Yılları Arasında Anadolu Rumlarının Müslümanlaştırılması Üzerine Bir Bellek Çalışması,” 48.

⁵⁰ Φωτιάδης, Κωνσταντίνος Ε., *Οι Εξισλαμισμοί Της Μικράς Ασίας Και Οι Κρυπτοχριστιανοί Του Πόντου*, 240.

⁵¹ Kaya, Mert, “1919-1925 Yılları Arasında Anadolu Rumlarının Müslümanlaştırılması Üzerine Bir Bellek Çalışması,” 48–49.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 57.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁵⁴ Tellioglu, İbrahim, “Pontus Meselesini Çözumsuzlüğe İten İddia ve Talepler,” 533.

2. Theory on nationalism, Pan-Movements, the modern Greek nation-state and the Pontic Greeks

2a. Theory on nationalism

Much of the present work has to do with nations, nation-states and national identities. But it is not just that. The writer deals with them in a period which is arguably the height of nationalism. Therefore, since terms like “nation”, “national identity” and “state” are to be found regularly on the “body” of this analysis, it was understood as necessary to explain and interpret those terms that everyone uses but not everyone knows or understands their meaning in their true basis. There will be an attempt to present the dominant theories on nation and national identity, as well as those elements that constitute a nation and its identity as such.

In International relations the exact meaning of the term “nation” is undefined⁵⁵. On the other hand the definition of the term “state” exists in the Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States(1933) Article 1, which reads: ‘The state as a person of international law should possess the following qualifications: a) a permanent population; b) a defined territory; c) government; and d) capacity to enter into relations with the other states.’⁵⁶ Nation has to do with something subjective, even if it is a collective subjectivity distinct from the objective features of state⁵⁷.

According to the constructivist theory, the nation is a construct, built and altered by people to define the identity of a political community in shifting circumstances. This construct is a mixture of traditional elements and new inventions necessary to build a contextual story of “we”⁵⁸. This approach is well aware of the historical components of national identity and the importance of historic and legendary myths and heroes serving as a foundation for that identity, without taking these historical ingredients as the decisive elements of nationhood. National identity

⁵⁵ Grotenhuis, René, *Nation-Building as Necessary Effort in Fragile States*, 25.

⁵⁶ <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/LON/Volume%20165/v165.pdf>.

⁵⁷ Grotenhuis, René, *Nation-Building as Necessary Effort in Fragile States*, 28.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 26.

is a living dynamic reality⁵⁹. Anderson's definition on nation fits well here. "The nation is an imagined political community- imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign"⁶⁰.

For constructivists the nation is a result of a construction and invention, not the result of a process of presenting something from the past into present and future. Nation comes to life by people who are seeking to create a nation and are bringing together the elements to construct it. During this process it may be important to deliberately leave out those elements that do not help the construction of a shared national identity⁶¹.

The construction of a national identity is a process of selection. The attempts to trace back the nation into history to link the existing nation to its historical roots are conscious actions to connect a national identity of an actual living community to historical events, persons and narratives⁶².

As far as nation-states is concerned, the constructivist theory believes that they are a result of war. Charles Tilly has said that war makes states and states make war⁶³. "State-making happens as the result of a process of rivaling factions vying for power by using violence"⁶⁴. The making of nation-state was not a tidied-up process of design and negotiation but one of different "organized criminal groups" fighting for power⁶⁵.

The violent origin of the nation-state is a recurrent fact in history⁶⁶, however a nation has no existential legitimacy without the sovereignty of people- the founding principle of nation-. No theory of nation-building can develop without placing people the center. The principle of peoples' sovereignty was established thanks to Enlightenment. From being the object of governance, people became the subject⁶⁷.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities*, 6.

⁶¹ Grotenhuis, René, *Nation-Building as Necessary Effort in Fragile States*, 28.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Tilly, Charles, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," 184.

⁶⁴ Grotenhuis, René, *Nation-Building as Necessary Effort in Fragile States*, 33.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 34.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 59.

One should also bear in mind that nation states emerged as a process of homogenization in terms of language and culture. Homogeneity is nothing more than the adaptation of a shared mainstream identity, leaving at the same time a particular identity behind⁶⁸. Nation-building therefore is the process by which people are bound to a common identity in language, culture, social and political systems, celebrate the same heroes, visit the same historic places and exercise publicly a dominant religion if it is considered to be an important factor of the nation⁶⁹.

Similar views can be traced in Gellner, who believed that “nations are products of nationalism and not vice versa”⁷⁰, and Brubaker, who claims that “nations are by no means *enduring components of social structure*. They are constructed contingent and fluctuating. They are illusory or spurious communities and an *ideological smoke-screen*”⁷¹.

There is on the other hand a different approach to nation and national identity. Anthony D. Smith believes that what we mean by national identity involves some sense of political community however tenuous. A political community in its turn must at least have some common institutions and a single code of rights and duties for all members. A definite social space, a fairly well demarcated and bounded territory with which the members identify and of which they feel they are part, are also necessary. This is a quite Western conception of the nation⁷².

Nations must have a measure of common culture and a civic ideology, a set of common understandings, goals and ideas that creates a connection between the people and their homeland. The standard components of the Western model of the nation are a historic territory, legal-political community, legal-political equality of members, a common civic culture and ideology⁷³.

There is though, another model, a non-Western one, that emphasizes on the ethnic conception of the nation. The distinguishing feature is its emphasis on a

⁶⁸ Ibid., 110.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Walicki, Andrzej, “Ernest Gellner and the ‘Constructivist’ Theory of Nation,” 611.

⁷¹ Brubaker, Rogers, “Rethinking Nationhood,” 19.

⁷² Smith, Anthony D., *National Identity*, 9.

⁷³ Ibid.

community of birth and native culture. The ethnic concept does not allow choice of nation. A nation is above all a community of common descent⁷⁴.

This model presents a number of facets. The stress on descent (or descent rather than territory). The nation is a fictive super-family which boasts pedigrees and genealogies to back up its claims, especially in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The nation searches its beginning to an imputed common ancestry. This means its members are brothers and sisters or at least cousins differentiated by family ties from outsiders⁷⁵.

The place of law in the western civic model is taken by vernacular culture, usually languages and customs. Another interesting element is the key role of lexicographers, philologists and folklorists. Their linguistic and ethnographic research into the past and present culture of the “folk” provided the material for a blueprint of the nation “under construction” even where specific linguistic revivals failed. By spreading the myths, history and linguistic traditions of the community, they succeeded in formulating the idea of an ethnic nation in the minds of most members, even when ancient languages, like in the case of Norway, declined⁷⁶.

Despite the different models of nations, some common assumptions about nation and common features of national identity can be extracted: a) historic territory or homeland b) common myths and historical memories c) common mass public culture d) common legal rights and duties for all members e) common economy with territorial mobility for members⁷⁷.

A national identity is fundamentally multi-dimensional. It can never be reduced to a single element even by particular factions of nationalists, nor can it be easily or swiftly induced in a population by artificial means⁷⁸. National identities fulfill intimate internal functions for individuals or communities as well. Most obvious is the socialization of the members as nationals and citizens. This is achieved through

⁷⁴ Ibid., 11.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 12.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 14.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

mandatory standardized public mass education systems, through which state authorities aim to instill national devotion and a distinctive homogenous culture, a goal most regimes pursue with considerable energy under the influence of nationalist ideals of cultural authenticity and unity⁷⁹.

The nation is also called up to provide a social bond between individuals and classes by providing repertoires of shared values, symbols and traditions. Using these symbols, members are reminded of their common heritage and cultural kinship and feel proud of their sense of common identity and belonging. The nation becomes a “faith achievement group” able to overcome obstacles and hardships⁸⁰.

A sense of national identity is a powerful means of defining and locating one’s self in the world, through the prism of the collective personality and its distinctive culture. It is due to a shared unique culture that we are enabled to know “who we are” in the contemporary world. By rediscovering that culture, we “find” ourselves, the “authentic” self or so it seemed to many disoriented individuals who have had to settle with the vast changes and uncertainties of the modern world. This process of self-definition is in many ways the key element to national identity⁸¹.

Adrian Hastings⁸² moves a step away from the constructivists and claims that “for the development of nationhood from one or more ethnicities by far the most important and widely present factor is that of an extensively used vernacular literature”⁸³.

A long struggle against an external enemy may also have a significant effect similar to state formation in some cases, though the latter may well have no national effect whatever elsewhere. A nation may precede or follow a state of its own, but it is certainly assisted by it to greater self-consciousness. Most such developments are caused by the perception of a nation-state and of the world as a society of nations, originally “imagined” through the mirror of the Bible, Europe’s primary textbook but

⁷⁹ Ibid., 16.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid., 17.

⁸² Hastings, Adrian, *The Construction of Nationhood, Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*.

⁸³ Ibid., 3.

turned into a formal political philosophy no earlier than the 19th century, and then next to be canonized by President Woodrow Wilson and the Versailles Peace Settlement in 1920⁸⁴.

“An Ethnicity -argues Hastings- is a group of people with a shared cultural identity and spoken language. It constitutes the major distinguishing element in all pre-national societies but may survive as a strong subdivision with a loyalty of its own within established nations⁸⁵”.

A nation however is a far more self-conscious community than an ethnicity, formed from one or more ethnicities and normally identified by a literature of its own, it has or demands the right to political identity and autonomy as a people, along with the control of specific territory, comparable to that of biblical Israel and of other independent entities in a world thought of as one of nation-states⁸⁶.

A nation-state is a state which identifies itself in terms of one specific nation whose people are not seen simply as “subjects” of the sovereign but as a horizontally bonded society to whom the state in a sense belongs. There is thus an identity of character between state and people. In some ways the state’s sovereignty is inherent within the people, expressive of its historic identity. In it, ideally there is a basic equivalence between the borders and character of the political unit upon the one hand and a self-conscious cultural community on the other. In most cases this is a dream and reality at the same time. Most nation-states in fact include groups of people who are not part of its core culture or feel themselves to be part of a nation so defined. Nevertheless, almost all modern nation-states act on the bold assumption that they are nation-states⁸⁷.

As far as nationalism is concerned, it means two things: theory and practice. As a political theory that each nation should have its own state, it derives from the 19th century. That general theory though, motivates few nationalists. In practice nationalism is strong only in particularist terms, coming from the belief that one’s own

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

ethnic or national tradition is extremely important and needs to be defended at almost any cost through creation or extension of its own nation-state. Nationalism became theoretically central to Western political thinking in the 19th century, but it existed as a powerful reality long before that. As something which can empower large numbers of ordinary people, nationalism is a movement which seeks to provide a state for a given nation or further to advance the interests of its own nation-state regardless of other considerations. It “blossoms” mainly where and when a particular ethnicity or nation feels itself threatened in regard to its own proper character, extent or importance, either by external attack or by the state system of which it has hitherto become part; but nationalism can also be stoked up to fuel the expansionist imperialism of a powerful nation-state, though this is even possible to be done under the guise of an imagined threat or grievance⁸⁸.

Religion is also an integral element of many cultures, most ethnicities and some states. The Bible provided, for the Christian world at least, the original model of the nation. Without it and its Christian interpretation and implementation, it is arguable that nations and nationalism as we know them could ever have existed. Moreover, religion has produced the dominant character of some state-shaped nations and of some nationalisms. Biblical Christianity both assists the cultural and political world out of which the phenomena of nationhood and nationalism as a whole developed, and in a number of important cases was the crucial feature for the particular history of both nations and nationalism⁸⁹.

John Breuilly⁹⁰ has a rather similar view of the nation-state. He argues “that the development of the political concept of nation was related to the ways in which the absolutist or would be absolutist state in early modern Europe shaped political thought and action”⁹¹.

The modern nation-state is the possessor of sovereignty over a certain territory. This idea of state is highlighted by internal tensions between universality and

⁸⁸ Ibid., 4.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Breuilly, John, *Nationalism and the State*.

⁹¹ Ibid., 367.

particularity, and between boundlessness and limitation. The state is universal in the sense that it envisioned a world made of a number of similar states⁹². The state is boundless in that it asserts ultimate power over the lives of those within it. It is the highest form of human existence in the sense that all other forms of existence are subordinate to it⁹³.

A nationalist movement therefore strives to link people with a particular territory in an endeavor to gain and use state power. The general context for the development of such a movement is supplied by the modern state and the strategic relationships to that state of reform, separation and unification⁹⁴.

Apparently, there are multiple approaches towards the nation. One such is the nationalist approach which deems that nationalism is an expression of nation. The “first” level of nationalism takes the form of culture and sentiments. The nation when characterized this way desires independence. However, it seems impossible to give an independent definition of the nation. The definitions provided by nationalists themselves vary enormously and conflict with one another. Another explanation is that nationalism is related to some prior development of national identity⁹⁵.

One of the most interesting approaches is that of communications. The “nation” is a developed system of internal communications which creates a sense of common identity. It is arguable that one can only conceive of the different social groups inhabiting a certain territory as having something in common that spreads their many differences among them (even similarities with groups outside the territory) if they do have regular and intensive communication among themselves.

It is also arguable that nationalist intellectuals can only spread their ideas and nationalist movements can only mobilize large scale support, if they have access to such extended networks of communication. In these ways, both the form of identity

⁹² Ibid., 369.

⁹³ Ibid., 370.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 381.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 405.

proposed in nationalism and the social reach of nationalism may have something to do with the emergence of modern systems of communication⁹⁶.

However, there is one crucial weakness in the approach. Intensified communications between individuals and groups can as often lead to an increase in internal conflict as well as to an increase in solidarity. What is more, such conflict or solidarity might be expressed in forms other than nationalist ones. One is forced to go further and inquire under what conditions can such forms of internal communication lead to an increase in conflict as solidarity in nationalist terms⁹⁷.

The structure of communications does not directly indicate what those types of conflict are and therefore cannot in itself provide us with much idea about what kinds of nationalism will develop.

The Marxist approach could not also be detoured. One cannot say Marxism failed to concentrate upon the issue of conflict. It is the way that conflict is conceived and related to nationalism that one can criticize.

Most Marxists would probably agree that nationalism is a modern phenomenon associated with the rise of capitalism. This development produces new classes and class relationships. These classes with more extensive interrelationships that had existed before with a greater degree of physical concentration along with a system of politics which did not arise directly out of economic relations, had to engage in politics in new ways. Control of the state depended much more than previously upon securing the active support and consent of the majority of the population. Mass politics and its accompanying ideologies had to find alternative appeals to that of class. Nationalism is the major alternative⁹⁸.

