Defining the Diaspora: the case of the Greeks*

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I am currently engaged in writing a large-scale history, not of Greece, but of the Greeks in modern times. Should I survive to complete such a large project, this will seek to integrate four essential strands in the history of Greek people since the Fall of Constantinople in 1453. These are, firstly, the history of the *Tourkokratia*, the nearly four centuries of Ottoman rule over the Greek lands between the end of the Byzantine Empire and the creation of an independent Greek state in 1830. The second strand is the emergence of the independent state in the 19th century and the gradual expansion of its borders until they reached their present extent. We sometimes tend to forget how recently these boundaries were finally established, with the incorporation of the Dodecanese islands, since 1912 under Italian rule, into the Greek state as recently as 1947. We should remember, too, that Konstantinos Karamanlis, president of Greece until 1995, was born in 1907, in Kupköy, a small village near Serres, a citizen of the Ottoman Empire. Thirdly, there is the history of what in Greece is termed *I kath' imas Anatoli*. This an expression that is not easy to translate. Literally, of course, it means Our East, the East according to us, or the East as we see it. But in English it has to be translated by some such expression as "the Greek East". *I kath' imas Anatoli* refers to the great Greek presence in the Balkans, the Near and Middle East and Southern Russia, that in many cases dated back to Byzantine or classical times. *I kath' imas Anatoli* survived

* This paper is an amended version of my introductory chapter in Richard Clogg (ed.), *The Greek Diaspora in the twentieth century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan 1999).

the emergence of the independent state and continued to exist until the catastrophic defeat of the Greek armies in Asia Minor in 1922. Fourthly, there is the history of the diaspora proper, comprised of migration outwith the bounds of the Greek state and of the Greek East.

Like the Jews and Armenians, the Greeks are pre-eminently a diaspora people, although the last fifteen years or so have seen Greece cease to be a country that exports emigrants and become a country of immigration. The recent establishment of a Polish language school on the island of Santorini is a small straw in the wind. Not so long ago there was a curious reminder of the rather obvious fact that Greece has, historically, exported a sizeable proportion of its population. In April 1991, the cruiser *Spiro*, Argentina's contribution to the first Gulf War, paid a courtesy visit to Piraeus. There was naturally a certain puzzlement in Greece as to how an Argentinian ship came to be bearing a seemingly Greek name. There was considerable interest when it became known that the ship was en route for the island of Hydra, the birthplace of Spyros Petrou, one of the great heroes of the Argentine navy. Born in 1784, Petrou had migrated to Argentina where he had come to command an Argentinian ship in the war of independence against Spain. In 1814, rather than submit to the Spanish, Petrou had preferred to blow himself up with his ship. If Petrou had thus became enough of a national hero, whose exploits are familiar to every Argentinian school child, for one of the most important ships in the Argentinian navy to be named after him, very few Greeks had been aware of his existence. Moreover, Petrou was not the only Greek to have distinguished himself in the service of the Argentinian military. When, at the end of the Falklands/Malvinas War, General Galtieri, the leader of the Argentinian junta, was deposed, he was replaced by General Nikolaidis, who had actually been born in Greece and who had an aunt still living in Kavala.

With anecdotes of this kind, however, I am in danger of falling into what appears to be a major hazard of writing about diasporas, namely the stringing together of lists of those of Greek,

Jewish, Armenian or whatever ethnic origin who have risen to prominence (or notoriety as the case may be) in their adopted countries, a game whose doubtful pleasures are increased if the individuals in question have changed their names so as to be less visibly "foreign" in the host societies. The names, for instance, of the Andrews sisters (Patti, Maxine and LaVerne), whose morale-boosting, all-American songs such as "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" made them one of the most popular vocal groups during the Second World War, give no clue to the fact that they were second-generation Greek Americans. This process of name-changing has certainly happened with a sizeable number of Greeks in the United States. One example is George Tenet, whose name has clearly been changed from the original Greek. He was born to Greek immigrant parents and is the erstwhile director of the CIA. His mother is of Northern Epirot origin and when he was appointed to head the CIA in 1997 there were apparently rumours circulating in the Northern Epirot lobby in the US that it would not be long before Northern Epirus was united with Greece.

Some years ago I taught in a summer school organised at Anatolia College in Thessaloniki on behalf of AHEPA (The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association), the largest Greek community organisation in the US. All those attending were of Greek descent and I had the unusual task of seeking to reinforce their sense of ethnic identity. I remember in particular twins from Georgia, named Campbell. I naturally asked them how, given their Greek background, they came to have the name Campbell. They told me that one of their forebears had migrated to the United States from the Mani in the southern Peloponnese and, seeing a resemblance between the clan systems of the Mani and of Scotland, had adopted the name of the largest Scottish clan, on the ground that his own clan had been the most powerful in the Mani. I now realise, indeed, that the twins are likely to have been related to the two Campbells, James and George, who, along with other prominent members of the Greek-American community, founded AHEPA in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1922.

In gathering material for my large-scale history of the Greek people in modern times, which will include the Greeks of the diaspora, I have been struck by the relative paucity of writing about diasporas in general and about the Greek diaspora in particular, although there are encouraging indications of a growing interest in the subject. Given the centrality of *xeniteia*, another difficult word to translate but roughly meaning sojourning in foreign parts, with overtones of nostalgia for the homeland, in the historical experience of the Greek people in modern times, it is noteworthy how relatively little has been written on the Greek diaspora as a whole. There are some notable exceptions, e.g. Theodore Saloutos, and Charles Moskos on Greeks in the United States.[1] Reference should also be made to the pioneering studies of Helen Zeese Papanikolas on the Greeks of her native Utah. Greek railroad workers and miners (and, indeed, some sheepmen) managed during the early decades of the present century to reconstruct in Utah a remarkable imitation of life in the old country. Helen Papanikolas managed, virtually single-handedly, to rescue these for the most part anonymous early migrants to the intermountain West from oblivion. Recently attention has been paid to the substantial Greek communities of South America, including that of Argentina, of which Aristotle Onassis, an archetypal diaspora figure, remained a citizen until his death.[2]

[1] See now also Ioanna Laliotou, *Transatlantic subjects: acts of migration and cultures of transnationalism between Greece and America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2004).

[2] See, for instance, Maria Damilakou, *Έλληνες μετανάστες στην Αργεντινή (1900-1970): διαδικασίες συγκρότησης και μετασχηματισμοί μιας μεταναστευτικής κοινότητας* (Athens: Istoriko Archeio 2004). Patrick Leigh Fermor records meeting a scattering of Greeks in Central America and the Caribbean. These included three barmen in Panama City who originated from Karlovasi in Samos; a businessman in Haiti; and a "lonely innkeeper in Cordova, on the shores of Lake Nicaragua opposite the volcano of Momotombo"; see *Roumeli: travels in Northern Greece* (New York 1966), p. 96.

There have been relatively few attempts to consider the history of the Greek diaspora as a whole.[3] Whereas in Israel the study of the Jewish diaspora is a well-established academic discipline and there are entire institutes devoted to the subject, there is no such academic tradition in Greece, nor is there a single institute devoted solely to the study of the Greek diaspora. There is much fascinating material on the diaspora scattered through libraries and archives in Greece but it would be good to see the establishment of an institute or library whose primary task it would be to collect material relating to the diaspora worldwide. Merely to collect copies of the numerous publications of the various diaspora communities would be to perform a service of immense value to present and future generations of historians. All too often newspapers and periodicals that have frequently been run on a shoestring, close down on the death or retirement of their editors. Whole runs of back issues, in some cases the only complete sets, are destroyed.

Where could one now hope to find, for instance, a complete run of the periodical *Νέα Ζωή*, published by Menelaos Antoniadis in Elisabethville in the Belgian Congo during the 1940s and 1950s? There are, however, exceptions to this general lack of interest, among them Manos Haritatos's comprehensive collection of material relating to the Greeks of Egypt in the Ελληνικό Λογοτεχνικό και Ιστορικό Αρχείο (ΕΛΙΑ) in Athens. The very rich and well-ordered collection of material on the Greeks in the United States assembled by Theodore Saloutos and now held in the Immigration History Research Center of the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis is a shining example of what can be done to salvage the collective historical memory of the Greeks of the diaspora. A hopeful portent of an interest by the Greek state in the history of the diaspora was the organisation of an exhibition by the Greek Parliament in December 2006. I was unable to visit

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[3] An exception is the very useful synthesis of Ioannis Hassiotis, *Επισκόπηση της ιστορίας της νεοελληνικής διασποράς* (Thessaloniki 1993). An older study is Mikhail Dendias, *Αι ελληνικαί παροικίαι ανά τον κόσμον* (Athens 1919).

this but, judging by the splendid catalogue, *Οι Έλληνες στη Διασπορά 15ος-21ος αι.*, it was a very useful attempt to present an overall picture of the diaspora. The extensive bibliography appended to the catalogue gives an insight into the richness of the subject. Two articles, in particular, caught my attention. These were about Karpathian masons in Sudan and Morocco.[4]