An approach that focuses upon internal class conflict in a certain society has three options. It can regard nationalism as the work and expression of a single class, with relatively little involvement by other classes. It can regard nationalism in terms of a set of class alliances in which each class has its own rational interests, and it may

⁹⁶ Ibid., 406.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 407.

also consider it as the expression of interests of a particular class but inducing other classes to support that nationalism⁹⁹.

As regards the first kind of nationalism, it is true that one does sometimes encounter avowedly nationalist movements with a very narrow social basis, but their nationalist ideology is so clearly self-serving that it does not merit serious investigation in its own right. In such cases it is not necessary to abandon explicit class analysis. Nationalism can at best, serve the function of helping that class acquire a greater sense of solidarity and co-ordination¹⁰⁰.

The second possibility is more important. An example might be the allegedly common interests of the bourgeoisie and the working class in removing pre-capitalist classes from power and setting up a constitutional state in which capitalism can advance at maximum speed. What remains difficult to understand is why such politics does not organize itself in the form of a set of class alliances, with each class indicating its particular interest in the alliance. And why instead, should the various classes employ a nationalist ideology and organization which seems to obscure their rational basis of politics? Certainly, when Marx and Engels called for class alliances they were thinking of alliances between political groups, representing the interests of each class.

One answer might be that at the relatively early stage of capitalism, in which this alliance occurs, the class divisions were incompletely developed, so that a class-based ideology is less attractive than a populist one which can take a nationalist form. Another answer might be that it is psychologically naïve to expect mass politics to proceed in the form of rational alliances, that to mobilize enthusiasm and popular support something more is required, and that can be supplied by nationalism.

A third answer might be that each class produces its own variant of nationalism- there is no single nationalism in a multi-class nationalist movement- and that nationalism is simply the lowest common denominator of these variants. However nationalist ideology often contradicts class ideology and organization. The question still remains. Why such classes have to resort to nationalism in the first place.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 408.

It could be argued that the conditions under which such multi-class alliances could be formed and sustained are fairly specific. Yet nationalism with a multi-class support appears as a general feature in modern politics¹⁰¹. This option attracts the most attention¹⁰².

The writer feels the need to stress out the origin of the ideas on state and nation. Carl Schmitt¹⁰³ believes that “all significant concepts of the modern theory of state are secularized theological concepts, not only because of their historical development- in which they were transformed from theology to the theory of state whereby the omnipotent god became the omnipotent lawgiver- but also because of their systematic structure, the recognition of which is necessary for a sociological consideration of these concepts. The exception in jurisprudence is analogous to the miracle in theology. Only by being aware of this analogy can we appreciate the manner in which the philosophical ideas of the state developed in the last centuries.

The idea of the modern constitutional state triumphed together with deism, a theology and metaphysics that banished the miracle from the world¹⁰⁴. This theology and metaphysics rejected not only the transgression of the laws of nature through an exception brought about by direct intervention as is found in the idea of a miracle, but also the sovereign’s direct intervention in a valid legal order¹⁰⁵. It is not worth mentioning that the rationalism of the Enlightenment rejected the exception in every form”¹⁰⁶.

Schmitt argues that sovereign is he who decides on the exception. Only for him the definition of a borderline concept can be just. Contrary to what is believed, a borderline concept is not a vague concept, but one pertaining to the outermost sphere. This definition of sovereignty leaves no other choice but to be associated with a case of this kind and not with routine. He claims “it is clear that the exception should

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid., 409.

¹⁰³ Schmitt, Carl, *Political Theology*.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 36.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 37.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 3.

be understood as referring to a general concept in the theory of the state and not merely to a construct applied to any emergency degree or state of siege”¹⁰⁷.

The assertion that the exception is truly appropriate for the juristic definition of sovereignty has a systematic, legal-logical foundation. The decision on the exception is a decision in the true sense of the word. Because a general norm, as represented by an ordinary legal prescription, is unable to engulf a total exception, the decision that a real exception exists cannot therefore be entirely derived from this norm¹⁰⁸. When Robert von Mohl¹⁰⁹ said that “the test of whether an emergency exists cannot be a juristic one”¹¹⁰, he assumed that a decision in the legal sense must be derived entirely from the content of a norm. But this is the question. In the general sense in which Mohl articulated his argument, his notion is only an expression of constitutional liberalism and fails to apprehend the independent meaning of the decision¹¹¹.

From a practical or a theoretical perspective, it really makes no difference whether an abstract scheme advanced to define sovereignty (in other words, that sovereignty is the highest power, not a derived power) is acceptable. About an abstract concept there will in general be no argument, least of all in the history of sovereignty. What is argued about is the concrete application, and that means who is he who defines what constitutes the public interest or interest of the state, public safety and order, *le salut public*, and so on, when conflict arises. The exception, which is not codified in the existing legal order, can at best be characterized as a case of a grave danger to the existence of the state, or the like. But it cannot be circumscribed factually and made to conform to a preformed law¹¹².

It is precisely the exception that makes the subject of sovereignty relevant, that is, the whole question of sovereignty. The precise details of an emergency cannot be anticipated, nor is anyone in position to predict what may take place in such a case,

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 5.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 6.

¹⁰⁹ Mohl, Robert von, *Staatsrecht, Völkerrecht und Politik Monographien 3*.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 626.

¹¹¹ Schmitt, Carl, *Political Theology*, 6.

¹¹² Ibid.

especially when it is truly a matter of an extreme emergency and of how it is to be eliminated. The precondition as well as the content of jurisdictional competence in such a case must necessarily be unlimited. From the liberal constitutional point of view, there would be no jurisdictional competence at all. The most guidance the constitution can provide is to indicate who can act in such a case. If such action is not subject to controls, if it is not hampered in some way by checks and balances, as is the case in a liberal constitution, then it is clear who the sovereign is. He decides whether there is an extreme emergency as well as what must be done to eliminate it. Although he stands outside the normally valid legal system, he nevertheless belongs to it, because the decision of the suspension of the constitution in its entirety lies solely to his hands. All tendencies of modern constitutional development point toward eliminating or bypassing the sovereign in this sense¹¹³. The ideas of Hugo Krabbe and Hans Kelsen are in line with this development. But whether the extreme exception can be banished from the world is not a juristic question. Whether one has confidence and hope that it can be eliminated depends on philosophical, especially on philosophical-historical or metaphysical, convictions¹¹⁴.

¹¹³ Ibid., 7.

¹¹⁴ Mohl, Robert von, *Staatsrecht, Völkerrecht und Politik Monographien* 3, 7.

2b. Pan-movements

“Megali Idea” or Pan- Hellenism, which will be presented later on, did not stand alone in the 19th century world. There were other similar movements at the time of nationalist rise through Europe. Through comparison, these movements will allow us to better understand the Greek one, but also assess the events of that turbulent era, whose consequences can still be seen today. In this effort, I will occupy myself with the main Pan-movements of the 19th and 20th century.

Pan-Slavism is a movement based on the conviction that all speakers of Slavic languages belong to a single nation¹¹⁵. It was a product of the second half of the 19th century, and it was a movement that was considered to be of lethal danger for the Greek nation. This fact led to the evolution of the Greek nationalism itself¹¹⁶. Despite its definition, Pan-Slavism is a diffuse and an ambivalent phenomenon¹¹⁷. On the one hand it is a movement in which nationalist elements are mingled with supra-national and often imperialist trends. It was a result of the political awakening of the intellectuals in Central and Eastern Europe, a by-product of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. But even more decisive was the influence of German romanticism and of a linguistic Pan-Germanism as presented by Arndt and Fichte. Pan-Slavism proclaimed the affinity of peoples despite any differences, with language being the only criterion. It could thus arise only at a time when under the influence of Herder, the national language was regarded as a determining factor for man’s loyalty and the course of his intellectual and spiritual life. Herder himself proclaimed the Slavs the coming leaders of Europe¹¹⁸.

On the other hand, Pan-Slavism was never a serious political proposition and was never considered as such by any of the Tsars. Some like Serbian bishop Nikolaj Velimirovich even claimed that there was no Pan-Slavism at all and that it was

¹¹⁵ Stergar, Rok, “*Panslavism*,” 1.

¹¹⁶ Αποστολοπούλου Μ. , Χατζηαντωνίου Κ., *Ιστορία Του Ελληνικού Έθνους: 1821-1941*, 117.

¹¹⁷ Dialla, Ada, “*Russian Nationalism and the Eastern Question: The Case of Panslavism (1856-1878)*,” 73.

¹¹⁸ Kohn, Hans, *Pan-Slavism*, 9.

invented by the Pan-Germanists¹¹⁹. However, a possible realization of the theory terrorized Western Europe in the years before the Crimean War, a terror caused primarily by the existence and power of Russia. This fear was caused not by Russian acts but mainly because of Russia's separateness, inaccessibility and its domestic policy.¹²⁰

Reality though was different. Pan-Slavism could not be exercised regularly by Russia for it was a policy which would inevitably lead to war against the Ottomans and the Habsburgs, if not the European powers in general. It was actually a revolutionary strategy directed against legitimate states. For the Russian empire to promote the principle of insurrectionary nationalism was to say the least double-edged¹²¹.

In addition, one has to bear in mind that the rest of the Slavs, especially those of the Balkans had their own nationalism and did not look that much up to Russia. "No one of the smaller Slav peoples was, in fact, really friendly to the Russian pretensions to the hegemony of the Slavs"¹²², something that was crystal clear in the First Slav Congress in Prague in 1848, where Russian expansionism was rejected, since for some Russian Pan-Slavs, Pan-Slavism was an extension of Russian nationalism¹²³.

Pan-Germanism propagates the unity of the German race. Though not all coherent, its foundation is solid. The idea of strengthening the bond that tied all Germans to their fatherland excited sympathy and even received approval from the emperor himself¹²⁴. Pan-Germanism was the expression of a national determination to preserve and strengthen the corporate life of a great people. The motives were greed from one point of view, ambition from another, but its effective cause in both cases was the expression of nationality. Germany had attained national consciousness, a national individuality and sought to make sure a lasting existence of this corporate for all time. Pan-Germanism was merely self-preservation¹²⁵.

¹¹⁹ Moss, Vladimir, *"The Eastern Question, Pan-Hellenism and Pan-Slavism,"* 6.

¹²⁰ Kohn, Hans, *Pan-Slavism*, 104.

¹²¹ Moss, Vladimir, *"The Eastern Question, Pan-Hellenism and Pan-Slavism,"* 8.

¹²² Colquhoun, Archibald R., *"Pan- Mania,"* 854.

¹²³ Stergar, Rok, *"Panslavism,"* 2.

¹²⁴ Colquhoun, Archibald R., *"Pan- Mania,"* 855.

¹²⁵ Usher, Roland G., *Pan-Germanism*, 232.

There was a strong feeling of limitation, as Germany shortly before World War I did not have more arable land than in 1815, whereas its needs had grown massively, and the Germanic race occupied the same space as in 1500¹²⁶. A strong duality can be therefore detected. Pan-Germanism was in the first place seen as a means of escaping the pressure of France and Russia, both bent to its destruction according to the German point of view and in the second place it was an offensive oratory steered against England, its object, the conquest of English possessions in the Mediterranean and Asia¹²⁷. It was in the realm of Pan-Germanism that the foundation for *Lebensraum* and *Drang nach Osten* -as expressed by Friedrich List-, of the later Nazi regime, were laid¹²⁸.

The idea however was utopian. First, the Germans of all peoples at the time were the most easily denationalized not only in a political, but in a wider sense. It was not at all easy to keep one German in heart under foreign control¹²⁹. Secondly, World War I proved that the overthrowing of England was more or less unachievable.

The next Pan-movement examined is that of Pan-Turkism. It is a romantic political ideology first developed in Europe in the 19th century. It served the Great Powers' policy in the Eurasian political scene. It was largely formed by Ziya Gökalp and its core lies in the vision of the unification of the Turkic nations¹³⁰.

The central point of Pan-Turkism is the "oğuzluk" (uguzism or turkomania), which means the dream of the unification of the Uguz¹³¹. The majority of historians today identify that the people that invaded Asia Minor were the Uguz or a part of them. That is also what the early Ottoman chronicles refer to Uguz Khan, the mythical ancestor of the modern-day Turks left as a mortgage to his people the march against the Rum (Byzantium). It is even mentioned that the first Ottomans were subjects of the Seljuk family. This part of the Uguz was left to plunder Asia Minor, in order to drive their violent nomad brothers out of the Seljuk Iranian territory, and eventually

¹²⁶ Ibid., 238.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 11.

¹²⁸ Earle, Edward Mead, "Friedrich List, Forerunner of Pan-Germanism," 430.

¹²⁹ Usher, Roland G., *Pan-Germanism*, 855.

¹³⁰ Κορδώσης, Στέφανος, "Κριτική Του Παντουρκικού Πολιτικού Κινήματος Για Την Ιστορία Των Τουρκικών Εθνών Μέσα Από Την Πρώιμη Ιστορία Των Ογούζων Και Τούρκων," 49.

¹³¹ Ibid., 50.

established itself there. Despite the fact that after 1923 the Uguz of Asia Minor are politically identified with the Turks (due to the name change), this identification does not go beyond the 20th century and despite the Pan-Turkist theory in any case does it apply during the Great Turkic Khaganate¹³². During the 1st (552-651) and the 2nd (685-744) Turkic Khaganate the ethnonyms Uguz and Turk were not used as synonyms, but they expressed different political entities and realities¹³³. From a political perspective, the Turkic nations were never united, at least in the way the Pan-Turkist theory believes they did¹³⁴.

Moving beyond what is mentioned above though, the initial phase of the active Pan-Turkism can be traced in the beginning of the 20th century in the crumbling Ottoman Empire. As a cultural phenomenon it appeared in the late 19th and early 20th century, being found in a “debate” against Pan-Islamism, Ottomanism and Turkism¹³⁵. At the same time the Pan-Turk ideology was gaining ground among the Tatars and other Turkic groups in Russia. Pan-Turkism was a by-product of Turkish nationalism, grown at first by the intellectuals¹³⁶.

Yusuf Akçura, a dedicated Pan-Turkist¹³⁷, considered the world of the Turks as an indivisible entity, with evident signs of both cultural ties (language, history, customs) and material bonds (blood, race). The term “Turk” referred to all those of Turkic origin i.e. the Tatars, Azeris, Kirghiz, Yakuts and others. To all these he applied the term nation (millet) and argued persuasively for joint action in a common cause. However, Pan-Turkism was just one of the ideologies that existed in the Ottoman empire. Its largely intellectual character, especially among the Turkic groups of Russia, and its lack of organization lead to its failure. Even though it was adopted by the Young Turks in the final years of the empire, it never replaced well established ideologies within the committee of Progress and Union¹³⁸.

¹³² Ibid., 61.

¹³³ Ibid., 53.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 62.

¹³⁵ Landau, Jacob M., *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, 29.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 31.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 43.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 45.

Pan-Islam is a different story. In the late 19th century most of Islam was under alien rule. Great Britain and France are the two chief Mohammedan Powers, dominating in a sense much of the Muslim world, having between them something like one hundred million Islamic subjects. The main idea was that Islam, once the greatest militant power in the world and ruler of half Europe, had entirely lost vitality, and that Islamic states were bound to decay. However, The Sultan of Turkey, a key player in the Pan-Islam movement, had succeeded in securing from the entire orthodox Mohammedan world the recognition of his position as Calif. Having won this, he was seeking excuses and finding opportunities to exercise and broaden his influence in a manner which was embarrassing and alien to other Mohammedan Powers. The position had been complicated by the ambitions of Germany (a non-Mohammedan Power), who for its own ends had acquired considerable influence with the Sultan¹³⁹.

At the same time, it was reactionary in its internal policy, so that it is impossible to regard him as the protagonist of a progressive Islamic revival. Moreover, many fiery Pan-Islamists (like those of India) had reached a high state of civilization under foreign rule, and were not that willing to accept or claim a change in their political status for the sake of preserving their religion in its full purity and the demonstration of its good qualities to the world.

At the opposite extreme of this religious revival movement were the fanatical brotherhoods, such as the Senoussi, who were conducting an extraordinarily successful campaign in Africa, and spreading Islam by the most energetic means, being the most dangerous factor in the Pan-Islamic propaganda¹⁴⁰.

Pan-ideologies may be diverse, and therefore difficult to compare, yet they share common traits. They have certain affinities to nationalism, imperialism and irredentism, share an ambiguous relationship to modernity, the state and the West, and their anxieties and fears often coincide or have a similar starting point. They are also essentialist by constructing a mythical concept of the pan-group, which is

¹³⁹ Colquhoun, Archibald R., "*Pan- Mania*," 860.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

supposed to transcend all other aspects of identity, and illiberal: membership in the pan-group is not optional (in the sense of the "daily plebiscite" as the basis of the French nation). Lastly, pan-ideologies are notoriously vague when it comes to defining goals and individual aims: they strive for paradise but are unwilling – or unable – to define what "paradise" is. They believe that the road to paradise has only been ordained by fate for their pan-group and thus are also deterministic¹⁴¹. They could be described as highly populist, "empty" but at the same time extremely appealing ideologies.

Pan-ideologies are strongly connected with both nationalism and empire. In fact, in most cases pan-ideologies bridge the gap between the two. Other pan-ideologies are created out of the context of colonialism and justify, organize and bring about anti-colonial struggle. Another one of their common traits is irredentism. Pan-ideologies are "annoyed" and dissatisfied with existing political realities and attempt to change them, usually by stirring up discontent among members of the "pan-group" living under foreign domination, claiming that these should be joined to one "mother-state." This irredentist nature of pan-ideologies may also provide an explanation as to why they have rarely managed to become official state policy. They have only prevailed in periods of international turmoil where war – the almost inevitable outcome of a propagation of a pan-ideology by a state – made significant changes in the world's territorial make-up possible¹⁴².

Hannah Arendt (1906–1975) regarded pan-movements as "particularly aggressive forms of Volk-Nationalisms", referring to pan-Germanism and pan-Slavism as examples¹⁴³. Yet, in fact, nationalism and pan-movements frequently have a rather uneasy relationship. Many pan-movements would be inconceivable without the presence of a modern nationalism, a nationalism which strives to achieve a nation state where the population is either in the majority or completely identical with "the nation". Pan-movements of this kind will go along with the national struggle, yet

¹⁴¹ Tilman, Lüdke, *"Pan-Ideologies,"* 4.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* 235.

inevitably find themselves frustrated once the state has finally been created. It is only then that nationalism and pan-movements part ways¹⁴⁴.

Despite their differences at first sight, Pan-Ideologies were a product of their time, thus sharing common foundation and characteristics. They may emphasize on different elements, having a more racial or political basis such as that “Megali Idea”¹⁴⁵, or highlighting maximalist claims like Pan-Germanism¹⁴⁶, focusing on linguistic criteria in the case of Pan-Turkists¹⁴⁷, or even having a religious starting point, but the reality is that all these movements are capable of many variations and inconsistencies, and one distinguishing symptom bringing them all together is a tendency for megalomania¹⁴⁸.

¹⁴⁴ Lüdke Tilman, 4

¹⁴⁵ Colquhoun, Archibald R., “*Pan- Mania*,” 859.

¹⁴⁶ Lüdke Tilman: *Pan-Ideologies*, 4

¹⁴⁷ Lüdke Tilman, 4

¹⁴⁸ Colquhoun, Archibald R., “*Pan- Mania*,” 852.

2c. “The Megali Idea”

Immediately after the creation of the Greek state in 1830, the Greeks believed it was obvious that they had to liberate their brothers still under Ottoman yoke and expand the territory of the state in lands that had rebelled against the Turks but had been left out¹⁴⁹ and were once Greek according to their perception. The core of “Megali Idea” is the liberation of the enslaved brothers¹⁵⁰. About thirty years after Kolettis’ speech in the parliament¹⁵¹, Charles Tuckerman, the US Minister to Greece at the time, defined “Megali Idea” as follows¹⁵²: “*Briefly defined the Great Idea means that the Greek mind is to regenerate the East—that it is the destiny of Hellenism to Hellenize that vast stretch of territory which by natural laws the Greeks believe to be theirs, and which is chiefly inhabited by people claiming to be descended from Hellenic stock, professing the Orthodox or Greek faith, or speaking the language*”.

This project targeted all the Balkan and Anatolian Orthodox who were willing to adopt Hellenic culture and language. The complex and diverse reality of the Ottoman Rum *millet* was co-opted in favour of a nationalist ideology which hailed the renaissance of a Hellenic nation that aspired to a leading role, as well as a *mission civilatrice* in Southeastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. The territorial expansion of Greece against Ottoman Balkan territories required a flexible approach towards local Christian populations, which often spoke Albanian, Bulgarian or Vlach. Bringing together these populations was a key element for the success of Greek expansionist strategies, so ethnic nationalism could not fit. Overlooking the element of language and ethnicity was in any case compatible with the *millet* legacy¹⁵³.

“Megali Idea” is not something new in the first decades of the life of the state. It exists from the Fall of Constantinople and is nothing more than the ideological expression of a movement for the creation of Greater Greece, that would include the

¹⁴⁹ Αποστολοπούλου Μ., Χατζηαντωνίου Κ., *Ιστορία Του Ελληνικού Έθνους: 1821-1941*, 116.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ Δημαράς, Κωνσταντίνος Θ., *Νεοελληνικός Διαφωτισμός*, 405–6.

¹⁵² Tuckerman, Charles W., “*The Greeks of Today*”, 120.

¹⁵³ Grigoriadis, Ioannis, “*Redefining the Nation*,” 6.

territories of the Byzantine empire, and was undoubtedly linked with the legend of the marble king¹⁵⁴. It was a vague schema as regards territory, since the Byzantine itself did not have specific borders. In any case the border was the “red apple tree” of the legend, somewhere deep in Asia Minor, and the Balkans in a European framework.

“Megali Idea” included different elements that shaped its form, through the years. There were solid Greek populations within the Ottoman empire that kept alive a tradition purely Greek in contrast with the Turks (Pontus, Cappadocia etc.). Some of them continue an old tradition that became a national element after the Turkish conquest, resisting to it (Pontus, Cappadocia, Constantinople, Eastern Thrace, Cyprus) and others were formed during the Ottoman rule for specific reasons (Greeks of Western Asia Minor, Greeks of the Principalities).

The Greek broker capital had transactions in the Balkans and Asia Minor. Thus, it could not accept as Greek state the one that was formed in 1830, since it had no interest in this region. There could not be a state that did not include its region of interest.

The orthodox patriarchate played a catalytic role in the shaping of “Megali Idea”. For the patriarchate there was no other solution than the resurrection of the Byzantine Empire.

The involvement of the minorities in the Ottoman state machine, and the important role the Greek intellectuals played, encouraged “Megali Idea”, since even them expected the reestablishment of the Byzantine empire¹⁵⁵.

The main exponent of the movement was Ioannis Kolettis, especially after his famous speech¹⁵⁶ in 1843 and that is exactly when the more realistic basis of “Megali Idea” is set. He believed, as well as King Otto, that the liberation of Greek provinces was possible through the incitement of revolutionary movements and the use of appropriate and flexible diplomatic acts, having in mind the favorable international circumstances.

¹⁵⁴ Αποστολοπούλου Μ. , Χατζηαντωνίου Κ., *Ιστορία Του Ελληνικού Έθνους: 1821-1941*, 115.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 116.

¹⁵⁶ Trencsényi B. and Kopecek M., "*Ioannis Kolettis: Of This Great Idea.*"

One might say that the driving force of the Greek state went through three faces. The first one propagated a gradual Hellenization of the Ottoman Empire and the revival of Byzantium. This approach, though diminished after 1821, still had supporters until the First Balkan War.

The second phase included the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire through a synergy of the Balkan peoples and its replacement with a federal state in which the Greek element would have a leading place due to its economic and cultural superiority. This reminds us a lot of Riga's points¹⁵⁷.

The third face is the one described above under Kolettis and Otto. It was based upon a tense irredentist policy aimed towards the territorial integration of the Greek state. There was a realistic plan formed, in which there was a minimum of territorial claims.

It must be noted that due to the weakness of the Greek kingdom and the Great Powers policy, "Megali Idea" could not be achieved in its initial phases. Things got even worse after 1854 and the failed revolutionary movements, Russia's turn towards Pan-Slavism and the Revolution in Crete (1866-1869). Greek foreign policy was forced to adapt more realistic orientations and seek the necessary as it was proven peaceful and friendly coexistence with the Ottoman empire. It was also clear that the economic and cultural rise of the enslaved Greeks, coupled with the military and fiscal strengthening of the young state was the only way to deal with the military failures but also the Bulgarian penetration in Macedonia¹⁵⁸.

The evolutionary interpretation of "Megali Idea" went through a new phase, with the concretion of the two national centers, Constantinople and Athens through Greco-ottomanism¹⁵⁹. One can talk about the emergence of a new irredentist ideology in the beginning of the 20th century. Its aim was the reformation of the empire the coexistence of Greek and Ottoman element. A. Souliotis-Nikolaidis and I. Dragoumis (Organisation of Constantinople) envisioned the transformation of the empire to a

¹⁵⁷ Βακαλόπουλος Α. Κωνσταντίνος, *Νεοελληνική Ιστορία (1204-1940)*, 192.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 193.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 195.

multi-ethnic federation, where the connecting point would be the common cultural bonds of the East¹⁶⁰.

Souliotis believed in the presence of many nations inside a federation which would ultimately take a supranational character with the creation of an Eastern race. After Venizelos's arrival we have a continuation of the Greco-Turkish approach as a result of the circumstances of the time¹⁶¹. He had sincerely believed in the possibility of coexistence within the Ottoman territory and even admitted that he would not have gone to war in 1912 against Turkey, if the Cretan issue had been solved¹⁶².

Of course, as it soon became apparent, the hope of coexistence was utopian, and would be proven as such in the most painful way possible, the Asia Minor Catastrophe in 1922.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 379.

¹⁶² Ibid., 383.

2d. The modern Greek nation and the Greek nation-state

Ever since the founding of the Greek state in 1830, a long debate has been going on about the beginning of modern Hellenism and modern Greeks. Fallmerayer's study¹⁶³ triggered a rush towards this direction. Many historians and scholars in general, tried to distinguish the elements of the Greek identity as well as its influences in an attempt to discredit Fallmerayer's claims. Prince Clemens Von Metternich on a letter to a Hungarian nobleman, Prince Paul Esterhazy on 21st September 1829¹⁶⁴ inquired "*What do we mean by the Greeks? Do we mean a people, a country, or a religion? If either of the first two, where are the dynastic and geographical boundaries? If the third, then upwards of fifty million men are Greeks...*"¹⁶⁵. This is just a small indication of the task they were up to, but also the complexity and obscurity of who was to be called Greek and what it meant to call oneself as such.

Much of the Greek identity is based on the classical heritage. This is partly thanks to western science. This heritage was known to Greeks long before the struggle for independence in 1821 and became even more evident after the establishment of the Greek state¹⁶⁶. It goes without saying that after 1830 Greeks devoted themselves to their classical heritage. Despite neglecting to refer to certain aspects of their roots, the continuity in Greek history, racial origin, language and culture is undisputed¹⁶⁷. The study of folkloristics provides further arguments. Greek folk tradition and its Slavic counterpart share many common customs that can be traced to the pre-Christian era and became corpus of the Orthodox Church and were thus transferred to the Slavs. If those customs had vanished, they could not have been transferred to the Slavs, whose folk tradition, despite the common elements is distinct from the Greek one¹⁶⁸.

Another important aspect of the Greek identity is Byzantium. The Byzantine empire was without doubt the one that preserved the ancient world through the

¹⁶³ Fallmerayer, Jacob P., *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters*.

¹⁶⁴ Livanios, Dimitris, "*The Quest for Hellenism*," 33.

¹⁶⁵ Bertier de Sauvigny, *Metternich and His Times*, 35.