Not only does there appear to be a paucity of writing about diasporas as such, and the Greek diaspora in particular, but, until recently, relatively little appears to have been written about diasporas on a comparative basis. One of the pioneering such studies, published in 1976, is John Armstrong's stimulating article on "Mobilized and proletarian diasporas", which seeks to construct a typology of diasporas. He makes a basic distinction between what he terms "proletarian" and "mobilized" diasporas.[5]

Quite where the Greeks would fit into Armstrong's schema is not immediately clear. Greek miners and railroad workers in Utah at the turn of the last century and Greek *Gastarbeiter* in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1960s, 70s and 80s clearly form part of a proletarian diaspora. On the other hand, the prosperous Greeks (and Cypriots) of, say, the Congo in the 1950s or the Greek shipowners of London clearly constitute part of a mobilised diaspora. Moreover, individual diaspora communities could be highly stratified. The tobacco workers in Egypt clearly formed part of a proletarian diaspora, while the great mercantile grandees such as the Benachis, the Zervoudachis, the Salvagos etc. clearly formed part of a mobilised diaspora.

One of the most interesting recent analyses of the diaspora phenomenon is Robin Cohen's *Global Diasporas*, published in 1997. One point that he makes is the negative connotation that the term diaspora has for many diaspora peoples. For the Jews, for

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[4] E. Georgitsoyanni, "Greek masons in Africa: the case of the Karpathian masons of Sudan", *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 29 (2003) 113-27; "Greek masons in Africa: the case of the Karpathian masons in Morocco", *Journal of Oriental and African Studies* 14 (2005) 111-20.

[5] *American Political Science Review* 70 (1976) 393- 408.

instance, it was the Babylonian captivity, the pogroms in 19th-century Russia and the holocaust during the Second World War that gave rise to their diaspora; for Africans the diaspora experience is overshadowed by slavery; for the Irish, the Great Famine of the 1840s was the principal impetus behind the large-scale migration from Ireland in the 19th century; for Armenians it was genocide that was one of the principal factors that led to the modern diaspora of the Armenian people. Such is not, however, the case with the Greek diaspora. The Asia Minor "catastrophe" of 1922 was certainly a disaster of immense proportions but it followed rather than preceded the great migratory wave that lasted from 1890 to the Balkan wars of 1912-1913. Refugees from Asia Minor certainly joined existing diaspora communities, in Egypt for instance. The main impulse behind Greek emigration, however, was not disaster or persecution in the homeland but poverty, exacerbated by the effective bankruptcy of the Greek state in 1893. While poverty is certainly a dispiriting and miserable experience, it is not usually a life-threatening one. Like Armstrong, Cohen proposes a typology of diasporas. For him they fall into five basic categories: victim (a category into which Jews and Armenians would fall), labour, trade, imperial and cultural diasporas. Cohen does not have much to say about the Greek diaspora but clearly, in his categorization, Greek migrants would form part of trading and labour diasporas.

How then should the Greek diaspora in modern times be defined? The question is a rather more complex one than appears at first sight. Clearly the Greek state as it is presently constituted must be removed from the equation. The Greek state has never included more than a proportion of the Greeks of the Near East. The original state that came into existence in 1830 had a population of some three quarters of a million, roughly a third of the two million or so Greek inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire at the time of the Greek War of Independence. For the first century of its independent existence the foreign policy, and, indeed, much of the domestic politics, of the new state was critically determined by the *Megali Idea*, or "Great Idea", the elusive vision of incorporating

all areas of compact Greek settlement in the Near East within the bounds of a single state, with its capital in Constantinople.

Although the term *Megali Idea* was explicitly used for the first time by the Vlach politician Ioannis Kolettis in a famous speech to the Constituent Assembly in Athens in 1844, the concept long antedated Kolettis's formulation. Throughout the period during which the *Megali Idea* was the dominant ideology of the Greek state there was a huge disparity between Greece's irredentist, expansionist ambitions and the physical means at the country's disposal. It is difficult from the perspective of the 21st century to credit the fact that Greece in the 19th century saw herself as the rival of Russia in seeking to establish hegemony over the Christian East. As that acute observer of late 19th and early 20th century Greece, William Miller, once observed, Greece had the appetites of a Russia but the resources of a Switzerland.[6]