¹⁶⁶ Dakin, Douglas, *Η ενοποίηση της Ελλάδας 1770-1923*, 18.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 21.

clergy¹⁶⁹. Despite the latter's enmity towards the ancient spirit, it saved it and brought it to today. Greeks have inherited byzantine Greece as well, its roots going deep into the Hellenistic world, which in its turn had its roots in classical Greece. It is undisputed that Greeks are closer to byzantine rather than classical Greece. This is because byzantine era Greece was the living past thanks to the church¹⁷⁰. In this framework, there have been attempts to "Hellenize" the Eastern Roman Empire, either because the nineteenth-century Greek Romanticism (through Spyridon Zampelios and Constantinos Paparrigopoulos) constructed Byzantium as the medieval phase of the primordial "Hellenic" nation or because a segment of the byzantine intelligentsia used the term "Hellene" to identify themselves, especially in the last two centuries of the empire¹⁷¹.

This duality was the cause for a "struggle" between the two traditions that was not limited to a theoretical framework. The dispute could be found in different groups of Greeks, each one highlighting the byzantine or the classical one. In any case, classical heritage became stronger and stronger until it became the dominant, though not the only force in modern Greek history¹⁷². After all, 1453, a milestone of the Greek "existence" was a date that saw no change in the way Greeks perceived themselves, a continuity rather than a break; this is also why the Fall of Constantinople does not mark the beginning of the "modern period" of Greek history¹⁷³.

Before one decides to take up the modern Greek identity issue it is imperative that he occupies himself with the Greek Millet or Millet-i-Rum. The Millet-i-Rum embraced all the Christians subjects of the Sultan and reflected in microcosm the ethnic heterogeneity of the empire itself¹⁷⁴. It contained Serbs, Romanians, Bulgarians, Vlachs, Orthodox Albanians and Arabs, while the strictly Greek element, although firmly in control of the millet through its stranglehold over the Ecumenical

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 24.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 25.

¹⁷¹ Livianos, Dimitris, "The Quest for Hellenism," 36.

¹⁷² Dakin, Douglas, *Η ενοποίηση της Ελλάδας 1770-1923*, 25.

¹⁷³ Livianos, Dimitris, "The Quest for Hellenism," 35.

¹⁷⁴ Braude B., and Lewis B., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, 185.

Patriarchate was by no means homogenous. The millets were formally formed after 1453¹⁷⁵, with the Rum millet being the largest one¹⁷⁶.

It is interesting to note that during the Ottoman Empire, the “nation” was Orthodoxy and the “fatherland” was the lands of the Orthodox. In this context, “Hellenic” as it was used by Scholarios¹⁷⁷ is just another word for Christian “Oecumene”. This could be termed as the “national character” of the “nation”. Christians however had a name for it: Genos [Γένος plural: Γένη] is a word that linguistically carries connotations of lineage through blood and ancestry and remains notoriously untranslatable¹⁷⁸. It started life in the Byzantine Empire as *Γένος των Ρωμαίων* (of the Romans) or *γένος των Χριστιανών* (of the Christians), but in many instances remained unaccompanied by adjectives and other appellations. It was the one single word used throughout the period of the Ottoman rule by the Greek-speaking Christians to denote the wider community they thought they belonged to¹⁷⁹.

The question of homogeneity is quite perplexed. Many Turkish speaking Christians referred to themselves as “Christians” or “Christians inhabiting the East” (Anadol etrafında sakın olan Hıristiyanlar). Furthermore, the existence in Istanbul and in the Orthodox eparchies of Nicaea, Nicomidia and Chalcedon of communities of Armenian speaking “Greeks” who employed the Greek alphabet to write Armenian, further complicated matters. Another element of ambiguity though outside the Millet-i-Rum stemmed from the Cryptochristians. Substantial numbers were to be found in Southern Albania, in Crete, in Cyprus and above all in Pontus where their numbers ran into many thousands¹⁸⁰.

The Greeks were always the dominant ethnic group in the Millet-i-Rum, just as the millet itself appears to have enjoyed a tacit precedence over the other millets¹⁸¹. The millet system evolved throughout the empire’s lifetime but in the 19th century it

¹⁷⁵ Sugar, Peter F., *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354-1805*, 44.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 45.

¹⁷⁷ Livanos, Christopher, *“The Conflict between Scholarios and Plethon: Religion and Communal Identity in Early Modern Greece.”*

¹⁷⁸ Κολιόπουλος, Ιωάννης Σ., *Η “πέραν” Ελλάς Και Οι “άλλοι” Έλληνες. Το Σύγχρονο Ελληνικό Έθνος Και Οι Σύνοικοι Χριστιανοί (1800-1912)*, 67–70.

¹⁷⁹ Livanios, Dimitris, *“The Quest for Hellenism,”* 49.

¹⁸⁰ Braude B. and Lewis B., *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, 186.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

began to crumble. The initial onslaught on the power and the pretensions of the millet and its leaders i.e. the Patriarchate, the Holy Synod, Fanariotes, koçabasis came from Greeks who with their growing network of commercial ties with Western Europe and with their cultural ascendancy within the Orthodox millet, were more susceptible to nationalist and rationalist currents emanating from Western Europe¹⁸². It was the emergence of the independent Greek state in 1830 which rendered inevitable the eventual demise of the Millet-i-Rum, although it was formally to survive for almost another century¹⁸³.

In the latter 19th century the Millet-i-Rum turned from a grouping that embraced all Orthodox inhabitants of the Ottoman empire into one that was largely but still by no means ethnically Greek. This was due to a number of reasons. Soon after the founding of the Greek state, its church was declared Autocephalous in 1833, and in the same decade the Ecumenical Patriarchate was forced to accept the de facto autonomy of the Serbian church together with the Serbianization of its hierarchy. After the collapse of the Phanariot regime in the Danubian lands, the Rumanian church was reorganized, and its autonomy was recognized in 1885. The major blow however was the Bulgarian Exarchate founded in 1870. The Patriarch responded with an anathema to the Exarchate in 1872, lifted only in 1945. The condition that dioceses could place themselves under the jurisdiction of the Exarchate provided that two-thirds of their members had voted to do so inaugurated forty years of bitter strife between Greeks, Bulgarians and Serbs in Macedonia¹⁸⁴.

The formal demise of the Millet-i-Rum should be dated to March 1919 on the eve of the Greek occupation of the West coast of Asian Minor, when the Ecumenical Patriarchate formally released Ottoman Greeks from their civic responsibilities as Ottoman citizens. Almost a century after the Greek War of Independence, the privileged status of the millet was unilaterally abrogated by its temporal and ecclesiastical leader¹⁸⁵.

¹⁸² Ibid., 192.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 193.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 194.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 200.

It is interesting to see the evolution of the Greek national identity starting from Regas Velestinlis. Greek nationalism was heavily influenced in its initial stages by the French Republican nationalism. The fusion of French civic ideals and the *millet* tradition did not allow ethnicity to become a defining element of Greek identity during the Neohellenic Enlightenment and the Independence War years¹⁸⁶. In Regas' work the boundary mechanism the delineation for the Greek national identity was voluntaristic and deduced its symbols from republican political values and institutions. The "other" in the civic nation he envisioned was the Ottoman *ancient regime*. Christians, Muslims, Jews adherents of French republican forces were invited to join forces and overthrow the despotic empire¹⁸⁷. The aim was the creation of a republic based on reason and a civic form of Hellenic civilization.

This civic conceptualization of the Greek national identity did not prevail, as *millet*- based divisions proved much stronger. The boundary mechanism remained voluntaristic but within the *Rum millet*. It just became more restrictive, as culture and language were added to political values as key symbolic resources. All Balkan Christians were invited and theoretically welcomed to partake in the Hellenic culture, learn Greek and thus become eligible for Greek citizenship¹⁸⁸. The importance of learning Greek is highlighted in several literary works of the Neohellenic Enlightenment. Some of them aimed specifically to the proliferation of Greek among non-Greek-speaking Christians¹⁸⁹.

Refocusing on the Rum millet meant that Christianity was a basic and solid identity criterion of the Greek nation. Therefore, the boundary drawn did not only exclude the despotic Ottoman Empire, but also its Muslim subjects. This fitted Ottoman social divisions and was of course easier to spread. According to Article 2§2 of the Constitution promulgated on 1 January 1822 at the First Revolutionary National Assembly in Epidaurus, "the autochthonous residents of the Greek territory who believe in Jesus Christ are Greeks enjoy all the civil rights without any limitation and difference". Greek citizenship included in other words an open invitation to all

¹⁸⁶ Grigoriadis, Ioannis, "Redefining the Nation," 3.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 4.

Ottoman Christians who were willing to join the revolutionary cause, regardless of their ethnic descent or mother tongue. Apart from the endurance of millet allegiances, this also reflected the diversity of the ethno-linguistic map of Ottoman Balkans. Through the appropriation of Greek language and culture, Balkan and Anatolian Christians could hope to become full members of the Greek nation¹⁹⁰.

While culture and language were recognized as key pillars of Greek national identity, their content was disputed. Adamantios Korais, arguably the most influential intellectual of the Neohellenic Enlightenment, claimed that to reach its ancient glory, the Greek nation had to rid itself of all Ottoman and Byzantine influences which had kept it aloof from all intellectual developments in Western Europe, recover its ancient culture and establish a secular state under the name of 'Hellas'¹⁹¹. The establishment of the terms 'Hellas' and 'Hellene' had a major symbolic significance. In Korais' view, Orthodoxy was not an incontrovertible element of Greek national identity; on the contrary, it was an obstacle to the nation's modernization. In a similar vein, Korais championed a comprehensive language reform so that the vernacular Greek language would be relieved from all its medieval Ottoman and Byzantine influences. The new idiom called 'katharevousa' would be literally 'pure' of all foreign traces and adulterations¹⁹².

Korais' complete rejection of Greece's medieval heritage was not followed by Konstantinos Paparregopoulos, the most influential Greek historian of the nineteenth century. In his magnum opus 'History of the Greek Nation'¹⁹³, Paparregopoulos attempted to reconcile ancient Greek and Byzantine historical legacies through the introduction of a 'Hellenic-Christian synthesis'. He also adopted the periodization of Greek history into ancient, medieval and modern, first suggested by the historian Spyridon Zambelios. In contrast to Korais, who had dismissed Orthodoxy, Paparregopoulos subjugated Orthodoxy to Greek nationalism and made it a key element of Greek national identity. Despite the universalistic message of Orthodoxy

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Roudometof, Victor N., "From Rum Millet to Greek Nation: Enlightenment, Secularization, and National Identity in Ottoman Balkan Society, 1453-1821," 25–26.

¹⁹³ Παπαρρηγόπουλος, Κωνσταντίνος, *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού έθνους από των αρχαιοτάτων χρόνων μέχρι των νεωτέρων, χάριν των πολλών*.

which was then advanced by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the newly- established Church of Greece facilitated the transformation of Orthodoxy into a cultural tool for the consolidation of Greek nationalism. In the nationalist visions of both Korais and Paparregopoulos, language and culture remained major symbolic resources for the definition of Greek national identity. The delineation of the boundaries of Greek national identity remained voluntaristic within the borders of the Rum millet. This was necessary due to the launch of an ambitious nationalist project¹⁹⁴. “Megali Idea” espoused the ‘re-civilization” of the Near East through the expansion of Greece. Through the recovery of Byzantine territories lost to the Ottomans including its capital and the restoration of a Hellenic Empire over the Ottoman territories, Greece would fulfil its *mission civilisatrice*.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴ Grigoriadis, Ioannis, “Redefining the Nation,” 5.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 6.

2e. Pontic Greek Identity and the Modern Greek Nation

The Greek population of the Southern Black Sea coast i.e. Pontic Greeks is a particular case among the Greek populations living outside mainland Greece. The geographic isolation and distance from powerful Greek centers, enriched their culture with some unique characteristics and as will be later presented, gave birth to some unlikely exceptions.

The first question to be answered is what are the elements of the Pontic identity and secondly, does this identity have a Greek orientation and character? Greek presence in Pontus dates back to the 7th century BC and the first colony of Miletus. Over the coming centuries the Greek element was a constant point of reference during the Roman and Byzantine empire. The late Byzantine era is one that is of great interest, since at the same time that Anatolia is being lost for Byzantium and consequently Hellenism, Pontus stands its ground. It is interesting to note that the Greek-orthodox element of Pontus was always part of the Greek “γένος” (genos). The term used for these people during the Byzantine and Ottoman times was “Ρωμαίος/Ρωμικός” (Roman), a term that still survives as self-distinguishing for the Greek-speaking Muslims of Pontus (εμείς πα Ρωμαίοι είμες- we are Romans). The Greeks of Pontus that had migrated to the Russian Caucasus during the 19th centuries called themselves “Ρωμαίοι-Romans” if they spoke Greek and “Rum/Urum” if they spoke Turkish¹⁹⁶. The word “Έλληνας-Hellene” followed in Pontus the same road as in the rest of the Greek-inhabited areas¹⁹⁷ of Byzantine and later Ottoman empire¹⁹⁸.

The endurance of Pontic Hellenism lies to geography, village communities in the valleys and the commercial prosperity in the coast. The morphology of the region

¹⁹⁶ Ξανθοπούλου-Κυριακού, Άρτεμις, Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευριπίδης Π., Χατζηκυριακίδης, Κυριάκος, *Οι Έλληνες του Πόντου και η Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία (1461-1923)*, 25.

¹⁹⁷ Δημαράς Θ.Κ., *Νεοελληνικός Διαφωτισμός*.

¹⁹⁸ Ξανθοπούλου-Κυριακού, Άρτεμις, Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευριπίδης Π., Χατζηκυριακίδης, Κυριάκος, *Οι Έλληνες του Πόντου και η Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία (1461-1923)*, 25.

has isolated even from antiquity the coast and the Greek trading stations on it- from Amisos (Samsun) to the west, to Bathys (Batumi) to the east- from central Anatolia, creating a culture of isolation. The northern slopes of the mountains that separate Pontus from Anatolia are densely forested and thus unattractive to the semi-nomadic Turkomans who first took their flocks to the edge of the Anatolian plateau and looked down upon the Pontic “sea of trees” (ağaç denizi). In other words, Pontus was well insulated from settlement coming from the interior, which in its turn meant that the process of Turkification was slow and protracted over centuries¹⁹⁹.

Having experienced the collapse of Byzantine administration in Anatolia before and after 1071, Pontic Greeks were the most successful in ignoring the wider political facts of life in Anatolia. After all it was proven that the rural areas that were Greek and had the will to defend their lands managed to retain a local independence. For the Greeks of Pontus specifically the imperial Byzantine or Ottoman government in Constantinople might not, for most practical reasons, have existed²⁰⁰. Another important factor is that in Pontus Muslim settlement began up to four centuries later than in other regions, and it only lasted for about a century before the tide was turned in the 19th century²⁰¹. Elsewhere Greeks tended to lose their language before their faith, and their faith before they stopped paying the haraç levy. The contribution of Ottoman bureaucracy and haraç assessors to the survival of Hellenism was in some areas crucial. It had been the Ottoman state that first adequately defined what a Greek was and assumed that his descendants would also be classified as “Rumi”. However, Anatolian Greeks lost ground geographically until the 19th century re-Hellenization.

Pontus on the other hand does not fall within these two categories. In at least two areas Greek language outlasted the Orthodox faith and in many more districts the Orthodox faith outlasted the haraç classification. Some crypto-Christians who declared Orthodoxy in 1856 might have had Muslim ancestors and were even enlisted for Muslim military service. It is possible though difficult to prove, that Greek had become the elite language among some Muslim settlers. In 1850, George Finlay was

¹⁹⁹ Bryer, Anthony, *“The Tourkokratia in Pontos: Some Problems and Preliminary Conclusions,”* 34.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 35.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 39.

taken round Trebizond by a Greek-speaking Muslim who answered to the name of Demetris²⁰². Finally, a look at Kiepert's map of Greek-speaking villages in 1890²⁰³, will reveal that virtually all the areas of the medieval empire had been retained. In the highlands Greek settlement had even been extended²⁰⁴.

The main source of "power" for Hellenism was the village communities in the interior. The coastal trading towns were more vulnerable to political and commercial change. But until a rift between urban and valley Greeks manifests itself in the late 19th century, they drew much of their strength and continuity of Hellenism from the valleys. It is interesting to note that for travelers the cities always seemed to look outward towards the Black Sea, and in the two or three biggest cities there was a cosmopolitan air, which was hard to reconcile with the uncompromising interior. But the old Greek colonies of the coast shared a community of interest with the immediate interior, something unparalleled for among similar Greek cities of the Euxine coast. Each town was inextricably linked to its own valley, its private Greek hinterland²⁰⁵.

Education is another factor that could not be omitted. Greek education went through various phases in Pontus during the long Ottoman rule. In the middle 15th century, after the Fall of Constantinople and Trebizond, a large number of scholars left the former Byzantine empire towards the West, joining those that had left prior to the Fall. Among them we should examine the life course of three different but esteemed Pontic Greek scholars. Cardinal Vissarion, Georgios of Trebizond and Georgios Amoiroutzis²⁰⁶.

These three men each one from different ideological roots and different life paths tried to save their homeland, its people and culture. This included constant pleads to European monarchs and the Pope for the liberation of the Greeks in the case of Vissarion, the attempt to Christianize Mehmet II and consequently the Ottoman empire as Georgios of Trebizond envisioned and the intention to keep the identity of

²⁰² Ibid., 40.

²⁰³ Kiepert, Heinrich, "*Die Verbreitung Der Griechischen Sprache Im Pontischen Küstengebirge.*"

²⁰⁴ Bryer, Anthony, "*The Tourkokratia in Pontos: Some Problems and Preliminary Conclusions,*" 40.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 34.

²⁰⁶ Ξανθοπούλου-Κυριακού, Άρτεμις, Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευριπίδης Π., Χατζηκυριακίδης, Κυριάκος, *Οι Έλληνες του Πόντου και η Οθωμανική Αυτοκρατορία (1461-1923)*, 49.

the *γένος* (gender, nation) alive and create a field of understanding, between ruler and ruled²⁰⁷ as is the case with Amoiroutzis. Despite the criticism that existed even at their time, especially as far as Amoiroutzis is concerned²⁰⁸, these prominent scholars alongside others of course were the education beacons of Pontus in the years right before and after the end of Byzantium and the empire of Trebizond.

However, situation got worse in Pontus as time went on. In the 16th century there were almost no teachers and scholars at all. At least until the early 17th century there was no way out of Pontus in this matter as the Greeks in the European part of the empire and Constantinople had. The very few scholars of that time came from the three Great monasteries. There were no schools but home teachers. Only in the late 17th century a series of positive developments in the region like the short teaching of the high-valued scholar Sevastos Kiminitis, the founding of the Princely Academies in Bucharest and Jassy (Ιάσιο) gave a generous boost to the education in Pontus. In any case though, in those hard times the undisputed guardians and providers of education were the three monasteries, Panagia Soumela, St. Georgios Peristereota and St. Ioannis Vazelona²⁰⁹. Great milestones are undoubtedly the founding of the “frontistiria” in Trebizond in 1682 and Gümüşhane (Αργυρούπολη, Argypoupolis) in 1723²¹⁰.

During the 19th century we see that there is an increased demand for education in Pontus that leads Archbishop Parthenios to ask for financial aid not for the needs of the church but for the education of the fold²¹¹. During the last decades of the century the increase of schools and students is impressive. The founding of new schools and the maintenance of existing ones was due to donations from Greeks in Pontus or Pontic Greeks that lived in Russia. The data available, with some reservation, talk about 507 Greek schools, 20.435 students and 543 teachers in 1890. By 1912 schools were 1.050, teachers 1.230 and students rose, perhaps with some excess, to

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 53–55.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 55–56.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 67–68.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 86.

²¹¹ Ibid., 129.

75.000. The period between the late 19th and early 20th century is also the height of the “frontistirio” of Trebizond²¹².

In the same framework one ought not to neglect the role of the church. For most Pontic Christians their relationship with the distant patriarchate were largely economic. They felt the burden of the *peşkeş* (monthly gift). The average Greek in the region was also made aware of his bishop’s legal and political position in the local government. The Greek core of Pontus is dominated by its great monasteries: Peristereota, Vazelon, Soumela and Choutoura. The forty or so villages that surrounded them remained unwavering in their faith from medieval until modern times. Among these villages, apostasy was inconceivable. In the Matsouka valley below Vazelon there are impressive records of the cultivation of the same fields by the same families under the same terms and using the same agricultural methods for up to six centuries²¹³.

It should be stated that it was a habit of the Greeks of Pontus after the end of the Russian-Turkish War in 1828-1829 to move to Russia after each conflict to avoid possible Ottoman retaliation. From 1828 to 1882 it is estimated that approximately 95.100 Greeks migrated from Pontus to Russia²¹⁴. Their numbers were fluctuant occasionally rising and falling until the breakout of the First World War. During its time, approximately 85.800 new Pontic Greeks found refuge in Russian territory²¹⁵.

During this period there were attempts to bring the immigrants to Greece. The national center had from late 19th century attempted to divert the wave of Pontic Greeks from Russia to Greece, in an attempt to become a point of reference for all the Greek orthodox populations of the Ottoman empire²¹⁶. It seems that among the landless peasants that lived in isolated hostile villages the prospect of relocation in the

²¹² Ibid., 249–50.

²¹³ Bryer, Anthony, *“The Tourkokratia in Pontos: Some Problems and Preliminary Conclusions,”* 36.

²¹⁴ Χασιώτης, Ιωάννης Κ., *Οι Έλληνες Της Ρωσίας Και Της Σοβιετικής Ένωσης: Μετοικεσίες Και Εκτοπισμοί, Οργάνωση Και Ιδεολογία*, 542.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 562.

²¹⁶ Παπαδόπουλος, Ιωάννης, *“Σχέδια Εποικισμού Πριν Από Την Ελληνοτουρκική Ανταλλαγή Πληθυσμών: Προσπάθειες Για Οργανωμένη Μετακίνηση Των Ποντίων Στη Μακεδονία, Τη Θεσσαλία Και Την Κρήτη Στα Τέλη Του 19ου Και Τις Αρχές Του 20ού Αιώνα,”* 152.

new Greek lands, at first in Epirus and Thessaly and later in Macedonia after the Balkan wars, was seen as the best solution²¹⁷.

Pontus was part of the ideal Greek space as early as the Greek revolution, and Pontic Greeks had taken part in revolutionary corps both from historic Pontus and Russia²¹⁸. This is why Theodoros Negris claimed in 1823 that Pontic Greeks had earned the undisputed right to gain political rights in Greece²¹⁹.

Even from the 1870s, the Greek Association (Σύλλογος) founded in 1872 in Trabzon believed that the Greeks of Pontus should stay in their ancestral land. Had it however been impossible, the choice should preferably be Greece, but in any case, anywhere but Russia²²⁰. The annexation of Thessaly to the Greek state (1881-1882) made this option more realistic²²¹.

According to Biliotti, the Greeks did not migrate to Russia out of sympathy for Russians but as the closest choice. Their hearts and sympathies were towards Greece, as long as they could find arable land and just a fraction of the facilitations provided by the Russian administration²²².

Greek government attempted to create a network of organized movement of Pontic Greeks in Thessaly, after 1878 and the end of the Russian-Ottoman war to prevent large masses of Greek populations to move towards Russia, since the St. Stephan Treaty provided facilitations to such movements²²³. After the temporary abandonment of these plans, Macedonia was suggested. Its people had not shown, at least according to the Greek government, the necessary devotion to the Greek ideals.

²¹⁷ Χασιώτης, Ιωάννης Κ., *Οι Έλληνες Της Ρωσίας Και Της Σοβιετικής Ένωσης: Μετοικεσίες Και Εκτοπισμοί, Οργάνωση Και Ιδεολογία*, 171.

²¹⁸ Παπαδόπουλος, Ιωάννης, "Σχέδια Εποικισμού Πριν Από Την Ελληνοτουρκική Ανταλλαγή Πληθυσμών: Προσπάθειες Για Οργανωμένη Μετακίνηση Των Ποντίων Στη Μακεδονία, Τη Θεσσαλία Και Την Κρήτη Στα Τέλη Του 19ου Και Τις Αρχές Του 20ού Αιώνα," 152.

²¹⁹ Νέγρης, Θεόδωρος, "Ανάπτυξις του νόμου της Επιδαύρου", 145

²²⁰ Χασιώτης, Ιωάννης Κ., *Οι Έλληνες Της Ρωσίας Και Της Σοβιετικής Ένωσης: Μετοικεσίες Και Εκτοπισμοί, Οργάνωση Και Ιδεολογία*, 109.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 115.

²²² Ξανθοπούλου-Κυριακού, Άρτεμις, "Μεταναστεύσεις Ελλήνων Στον Καύκασο Κατά Τον 19ο Αιώνα," 125.

²²³ Παπαδόπουλος, Ιωάννης, "Σχέδια Εποικισμού Πριν Από Την Ελληνοτουρκική Ανταλλαγή Πληθυσμών: Προσπάθειες Για Οργανωμένη Μετακίνηση Των Ποντίων Στη Μακεδονία, Τη Θεσσαλία Και Την Κρήτη Στα Τέλη Του 19ου Και Τις Αρχές Του 20ού Αιώνα," 157.

Greek diplomats were surprised to see that the populations in Macedonia and Thrace preferred the immediate liberation from the Ottoman yoke rather than the unsure unification to Greece in the future. Even the devoted to Hellenism Bulgarian-speaking communities of Doirani, Giannitsa, Goumentza and Vodena, refused to sign protest letters against their inclusion to the Bulgarian state. In this framework, the prospect of the organized movement of Pontic Greeks of undisputed ethnism (εθνισμός) towards Macedonia, was seen as positive.

Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Charilaos Trikoupis reported to the Greek consul in Thessaloniki that many Pontic Greeks had asked the Greek consul of Trabzon for aid from the Greek government in order to migrate to Greece²²⁴.

In the 1880s, resisting the Russification policy, organized in strong Greek communities, these Pontic Greeks kept their national identity alive, alongside their bonds with their fatherlands but also their ideological at least contact with the distant and idealized homeland, Greece²²⁵.

Greece's interest for the Greeks of Russia intensified during the next decades. After the Balkan wars, Venizelos' emigration policy in Macedonia was an attempt to bring dynamic populations to the newly acquired territories. In this framework doctor Koutsodimitris was sent in 1914 in Russia to examine the wills of the Greeks and record the families that would be willing to move to Macedonia. Pontic Greeks of Russia expressed the will to come to Greece. It is estimated that 3.757 Pontic Greeks from Caucasus moved to Macedonia, many of which returned to Russia, disappointed by the situation in Macedonia²²⁶. It has to be stated though that before these events, some families from the Hant`o and Meglis villages in Chalka had tasted the experience of emigration in Macedonia. Some of them returned to their villages in Caucasus because of the conditions they found²²⁷.

²²⁴ Ibid., 159.

²²⁵ Ξανθοπούλου- Κυριακού, Άρτεμις, *“Μεταναστεύσεις Ελλήνων Στον Καύκασο Κατά Τον 19ο Αιώνα,”* 135.

²²⁶ Παπαδόπουλος, Ιωάννης, *“Σχέδια Εποικισμού Πριν Από Την Ελληνοτουρκική Ανταλλαγή Πληθυσμών: Προσπάθειες Για Οργανωμένη Μετακίνηση Των Ποντίων Στη Μακεδονία, Τη Θεσσαλία Και Την Κρήτη Στα Τέλη Του 19ου Και Τις Αρχές Του 20ού Αιώνα,”* 172.

²²⁷ Χασιώτης, Ιωάννης Κ., *Οι Έλληνες Της Ρωσίας Και Της Σοβιετικής Ένωσης: Μετοικεσίες Και Εκτοπισμοί, Οργάνωση Και Ιδεολογία,* 172.

The national orientations of these populations can become further clearer if one reads the Greek newspapers during the Balkan wars. With the beginning of the war, the three most important newspapers (Κόσμος, Εθνική Δράσις, Αργοναύτης) present a complete ideological convergence. In an atmosphere of general national elan, took initiatives for the fund raising for the cause²²⁸.

As far as Pontus itself is concerned, Moricz's ,Austrian consul in Trabzon, notes in 1914 are enlightening: " For five days now it is rumored that Turkish women have told Greek merchants that their husbands do not allow them to shop from Greeks anymore, because they sent the money to the Greek fleet"²²⁹.

Newspapers further suggest the sense of belonging to the Greek nation, Pontic Greeks had. An article in the newspaper " Ελεύθερος Πόντος" (Free Pontus) printed in Batum in June 1919, after describing the unwavering devotion of the Pontic Greeks to Hellenism, calls the Greeks of Pontus not to lose their hopes for success and urges them to set the limestone of the Hellenic Republic of Komnenoi (της ελληνικής δημοκρατίας των Κομνηνών)²³⁰.