There is a tendency on the part of some Greek historians to refer to the Ottoman Greeks, the Greeks who remained under Ottoman rule *after* the emergence of the independent Greek state, rather loosely as Greeks of the diaspora. But strictly speaking the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire did not form part of the diaspora. Apart from the Greek populations that were eventually to be incorporated into the Greek state, there were four main population clusters in the Ottoman Empire. These were the Greeks of the capital, Constantinople and its hinterland, including the sea of Marmara; those of western Asia Minor; those of Cappadocia (many of them Turkish-speaking); and those of Pontos, on the south-eastern shores of the Black Sea. Although indeed dispersed, these populations did not form part of a diaspora in the sense that they had arisen as a result of migration, voluntary or imposed. In all these areas, and particularly in Pontos, there was a continuous history of Greek settlement going back to Byzantine and, indeed, in some cases, to classical times.

The Greek-inhabited areas of the vast Orthodox commonwealth, or to use that wonderfully evocative Greek phrase, *I kath'*

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[6] *Greek life in town and country* (London 1905), p. 44.

imas Anatoli, a world which disintegrated, along with the project of the *Megali Idea*, in the debacle in Asia Minor in 1922, do not in my view constitute a part of the modern Greek diaspora. For this reason I would not include within the diaspora the now pitifully small Greek community in present day Turkey (in Istanbul and, even more vestigially, on the islands of Imvros and Tenedos), perhaps amounting to two thousand or so. Nor would I include the much larger Greek minority in southern Albania. Together with the Greeks of Cyprus, these are the last remnants of the Greek East to remain outside the borders of the Greek state.

In my view the diaspora proper is constituted by migration outwith the bounds of the Greek state and of *I kath' imas Anatoli*, the Greek East. This was a process that initially got under way on a small scale in the 16th century but which accelerated markedly during the course of the 18th century. It was during this century that Greek mercantile *paroikies* (literally, colonies) were established throughout the Mediterranean and the Balkan peninsula and, indeed, as we shall see, further afield.

Wherever they were active, these merchants established their mercantile *kompanies* (companies) and *paroikies* and, during the 18th century, *xeniteia*, or sojourning in foreign parts, became so ingrained a feature of life in the Greek world that an Epirot folk song contained the complaint:

> Accursed be Wallachia
> Accursed be dark Jassy
> Whither go our husbands
> May the Danube dry up
> Because it lets them cross over.[7]

Itinerant Epirot workers were so common in Russia in the 18th and 19th centuries that Greeks were apparently referred to as *Pindoi* or *Pindioi*, people of the Pindos mountains which divide mainland Greece.

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[7] Victor Papacostea, "Esquisse sur les rapports entre la Roumanie et l'Epire", *Balcania* 1 (1930) 230.

So close at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries were the ties between the Thessalian town of Ambelakia, famous for its spun red cotton which was widely exported to Central Europe, and the German-speaking world that a German traveller, J. L. S. Bartholdy, came across a small amateur theatre in the town in which plays such as Kotzebue's *Menschenhasse und Reue* were performed in German "wie in der ganzen übrigen cultivierten Welt",[8] while increased commercial contacts with the German-speaking lands even began to have a vestigial influence on the Greek spoken in Macedonia. Moreover, during the 18th century, Greek migration became ever more far-flung, prefiguring the present worldwide dispersion of Greek communities. It was in the mid-18th century that Greeks from Corsica, together with Italians, Corsicans and Minorcans, became caught up in Dr Andrew Turnbull's ill-fated attempt to establish a colony at New Smyrna in Florida.[9] Following the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, which brought to an end the Russo-Turkish war of 1768-74, the Russian Empress Catherine the Great encouraged Greek migration from the Peloponnese and the islands of the Aegean to help populate her newly acquired territories on the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Greeks came to develop a dominant position in the commerce of towns such as Odessa, Taganrog and Mariupol.

One of the most interesting of these far-flung Greek communities was that established towards the end of the 18th century in India by Greeks from Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace, and more particularly from Philippoupolis (now Plovdiv in Bulgaria) and Adrianoupolis (now Edirne in Turkey). The first Greek community came into being in Calcutta in ca. 1770-75, and was followed a few years later by a community in Dacca. Both communities prospered so that by 1821 there were some 120 Greek families established in Calcutta, Dacca and the interior. Some of their Indian servants were Greek-speaking. The essential

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[8] *Bruchstücke zur nähern Kenntniss des heutigen Griechenlands...* (Berlin 1805), p. 169.