²²⁸ Ibid., 219.

²²⁹ Κυριακίδης, Θεοδόσιος Αρ., *Συμβολή Στην Έρευνα Της Γενοκτονίας Του Ελληνορθόδοξου Πληθυσμού Και Της Αντιχριστιανικής Πολιτικής Στον Πόντο*, 63.

²³⁰ Ανώνυμος, "Πίσις εις την επιτυχίαν", *Ελεύθερος Πόντος*, 19 Ιουνίου, 1919, σελίδα 1, τεύχος 2.

2f. Pontic Greek population: Facts and figures

When it comes to Greeks of Pontus in general, the writer does not wish to tire with a long presentation of the population data but instead will present the most known censi and their information. Perhaps the most known census is that of 1881-1893²³¹. It was carried out by French geographer Vital Cuinet²³² and was criticized even from its publication²³³. According to the Ottoman division of Pontus, the Greeks were 246.625. But if one adds the Greeks residing in the expanded boundaries of the area, then the total number rises to 278.925²³⁴. Cuinet's work is even more strongly doubted by Turks today²³⁵.

It seems however that this census despite its problems is still better than the Ottoman counterpart of the same period that lasted twelve years as well²³⁶. This census claimed that the Pontic Greeks were 193.733²³⁷.

The second Ottoman census is that of 1905-06. In this the Greek population is estimated to 286.943²³⁸. Even more illuminating is the last ever Ottoman census of 1914 based on the one mentioned above²³⁹. According to these the Greeks of Pontus were 335.946²⁴⁰. What is interesting is that in these two censi the Greek population has a 50% rise in total. In some areas like the sancaks of Amasya, Karahisar Sarki, Tokat and Sinop we are talking about an 85% rise, which cannot be explained by means of natural reproduction rates of a population²⁴¹.

²³¹ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., "Τα Πληθυσμιακά Στοιχεία Για Τον Πόντο (1870-1912): Κριτική Προσέγγιση Και Συγκριτική Παρουσίασή Τους," 205.

²³² Cuinet, Vital, *La Turquie d'Asie. géographie administrative, statistique descriptive et raisonnée de chaque province de l'Asie mineure*.

²³³ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., "Τα Πληθυσμιακά Στοιχεία Για Τον Πόντο (1870-1912): Κριτική Προσέγγιση Και Συγκριτική Παρουσίασή Τους," 206.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 207.

²³⁵ Tellioglu, İbrahim, "Pontus Meselesini Çözüm Süzülüğe İten İddia ve Talepler," 531.

²³⁶ Karpat, Kemal H., "Ottoman Population Records and the Census of 1881/82-1893."

²³⁷ Κλάψης, Αντώνης, "Ο Ελληνικός Πληθυσμός Του Οθωμανικού Πόντου Στις Αρχές Του 20ου Αιώνα. Μία Συγκριτική Δημογραφική Ανάλυση," 225.

²³⁸ Karpat, Kemal H., *Ottoman Population 1830-1914. Demographic and Social Characteristics*, 164.

²³⁹ Κλάψης, Αντώνης, "Ο Ελληνικός Πληθυσμός Του Οθωμανικού Πόντου Στις Αρχές Του 20ου Αιώνα. Μία Συγκριτική Δημογραφική Ανάλυση," 227.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 228.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 226.

Greek statistics or statistics based on Greek data appear after 1870 and come from the Metropoleis of the Greek communities or the Greek consulates²⁴². Savvas Ioannides presented in 1870 the population of Pontus. In his work, Christian Greeks are 240.000 and Muslims 480.000 out of a total 1.000.000 inhabitants. Armenians were 120.000, Kirghiz were 100.000 and the Kurds along with other Muslim ethnicities were approximately 60.000²⁴³. When the ethnic criterion is involved though, numbers change. Ioannides claims that those of Greek ethnic origin reached 330.000, those of Ottoman- Turkish descent 250.000, Kirghiz 100.000, Armenian 140.000, Laz and Georgian 45.000, Türkmen 85.000 and Kurd, Persian etc. 50.000. However, it is not clear how he made this separation²⁴⁴. With these numbers also agree but with small changes the statistics of Pericles Triantafyllides the same year, and the report of the Greek consul in Trebizond Napoleon Mpetsos²⁴⁵, and finally that of the French geographer Alexandre Syvrais, who gives a number of 320.000 Greeks in Pontus and Paphlagonia without particularly detailed data²⁴⁶.

The next attempts were conducted under difficult conditions which affect their trustworthiness, like the last official Greek statistic in 1910²⁴⁷. The thoroughly discussed census of the Patriarchate is surrounded by contradiction²⁴⁸. Published in a book in 1919, it gives a number of 450.913 Greeks in the Pontus region²⁴⁹. Finally, the American King Crane report in the Paris Peace Conference, places the Greek number in 400.000²⁵⁰.

It is hard and perhaps even impossible for one to deduct safe and accurate numbers, since the numbers have been exploited but more importantly there are many factors that cause obscurity and greatly impair our ability to extract solid results.

²⁴² Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., *“Τα Πληθυσμιακά Στοιχεία Για Τον Πόντο (1870-1912): Κριτική Προσέγγιση Και Συγκριτική Παρουσίασή Τους,”* 211.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 212.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 213.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 214.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 216.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 222.

Therefore, caution is mandatory. One can however scratch satisfying accuracy given the particularity of the aspect.

Comparing the Ottoman census of 1914 to the Greek of 1910-1912, there is a difference of roughly 117.247 Greeks between them, a 35% divergence. The helping hand at this point is the work of Justin McCarthy²⁵¹. McCarthy uses a “correction factor”²⁵² when dealing with the Ottoman censi to raise the artificially reduced Greek population in an attempt to defend their trustworthiness²⁵³. McCarthy uses his factor only in vilayets and not in each sancak²⁵⁴, which makes his numbers debatable.

If we however apply the “correction factor”, the numbers of the Ottoman census rise to 356.114, merely a 97.000 and 27% difference to the Greek one²⁵⁵. If the “correction factor” was applied evenly to all the vilayets, the Greek population would be more than 397.000, a number which seems the most plausible since the Greeks in the early 1910s could not have been less than 336.000 and more than 454.000²⁵⁶.

²⁵¹ McCarthy, Justin, Muslims and Minorities. The Population of Ottoman Anatolia and the End of the Empire.

²⁵² Ibid., 10, 194.

²⁵³ Κλάψης, Αντώνης, “Ο Ελληνικός Πληθυσμός Του Οθωμανικού Πόντου Στις Αρχές Του 20ου Αιώνα. Μία Συγκριτική Δημογραφική Ανάλυση,” 229.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 243.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 244.

3. Limits and realizations of the “Megali Idea”: Pontic attempts to self-determination

3a. autonomy, independence or inclusion into the modern Greek state

With the end of the First World War, Greece was on the winning side thanks to its engagement in the Macedonian front in the last stages of the war. In the Paris Peace Conference Greece's claims were put forward in a comprehensive memorandum, drafted by Venizelos himself at President Wilson's suggestion in twelve hours of uninterrupted work. It followed the lines of a memo he had sent to Lloyd George when he was in London in early November 1918²⁵⁷. In this he had argued in favor of a threefold settlement in Asiatic Turkey: the creation of an Armenian state; the creation under the auspices of the League of Nations of an independent state of Constantinople and Eastern Thrace, to assure the freedom of the Straits; and the annexation of western Asia Minor to Greece. Venizelos argued that the large area he claimed in Asia Minor could be delimited 'without the slightest difficulty'. This could be done in such a way as to include an Ottoman population roughly equal to the 800,000 or so Greeks who remained outside the area, and the peace treaty should then encourage mutual and voluntary intermigration. He was attracted by a solution whereby Asia Minor would eventually consist of homogeneous national areas, with a strong, defensible Greek zone which would not be subverted from within. In his memorandum to the peace conference, Venizelos claimed the maximum that he realistically felt was attainable²⁵⁸.

Venizelos went on to list his statistics for the distribution of the Hellenic nation within and outside the kingdom of Greece. He claimed all the islands of the Aegean, both those which were under Ottoman sovereignty, and the Dodecanese which had been under Italian occupation for six years. On cultural and historical grounds, he claimed almost the whole of Northern Epirus with its mixed population of Greeks and Albanians, of whom the majority spoke Albanian. He claimed both Western (Bulgarian) and Eastern (Turkish) Thrace, despite the majority of Muslims over Greeks recognized

²⁵⁷ Kitromilides, Paschalis M., *Eleftherios Venizelos: The Trials of Statemanship*, 157.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 158.

in Greek statistics. In Asia Minor he proposed to solve the Pontus problem by incorporating the vilayet of Trebizond, where the Greeks were most densely concentrated, in the new state of Armenia. This was the best he could do for a population too distant for Greece to protect and too weak to protect itself. He had wisely refused to endorse the demands of the Pontic Greeks that Pontus should become an independent Greek republic²⁵⁹.

In western Asia Minor Greece claimed the strip lying west of a line running from near Panderma on the Sea of Marmara to a point on the south coast opposite Kastellorizo. The zone included Smyrna and most of the vilayet of Aydin. According to Venizelos' figures, which were those of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's census of 1912, the zone contained just over 800,000 Greeks as against just over one million Turks and just over 100,000 Armenians, Jews and others. Venizelos got around these inconvenient figures by including in the zone for statistical purposes the neighbouring islands of Imbros, Tenedos, Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Ikaria, Rhodes and the Dodecanese, and Kastellorizo, where Greeks easily outnumbered Turks. He argued that these islands were geographically an extension of the mainland. On this basis Venizelos was able to argue for the cession of Asia Minor on ethnographic, historical and cultural grounds²⁶⁰.

The logic of Greece's claims purported to be primarily ethnographic. It was based on President Wilson's principle of self-determination. This was the fashion of the time and it was no doubt essential that Greek claims be couched in this form²⁶¹. One should take into account that the circumstances at the time were ideal for the pursuit of Greater Greece.

Great Britain was Greece's main ally and its interests seemed to coincide with the Greek ones. Within the Foreign Office there was a significant group who wished to cast Greece in the role of regional power and regional British proxy. With the ending of the war in 1918 the actual conduct of the negotiations over Greek related questions fell into the hands of this group of philhellenes, centered on the new Political

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 159.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

Intelligence Department. The most important philhellenes were Sir Eyre Crowe, Allen Leeper, Harold Nicolson, and to a lesser extent Arnold Toynbee. From the ending of the war in November 1918 until Venizelos' fall two years later they pushed for the creation of an Anglo-Greek entente in which a Greater Greece would be Britain's chief ally in this historically sensitive area²⁶². That was until the fall of Venizelos of course.

The Sèvres Treaty (28 July/ 10 August 1920) was the highlight of the Greek expansionist policy. The realization of the "Megali Idea" seemed feasible. The terms referring to Greece were based upon the conclusions of the commission established by Lloyd George. This commission delimited an area around Smyrna and suggested that it be set under Greek control. Based on American census it claimed that 375.000 Greeks and 325.000 Muslims lived in the area of interest. Turks would formally retain the suzerain and as an exchange Eastern Thrace until the Çatalca line would be given to Greece with full sovereignty. A local parliament would be established in Smyrna which after five years would decide whether the area would be annexed by Greece or not²⁶³.

Western Thrace was also fully ceded to Greece, as was the case with Eastern Thrace under the term that Dedeğaç would become an international port and include a Bulgarian zone. The Greek army occupied both territories from the middle of 1920. The supreme allied council had given its written approval for the occupation. Furthermore, it had once again requested for Greek military support after the belligerent Turkish stance against the peace treaty compiled in Sanremo and presented to the Turkish delegation in 28 April/ 11 May. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the Greeks not only suppressed every resistance in Thrace by entering Adrianople (Edirne), but they also cleared the whole region between Smyrna and the Dardanelles (Çannakkale boğazı), by seizing Bursa, the old capital of the Ottoman empire.

The Sèvres Treaty attested the Aegean islands to Greece. Some of them would have to be demilitarized since they were part of the demilitarized zone of the Straits,

²⁶² Goldstein, Erik, *Great Britain and Greater Greece 1917-1920*, 339.

²⁶³ Dakin, Douglas, *Η ενοποίηση της Ελλάδας 1770-1923*, 340.

which included Gelibolu (Gallipoli) and substantial acreage in both banks of Bosphorus (İstanbul boğazı) and the Dardanelles. Control of the Straits would be the task of an international commission in which Greece and Turkey (when it would have joined the League of Nations) would take part. The responsibility for this zone, which Constantinople would be part of would fall on a guard made up of French, British and Italian forces, as well as local arms of Greek and Turkish gendarmerie under allied rule.

Constantinople would remain the capital city of Turkey and base of the Sultan. The allies though reserved to modify this regulation had Turkey not conformed to the general terms of the treaty, especially those regarding the issues of the minorities²⁶⁴.

It is now time to examine the requests and actions of the Pontic Greek side, from the Great War to 1922 and the exodus. Russian advance in Pontus in 1916 and 1917 brought as it would be expected enthusiasm to the Pontic Greek population²⁶⁵. When the Russian army entered Trebizond, some of the most prominent Greeks started considering a type of an “autonomous” solution for the entire Pontus region, especially after the Russian occupation of the Eastern Pontus and the newly created political situation²⁶⁶.

The February Revolution in Russia was a catalyst for the future of Hellenism in Pontus²⁶⁷. The leader of the temporary government Alexander Kerensky was in favor of a pro-Greek solution in the Pontic issue and even supported the creation of a Greek regime in Asia Minor. Some Russian generals suggested the creation of a Greek beach strip from Rize to Bafra, an area they could later claim in the Peace Conference. This suggestion was not accepted though mainly due to the limited presence of Greek population²⁶⁸. In any case there was constant movement during the whole of 1917 and after the convening of the *National Assembly* in Tbilisi in 5/5 1917²⁶⁹ and the 1st

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 341.

²⁶⁵ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., “Οι Προσπάθειες Των Ελλήνων Του Πόντου Για Αυτοδιάθεση Κατά Το Τέλος Της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας 1916-1922,” 57.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 60.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 68.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 70.