[9] E. P. Panagopoulos, *New Smyrna: an eighteenth century Greek Odyssey* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press 1966).

core of any Greek mercantile *paroikia* was a church, and the Greeks of India were from the outset anxious to build a church and to attract a priest, who came under the jurisdiction of the monastery of Mount Sinai. A site was acquired in 1774 and the Greek church in Calcutta was duly completed in 1780. An unusual problem facing the community was the intense humidity of Calcutta and the merchants requested that the Cretan painter of icons for the church be asked whether he knew some means of preventing damage to the icons caused by humidity.

An early concern of this community, as it was to be of Greek communities wherever and whenever they were established, was the question of mixed marriages between members of the Greek community and the indigenous inhabitants. This matter was settled in 1782 when the Archbishop of Mount Sinai gave permission for Greeks to contract mixed marriages, provided that the children were baptised into the Orthodox faith. A major problem facing the Greek *paroikies* of Calcutta and Dacca was the availability and quality of priests, a recurring problem in Greek communities as they developed worldwide.

Before a school could be established for this early Greek community in India, the wealthier families employed tutors, of whom Dimitrios Galanos, who originally trained as a priest in Patmos, was one. After six years as a tutor in Dacca, Galanos went to live in the holy city of Benares, "the Oxford of the East", where, from 1793 until his death in 1833, he devoted himself to the study and translation of Sanskrit texts, on which he became one of the leading authorities of his time. His translations into the *katharevousa* (literally "purifying") Greek that was the fashion at the time, and was readily intelligible to those with a classical education, were a principal conduit for knowledge of Hindu religious texts in the West when a number of them were published in the mid-19th century.[10] His presence in Benares was something of a mystery to the British authorities, who for a time regarded

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[10] On Galanos, see Siegfried A. Schulz, "Demetrios Galanos (1760-1833): a Greek Indologist", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 89 (1969) 339-56.

him with some suspicion as some kind of *praktoras*. As one contemporary British traveller, Reginald Heber wrote, so few Europeans "who can help it, reside in India, that it seems strange that any man should prefer it as a residence, without some stronger motive than a fondness for Sanscrit literature..."[11]

A perennial concern in communities of the diaspora has been the preservation of the language among the children of the first emigrant generations. It is interesting to note how early this became an issue. Konstantinos Koumas, writing in the early 1830s of the numerous Greek *paroikies* in central Europe, complained that "our young people are being harmed by the inexperience of their parents. Greeks should pass on to their children their language, and together with the language, their religion, which brings salvation and which employs the Greek language in church". Instead of this, he went on, "parents despise Greek and talk to their children in German. Young women are ashamed to appear as Greeks. A Greek woman who knows Greek speaks to another Greek woman arrogantly in German. Mothers speak to their children in German."[12]

Migration from the Greek lands before the war of independence and the establishment of mercantile *paroikies* were clearly factors of major significance in the emergence of the Greek national movement. Wealthy Greek merchants of the diaspora provided the material underpinnings of the pre-independence intellectual revival, while the *Philiki Etairia*, the secret revolutionary society that laid the groundwork of the Greek revolt, was, by no means coincidentally, founded in 1814 by three young Greeks from the Odessa *paroikia*. One of the most brilliant

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[11] *Narrative of a journey through the Upper Provinces of India from Calcutta to Bombay, 1824-1825* (London 1828), I, p. 329. A useful book on Greeks in India is Paul Byron Norris, *Ulysses in the Raj*, published in 1992 by the British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia.

[12] Konstantinos Koumas, *Ιστορίαι των ανθρωπίνων πράξεων* (Vienna 1832), Part XII, p. 552, cited in Athanasios Karathanassis, *L'Hellénisme en Transylvanie: l'activité culturelle, nationale et religieuse des compagnies commerciales helléniques de Sibiu et de Braşov aux XVIII-XIX siècles* (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies 1989), p. 147.

polemicists of the national movement, the anonymous author of the *Elliniki Nomarkhia* of 1806, attributed the continued servitude of the Greeks to two principal factors: the "ignorant priesthood", of which he was a savage critic, and the absence abroad "of the best fellow citizens", by which he meant the Greek merchants that had established themselves outwith the Greek lands. He called on these voluntary emigres to return and to place their skills, knowledge, and, indeed, wealth at the service of their motherland. But he was severely critical of the two main groups that had established themselves abroad, the merchants and the students. The merchants, he believed, had become "de-Hellenised", a familiar complaint about subsequent generations of migrants, and had been transformed into "true enemies" who were worse than Greece's Ottoman tyrants. Once they had made money the merchants sank into "the mire of debauchery and wallow about like pigs until they die", perverted by the immorality characteristic of the foreigner and interested only in the price of cotton and of beans. Much the same strictures were directed at the students. These he accused of wasting their time in reading poems "of which there were more volumes in France and Italy than pumpkins in the Peloponnese" and of being interested only in girls and the theatre instead of studying subjects that would be beneficial to a newly self-aware Greece such as politics, law, military tactics and "sciences useful for our nation".[13]