²⁶⁹ Χασιώτης, Ιωάννης Κ., *Οι Έλληνες Της Ρωσίας Και Της Σοβιετικής Ένωσης: Μετοικεσίες Και Εκτοπισμοί, Οργάνωση Και Ιδεολογία*, 246.

*Pan-Russian Congress of the Greeks of Russia*²⁷⁰ in Таганрог (Taganrog, Ταϊγάνιο) in 29/6-10/7 1917²⁷¹, the survival and then the political future of the Hellenism of Pontus as the Ottoman empire crumbled were discussed in both congresses. The need for “national survival” made it imperative that the Greeks take up military action, especially in Transcaucasia (Закавказье, Υπερκαυκασία) . It was the only way that self-defense could be achieved²⁷². Despite the attempts made, the coordination of the Greek troops in Caucasus and Pontus did not move beyond training in gun usage and the sending of some supplies²⁷³. It was however clear that the Pontic Greeks in Southern Russia at least, were oriented towards an autonomous Pontus²⁷⁴.. A typical example of this tendency is the “Central Union of Pontic Greeks in Екатеринбург (Yekaterinburg Αικατερινούπολη)” organization in October 1918²⁷⁵,

After the congress a number of organizations were formed in Europe as well. The most worth noting is the National League of Pontus (League du Pont) founded on the 1st October 1917 in Paris under the presidency of K. Konstantinides, who was the first one to formally request an independent Pontus state²⁷⁶. The proposed borders were those of the main Pontus, west of the Sinop peninsula, from Ortalık, Boyabat (Domanitis), Gümüş Maden (Hacı Köy), west of Merzifon, Mecit Ozu, Southwest of Amasya, South of Tokat (Evdokias), South of Sebin Karahisar (Nikopolis), Southeast up to Keltik and East from Gümüşhane (Argyroupolis) to the port South of Batum²⁷⁷. These borders were the generally at the time approved borders of Pontus.

During the Paris Peace Conference there was no organized movement on behalf of the Pontic Greeks. There was always a fear of retaliation from the Turks as

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 211.

²⁷¹ Λαμψίδης, Οδυσσέας, “*Η Πρώτη Εκδήλωση (1.10.1917) Για Αυτονομία-Ανεξαρτησία Του Ελληνικού Μικρασιατικού Πόντου,*” 104.

²⁷² Χασιώτης, Ιωάννης Κ., *Οι Έλληνες Της Ρωσίας Και Της Σοβιετικής Ένωσης: Μετοικεσίες Και Εκτοπισμοί, Οργάνωση Και Ιδεολογία,* 253.

²⁷³ Ibid., 256.

²⁷⁴ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., “*Οι Προσπάθειες Των Ελλήνων Του Πόντου Για Αυτοδιάθεση Κατά Το Τέλος Της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας 1916-1922,*” 72.

²⁷⁵ Λαμψίδης, Οδυσσέας, “*Η Πρώτη Εκδήλωση (1.10.1917) Για Αυτονομία-Ανεξαρτησία Του Ελληνικού Μικρασιατικού Πόντου,*” 98.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 100.

²⁷⁷ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., “*Οι Προσπάθειες Των Ελλήνων Του Πόντου Για Αυτοδιάθεση Κατά Το Τέλος Της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας 1916-1922,*” 90.

the telegram colonel Katheriotis sent to Venizelos and the Minister of Foreign Affairs on 14th May 1920 suggests²⁷⁸. Every action undertaken was a result of the reactions caused by Venizelos' proposal on the 17th December 1919²⁷⁹. Pontus was not part of the Greek territorial claims. Venizelos suggested that the vilayet of Trebizond would be ceded to the nascent state of Armenia, a proposal he himself had come up with and with which the Pontic Greeks disagreed²⁸⁰. During its works Pontic Greeks composed numerous memoranda to present their assertions. They were directed towards the Conference, the Greek delegation and government and the Armenian counterparts as well.

By November 1919 though, the change of the American policy in the region brought about new correlations and problems. Katheriotis was sure by December that there was no hope of success of the Pontic issue²⁸¹. Because of the negative attitude of the Great Powers and Venizelos' as well, towards an independent Pontus, metropolitan Chrysanthos agreed on the 3rd /16th January 1920 with the Armenians to the creation of a Ponto-Armenian Federation at first and then to a military agreement for the landing of Greek army in Trebizond, that would march from Ercican to Erzurum in order to protect the Greeks of Pontus, with the parallel succor of the Armenian army in the borders of Caucasus and Erzurum²⁸². This agreement however, never went beyond the paper due to the rapid developments and the growth of the Kemalist movement, the weakness of the Armenian government, the inability of the Greek side to take up the initiative and the indifference or the objection of the Great Powers to such plans. Equally important factor was the suspicion of both sides and the fact than neither one was satisfied with what the other offered²⁸³. Katheriotis claimed in January 1920 that Armenians were nostalgic both of the Russian and Ottoman regime

²⁷⁸ Λαμψίδης, Οδυσσέας, *Οι Έλληνες Του Πόντου Υπό Τους Τούρκους (1461-1922)*, 39.

²⁷⁹ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., *Η Δημοκρατία Του Πόντου: Ένα Ανέφικτο Όνειρο ή Μια Ρεαλιστική Επιδίωξη*, 229.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 231.

²⁸¹ Λαμψίδης, Οδυσσέας, *Οι Έλληνες Του Πόντου Υπό Τους Τούρκους (1461-1922)*, 48.

²⁸² Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., *Η Δημοκρατία Του Πόντου: Ένα Ανέφικτο Όνειρο ή Μια Ρεαλιστική Επιδίωξη*, 415.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 418.

because during their time their commercial activities were free. They were even positive towards the new Bolshevik regime²⁸⁴.

By the early 1920 the Armenian issue was discussed more and more tensely but the Pontus issue was nowhere to be found as an independent one²⁸⁵. From January the Greek embassies informed that the Great Powers were positive for the creation of an autonomous state under Sultan rule in Western Asia Minor, should the Greeks abandon every idea for an independent Pontus or even the inclusion of Trebizond in Armenia²⁸⁶.

In April 1920, during the Sanremo Congress works, the independence of Armenia was recognized (11-24 April 1920) with access to the Black Sea. However, there was not even a single mention of Pontus²⁸⁷. The Greek side did not have particular room for movement. It considered that independence was long lost and that it had been a mistake of the Pontic Greeks not to accept the Federation with the Armenians. The only solution now was the fight for minority rights. Venizelos proposed once again the inclusion of the vilayet of Trebizond to Armenia²⁸⁸.

After the approval of the Powers and the march of the Greek army in Eastern Thrace and Northwestern Asia Minor, Venizelos discussed with Lloyd George whether Mustafa Kemal could be dealt with. The former believed it was possible through allied help and also believed that peace with Kemal could be achieved if he was somehow pressed to it through a Ponto-Armenian state, the capture of the region up to the Adramitt Bey (Edremit Körfezi) and its union with Greece or with the removal of Muslims from Constantinople, as it is presented in his letter towards the British Prime Minister in 2/15 June. Venizelos rested his hopes for the federation of Greek Pontus and Armenia upon Lloyd George. The Greek statesman even declared that Greece would enter Trebizond, Eski Şehir, Afyon Karahisar and Bursa. This means that there

²⁸⁴ Λαμψίδης, Οδυσσέας, *Οι Έλληνες Του Πόντου Υπό Τους Τούρκους (1461-1922)*, 57.

²⁸⁵ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., *“Οι Προσπάθειες Των Ελλήνων Του Πόντου Για Αυτοδιάθεση Κατά Το Τέλος Της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας 1916-1922,”* 302.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., *Η Δημοκρατία Του Πόντου: Ένα Ανέφικτο Όνειρο ή Μια Ρεαλιστική Επιδίωξη;*, 449.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 451.

was a possibility of Greek intervention, but as Venizelos said, this would happen only in the case that the Ottoman Empire would not sign the Peace Treaty²⁸⁹.

The Treaty of Sèvres was signed on 28 July/ 10 August 1920 and did not mention anything about a special status of Pontus, rather than general declarations about Christian minorities' rights. Despite the disappointment of the Pontic Greeks, the issue was still alive and the tendency for the fight for independence constantly gained ground. On 20 August Venizelos promised to the National Board of Pontic Greeks, that he would take up action for the capture of Pontus under Greek mandate²⁹⁰.

On 22 September/ 5 October 1920, under the light of the Kemalist attacks in Armenia, Venizelos proposed in his telegram towards Lloyd George the creation of a separate state in Pontus as a means of defeating Kemal and at the same time suggested a new campaign in Ankara and Pontus for his demise. This state would consist of the remaining Greeks in Pontus, but also those who had fled to Russia in the last 50 years. According to him, they were approximately 800.000. Pontus alongside Armenia and Georgia would be a bulwark against Islamism and Russian expansionism. Greece would be able to undertake this task with the financial aid of Britain. At the same day he filed a petition to marshal H. Wilson, in which he asked the formation of a Pontic state based on his attack plan. The Greek plan was a coordinated attack during which the Greek army would reach Ankara within a month and at the same time Pontus would be liberated. Venizelos sent a similar letter to Lloyd George without sending it to Foreign Office. But there were also British suggestions for wider operations in Pontus, as well as Smyrna and Constantinople and the creation of a state in Pontus to apply more pressure on the Kemalists. There were of course opposite opinions expressed. Mainly due to fears about the fate of the Christian population that lived outside the areas of operations²⁹¹.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 465.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 481.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 490.

Venizelos on the eve of the elections was confident that Pontus would be liberated, even though he believed that things would be better if Pontic Greeks had accepted his plan. Henry Wilson asked Venizelos to present him with the ethnographical borders of Pontus and the latter in response presented on the 12th his plan for the creation of a Pontic Republic from Trebizond to Sinop in the coast and from Amasya (Αμάσεια) to Tokat and Sebin Karahisar. All these actions were part of an increased undertaking of Venizelos in the Pontic affairs that caused further mobilization of the Pontic Greeks. The Greek Prime Minister re-assured everyone, even on the day of the elections 1/14 November 1920, that if the Kemalists do not abide by their obligations, he has the approval of the allies to seize Constantinople and form the Republic of Pontus. His electoral loss however, changed everything²⁹². Three telegrams show Venizelos' opinion on the Pontus issue at the time. In his correspondence to Archbishop Chrysanthos (8th January 1920), the president of the *National council of Pontus (Εθνικόν Συμβούλιον Πόντου)* Ioannides (8th January 1920) and the Pontic National Assembly (9th January), becomes clear that the former Prime Minister expected nothing more than absolutely nothing for Pontus²⁹³.

The comeback of Constantine on the Greek throne was the perfect opportunity especially for France and Italy to stabilize their change of views. By 17/30 September 1920, France and Italy signed the redefinition of the Treaty of Sèvres in Aix le Bains in favor of the integrity of the Ottoman empire, and the Ottomans started asking more insistently the re-negotiation of the terms of the Peace Treaty²⁹⁴.

1921 was foreshadowed as a bad one for the Pontic Greeks not only in terms of establishing a state but also their very existence. The new wave of organized persecutions after December 1920, the arrest of prominent members of the Greek communities and the recruitment yet again of Greeks to the "amele taburu", pointed to this direction. Kemalist activity increased even more, after the appointment of

²⁹² Ibid., 493.

²⁹³ Λαμψίδης, Οδυσσέας, *Οι Έλληνες Του Πόντου Υπό Τους Τούρκους (1461-1922)*, 60,61.

²⁹⁴ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., "Οι Προσπάθειες Των Ελλήνων Του Πόντου Για Αυτοδιάθεση Κατά Το Τέλος Της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας 1916-1922," 347.

Topal Osman as general commander of the coast, from İnebolu (Inepolis) to Hopa in March²⁹⁵.

As far as the Pontus issue is concerned, there was not much of a progress until February, with the exception of very few reports and memoranda towards the Greek ministry of Foreign Affairs. A memorandum of A. Neophytos is characteristic: He talked about union with Greece through the founding of an independent Pontic state that would also carry away Bithynia, in the same way as Macedonia carried away the unification of Thrace, thus creating a state “being”. He claimed that such a state would function as a balancing factor in Asia Minor after the founding of the three republics in Caucasus, while he considered the suspicion of Armenians to be the reason for the failure of the Ponto-Armenian cooperation. He however warned, that if the necessary measures were not to be taken, the Greek population would be annihilated in the following months²⁹⁶.

From 8/21 February to 2/15 March 1921 a Conference in London was held, under the light of the recent changes in Greece. The Great Powers proposed the reconsideration of the Sèvres Treaty. The presence of Kemalist representatives meant more or less the acceptance of Kemal’s movement by the allies. While the French Prime Minister Aristide Briand discussed the possibility of the withdrawal of the French troops from Cilicia, the Greek representatives proposed to Lloyd George a plan for the marching of the Greek army to Ankara in order to deal with the Kemalist movement once and for all. Its effort would be assisted with the landing of Greek troops in Pontus and their descent to Sivas (Σεβάστεια) and Erzurum, i.e. the center of the Kemalist movement. The response of Britain did not seem to be negative at least for the Ankara part, but there was no approval either. This way Venizelos’ draft “rose to the surface” again for a short period without any further progress²⁹⁷. The future of the Greeks of Pontus was not discussed during the Conference²⁹⁸.

²⁹⁵ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., *Η Δημοκρατία Του Πόντου: Ένα Ανέφικτο Όνειρο ή Μια Ρεαλιστική Επιδίωξη*, 498.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 499.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 501.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 502.

Konstantinides addressed to Venizelos in February asking for independence for the whole of Pontus from Sinop to Rize (Ριζούντα), expressing at the same time the denial for the inclusion of Trebizond to Armenia. The latter forwarded these claims to the British but to no end once again. Konstantinides also sent a memorandum to the Greek Prime Minister Kalogeropoulos, asking for autonomy and the reassurance of peace and order in the region. The *National Council of the Greeks of Pontus* sent a similar memorandum limiting its claims to autonomy or at least the end of the Ottoman yoke and the protection of Pontus from Britain. The disagreements though, between Pontic Greeks and the crisis itself had become more intense²⁹⁹.

On 27 June/ 10 July 1921 the great Greek attack led to the capture of Afyonkarahisar, Kütahya and Eskişehir. Venizelos disagreeing with the Greek government proposed that Greece should claim the whole vilayet of Aydın, the greatest part of the vilayet of Bursa, international command in Constantinople and an autonomous province in Trebizond, having even late been persuaded for the necessity of autonomy for Pontus³⁰⁰.

The situation however did not improve for the Pontic Greeks and it got even worse after the enchainment of the Greek army in Sakarya (Σαγγάριος) river in August 1921³⁰¹. In 1922, during the months before the Catastrophe, the issue of the elimination of Pontic Greeks was discussed tensely but was eventually overshadowed by the dramatic events in the Asia Minor front in August.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 503.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 514.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

3b. Aims and scopes of the international factor

The end of World War I brought with it, Peace and a chaos in its settlement as well. The allies had promised practically everything to everyone and now had to deal with a post-war world that had seen two great empires fall apart. Many states had claims, new states were under formation and the Great Powers had to take into account their own interests too. In the Ottoman empire, an issue closely linked to Middle East, the allies had conflicting ideas and interests that eventually influenced in a great way the outcome of the Greco-Turkish war and the fate of the Asia Minor Hellenism.

Britain's concern was to limit the French presence in the shores of Syria, by depriving it of Cilicia. It did not wish the implementation of the secret agreements claiming they were agreed under different circumstances, and now with the Bolshevik win, things had changed. Therefore, Britain did not consider itself bound by them, something in October 1918 to Italy during the discussions for the latter's claims in Asia Minor. Prominent members of the British and French political scene though like former prime minister Asquith, under-secretary of foreign affairs R. Cecil and his French counterpart Alexandre Millerand were in early November in favor of the termination of the Ottoman empire's rule upon its subjugated people³⁰².

Britain had expressed its views on the Armenian issue as early as 1917 providing general promises for the territorial issue. Its policy was largely guided by the *PID* (Political Intelligence Department) and the *Eastern Committee*, whose main target was to limit the French and Italian demands based on the secret agreements³⁰³. On 8/21 November 1918, a British memorandum was presented for Greater Armenia, with borders from Mersin to Ordu (Κοτύωρα), including thus an important part of Pontus (almost the entire eastern Pontus). British policy sought to create powerful states that would resist the Russian-Bolshevik power in the region. However, Britain

³⁰² Ibid., 199–200.

³⁰³ Goldstein, Erik, "British Peace Aims and the Eastern Question: The Political Intelligence Department and the Eastern Committee, 1918," 419–20.

did not want to take up the supervision of these states, as it intended to leave the region soon³⁰⁴.

On 3/16 December 1918, the British minister of foreign affairs suggested a 13 points solution for Caucasus. Curzon was in favor of the British presence despite opposite voices claiming that the danger and financial difficulties were too great to allow such thing. British presence though, did not have a certain aim and was unable to function efficiently and in harmony. Part of the plan for Caucasus was the suggestion for an independent Armenia that would further weaken the Ottoman empire in an effort to eliminate problems in the future. The plan, having the approval of both the Eastern Committee and the Foreign Office , was for the supervision to be given to the USA for all the Caucasian Republics, including the unified Armenia, since it was believed that Armenia alone would not be able to resist Russia, but also the Pan-Turanic and Pan-Islamist pressure from the Ottoman empire and the Muslim populations of the region³⁰⁵. During this period, A. Toynbee presented a report titled "*The future Turkish state*" on 9th December (n.d.), in which he ruled out any possibility of cessions to Greece in Asia Minor and suggested that the Greeks of the Black Sea littoral be accommodated in the new Armenian state, closing in to the American tendency of the time that was constantly gaining ground³⁰⁶.

During the period 1910-1919 France's policy in the partition of the Ottoman empire issue was full of unjustified consents and clumsy handling. In the beginning of the century its economic and cultural presence in Asia Minor and Near East was impressive. 60% of the Ottoman public debt was under French control, the capital sharing through the controlled Ottoman Bank (Banque Ottomane) reached 53,5%. However, for many, the ethical and cultural presence, a century-long phenomenon was far more important than the economic one. The clumsy handling though of the

³⁰⁴ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., *Η Δημοκρατία Του Πόντου: Ένα Ανέφικτο Όνειρο ή Μια Ρεαλιστική Επιδίωξη*, 201.

³⁰⁵ Hovannissian, Richard G., *The Republic of Armenia: The First Year, 1918-1919*, 271.

³⁰⁶ Goldstein, Erik, "*British Peace Aims and the Eastern Question: The Political Intelligence Department and the Eastern Committee, 1918*," 431.

Paris government meant that in just a decade the advantages gained over centuries were lost³⁰⁷.

In Fall 1918 with the end of the war, Britain's position in the Near East was strengthened. France, accepted the loss of Palestine despite the danger for Syria, still being in shock from the war. In December Clemenceau, ceded Mosul to the British in return for the French recognition in Syria, Cilicia and Lebanon. A fatal mistake, since the aforementioned was a reality recognized by the Sykes-Picot Agreement³⁰⁸.

By 1919 the British position in the Near East was at its height. France thought that a deal should be made with Britain due to the new facts in the region. By spring 1920 though, with the new government in power, France turned in favor of the integrity of the Ottoman empire. As a result, the idea of an approach with the Turkish nationalists was constantly gaining ground in Paris³⁰⁹.

The Treaty of Sèvres on 10 August 1920 was very good for Greece. France signed the Treaty in order to avoid a fracture of the allies that seemed unavoidable. From its signing though it sought ways to overhaul its terms. It was an essential move to gain the Turkish trust. And the opportunity came with the Greek elections in November 1920³¹⁰. From this point onwards the French-Turkish approach grew by the day also because of the Soviet-Kemalist approach.

American policy was in general terms negative towards Greeks and their national claims. This was partly due to the new policy pursued in Asia Minor. In an effort for greater financial penetration, it was understood that the powerful economic and cultural presence of Greeks would be a problem. The Americans preferred to converse with a nationalist Turkish state without a background of solid Turkish structures, rather than the dominant economically Greek element.

It would be much easier, in other words, for the Turks, who did not have solid economic and merchant tradition and were significantly regressive, to grant privileges

³⁰⁷ Μουρέλος, Ιωάννης, *“Η Γαλλοτουρκική Προσέγγιση Του 1921: Το Σύμφωνο Franklin-Bouillon Και η Εκκένωση Της Κιλικίας,”* 213.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 214.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 216.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 218.

to the American interests, especially during the Asia Minor Campaign, when the aid of powerful states in their struggle against the Greeks was imperative³¹¹.

Even in Pontus the choice of Armenians made sense. The Armenian case was much more known to the American policy, whereas the Greek one was almost unknown. Furthermore, the success of American missionaries among the Armenians and the failure among the Greeks, meant that cooperation with the latter would be at best difficult. But the former, were also abandoned when the USA realized that Great Armenia would be really hard to happen and would not provide substantial profit, since it had turned out that Asia Minor was not that promising in terms of investments.

The support of Kemal was risky, but the chances of success were greater, since almost all the allies were against the Greek military presence in Anatolia and secondly the inability of Armenians to prevail militarily³¹².

Soviet Union took advantage of the common enmity they shared with Kemal for the Allies regarding the issue of the Straits. Of course, Kemal used the “anti-imperialist” card efficiently. This was highly convenient for the USSR, since it could now turn its large Muslim masses that were causing a lot of trouble against the West.

A first contact was made in summer 1919, and then a pact was signed on 16/29 November 1919 after talks held in Baku, Trebizond and Istanbul. A new agreement, the first official was signed on 7/20 April 1920 for the determination of the borders based on the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and the common refusal for the creation of an Armenian state. The Soviets were at the same time urged the Kemalists not to accept allied presence in Asia Minor. On 15/28 April Azerbaijan became Soviet territory, laying thus the foundations of the Soviet-Kemalist approach³¹³. On 11/24 August 1920 an agreement plan for the aid provided by the Soviets was signed after seven months of disagreements for Armenia and Caucasus³¹⁴.

³¹¹ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., *Η Δημοκρατία Του Πόντου: Ένα Αnéφικτο Όνειρο ή Μια Ρεαλιστική Επιδίωξη*, 382.

³¹² *Ibid.*, 384.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 459.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 460.

During the approach, the Novorossiysk Bolsheviks in accordance with Moscow, suggested to the Council of Batum, through the Greeks of Novorossiysk on 27th April cooperation with exchange for help in the struggle for the independence of Pontus, providing financial aid but not officers. Greek government considered the suggestions to be unacceptable but advised the Council to continue the talks, because of the Pontic Greeks that lived in Southern Russia and should not be jeopardized³¹⁵.

Catalyst to the events that followed was the *Friendship and Cooperation* Agreement signed in 3/16 March 1921 in Moscow. Soviet Union considered the Kemalist movement a revolutionary one, given the fact that it seemed to oppose to Western Powers, but also because Kemal had threatened the Soviets with an approach with the Westerns. They also signed an agreement for financial and military aid. The Bolsheviks assisted Kemal believing the Greeks were an instrument of the British policy. Soviet aid has been rendered by many scholars as decisive for the course of the facts. Kemalists themselves admitted that two months prior to the attack of the Greek army they were significantly aided from the Soviets financially with the shipping of gold and militarily with guns, ammunition and training by Soviet officers³¹⁶.

³¹⁵ Ibid., 462.

³¹⁶ Ibid., 505.

3c. Turkish reaction

The Kemalist movement grew stronger during the whole of 1919. In a meeting of the military leadership in Amasya in June 1919 and the Protocol that followed is evident the will to resist the allied decisions. The next national congress was organized by the “*Company for the Protection of the rights of Anatolia*” in Erzurum on July 23rd. Kemal was recognized as the leader of the struggle, the opposition to the partition of the country was stated and the slogan “*Turkey to the Turks*” dominated. In September (4-11) the national assembly of Sivas (Σεβάστεια) was held. Among other things, there was the validation of what had been decided in Erzurum³¹⁷.

Kemal signed two extremely important Treaties in the early 1921. On 9th March 1921 (new calendar), he signed a first agreement with France for the withdrawal of the French troops from Cilicia in exchange for money. On 12th March he signed a similar agreement with Italy for the Southwestern Asia Minor. He achieved in other words the closing of three major fronts but also gained an unexpectedly huge amount of guns, ammunition, war material and large sums of money, along with the important supply lines.

In April Kemalists initiated a new phase of persecutions. Under Topal Osman’s command solid Greek populations were eliminated despite the efforts to awaken the allies. The systematic elimination of the Pontic Greeks began after May 1921. Murders, rapes, violent acts and displacements climaxed during the summer. At the same time there is an increase in the guerilla activity of the Pontic Greeks who achieved important wins in July³¹⁸. However, these actions were part of a program conceived much earlier. From early 1916 the decision to eliminate the Greeks of Pontus in a similar way to the Armenians had been taken by the Young Turk leadership. Talaat Pasha had admitted in a personal conversation to an Austrian agent on 31st January 1916 that: “ It is necessary for Turkey to get rid of the Greeks as it previously did with the Armenians” . Furthermore, in an extremely confidential report sent by

³¹⁷ Κυριακίδης, Θεοδόσιος Αρ., *Συμβολή Στην Έρευνα Της Γενοκτονίας Του Ελληνορθόδοξου Πληθυσμού Και Της Αντιχριστιανικής Πολιτικής Στον Πόντο*, 110.

³¹⁸ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., *Η Δημοκρατία Του Πόντου: Ένα Ανέφικτο Όνειρο ή Μια Ρεαλιστική Επιδίωξη*, 509.

the Austrian consul in Samsun (Σαμψούντα) Kviatovski, it is characteristically written that the Mutessarif had told him: “We must already get rid of the Greeks. I sent today divisions of the gendarmery to the outskirts of the city with orders to kill every Greek they encounter in their way”³¹⁹.

In September 1921 Kemal set up the “Independence Courts”, an attempt to give legal legitimacy to the displacement of the Greeks. The charge was taking part in activities for the purpose of the creation of a Greek republic. After a grotesque trial they were executed. These trials were conducted away from the coastal cities behind closed doors³²⁰.

In October 1921 Kemal signed two new agreements with France and the Soviet Union, further stabilizing his position. On 13th October (new calendar) he signed in Kars, a *Friendship and Brotherhood Agreement* with the Soviet Union and the Trans-Caucasian Republics i.e. Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in which the borders were defined. On the 7/20 October 1921 the new French- Kemal pact was signed. It is the so-called Ankara pact or Franklin- Bouillon Pact. It was an agreement for financial cooperation in exchange for military material including airplanes³²¹.

On 13th /26th August 1922 Kemal launched an attack against the Greek army. The latter did not manage to pose serious resistance and the front was dispelled. Asia Minor Catastrophe, the slaughterhouse of Greeks and Armenians in Smyrna, the indifference of the Great Powers and finally the Moudania Truce on 28th October /11th November 1922³²² is the tragic epilogue to the Asia Minor campaign and the definite end to the Greek presence in Asia Minor and of course Pontus. The Treaty of Lausanne on 24th July 1923 and the Greco-Turkish Exchange of Populations Agreement on 17th /30th December 1923 sealed the end.

³¹⁹ Φωτιάδης, Κωνσταντίνος Ε., *Η Γενοκτονία Των Ελλήνων Του Πόντου*, 178.

³²⁰ Γεωργανόπουλος, Ευρυπίδης Π., *Η Δημοκρατία Του Πόντου: Ένα Ανέφικτο Όνειρο ή Μια Ρεαλιστική Επιδίωξη*, 520.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 525.

³²² *Ibid.*, 540.

Conclusion

Pontus has always been a particular case among Greek populations. For it is the circumstances that were probably the hardest than in any other region. Despite the odds the Pontic Greeks preserved their identity and culture during the Ottoman era and asserted their freedom and independence when time seemed right.

However, its distance from mainland Greece, the chaotic post-war world, the objective difficulties and a number of mistakes led things to utter disaster. The genocide of the Greeks of Pontus and the Asia Minor Catastrophe is a part of Greek history where time stood still. The aforementioned did not only affect the Asia Minor Greeks. The extirpation of these populations had a huge impact on Greece itself. After almost a quarter of a century of constant warfare Greece was now defeated and weak. A hundred years after the Independence War, Greek state and society had to make a restart in the most demanding and urgent way.

Greeks of Pontus have always been an organic part of the body of Hellenism, as it is proven by their language, their religion, their customs, their endurance but most importantly in the writer's opinion during the 1896-1922 period.

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