Important though this early, pre-independence migration was in economic, cultural and political terms it was numerically relatively restricted in relation to the much larger migrations that got under way later. These occurred during the fifteen years or so before the Balkan Wars of 1912-13; in the aftermath of the Asia Minor "catastrophe" of 1922; and during the 1950s and 1960s. Together these great migrations laid the foundations of the present very large Greek communities in America, Canada, Australia, Germany and elsewhere.

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[13] G. Valetas (ed.), Ανωνύμου του Έλληνος, *Ελληνική Νομαρχία* ("Italy" 1806, reprinted Athens 1957), pp. 150ff.

The war of independence itself gave rise to certain migratory patterns. The great massacre on Chios of 1822 resulted in considerable emigration from that island. Much of the Greek community in 19th-century England was of Chiot origin. The history of the Anglo-Chiots and of the rapid assimilation of a number of families, mainly of Chiot origin, such as the Rallis, the Pallis and the Vlasto families, to the English upper middle classes is a phenomenon not, to my knowledge, encountered in Greek communities elsewhere.[14] The mere sight of the grandiose Greek churches built in the 19th century in London (*Aghia Sophia*, Bayswater, 1877), Liverpool (*Aghios Nikolaos*, 1870) and Manchester (*O Evangelismos tis Theotokou*, 1861), the first two in a neo-Byzantine style, the last in a neo-Classical style, not to mention the Greek cemetery in West Norwood in London, is sufficient testimony to the prosperity of these important diaspora communities at the times these churches were built.

Such emigration as took place from the Greek kingdom until the 1890s tended to be to traditional centres of Greek commercial activity in the Ottoman Empire such as Smyrna and Constantinople and there was always a certain traffic to the established mercantile *paroikies*. A significant new destination for Greek migrants did, however, emerge in the 19th century, namely Egypt. There had always been a small Greek community in Egypt during the 16th and 17th centuries but Mohammed Ali, the ruler of Egypt, during the earlier part of the 19th century, gave strong encouragement to Greek migration, which received a further boost in the boom years for Egyptian cotton during the American Civil War of the 1860s, when the foundations of many Egyptian-Greek fortunes were made.

Another important migratory movement during the 19th century were the migrations that took place from the Pontos region on the south-eastern shores of the Black Sea to the Cau-

[14] See, for instance, the memoirs by A. A. Pallis, *Ξενητεμένοι Έλληνες: αυτοβιογραφικό χρονικό* (Athens: Aetos 1954) and Peter Calvocoressi, *Threading my way* (London: Duckworth 1994). Both authors had been to Eton.

casus and other areas of southern Russia. These population movements took place in the aftermath of the numerous wars between the Russian and Ottoman empires during the 19th and 20th centuries. One of the unexpected consequences of the period of *perestroika* and *glasnost* in the last years of the Soviet Union was the re-emergence of a sizeable but hitherto submerged ethnic Greek population, the descendants for the most part of these 19th- and early 20th-century migrants.

During the early years of Bolshevik rule, the Greeks enjoyed a considerable degree of cultural autonomy, with their own schools, newspapers and books (published in the Pontic Greek dialect and using a twenty instead of twenty-four letter alphabet) and even a Greek-language theatre in Sukhum, the capital of Abkhazia. In the late 1930s, however, the Greeks were among the nationalities that fell victim to Stalin's paranoia as a "disloyal" nation. Schools and cultural institutions were closed and book production ceased. In 1949 the Greek populations were deported, in conditions of appalling hardship, to a bleak exile in Central Asia.

Only after the death of Stalin in 1953 were they for the most part permitted to return, although their confiscated properties were often not reinstated. It is difficult to estimate the present size of the Greek population of the former Soviet Union. Preliminary data from the all-Union census of January 1989, the last ever census to be made in the Soviet Union, gives a figure of 356,000. There are, of course, probably many more of Greek, or partial Greek, origin than those who admit to this ethnicity in the census returns. In recent years considerable numbers of these Russian Greeks of Pontic origin, the Rosso-Pontioi, have settled in Greece.

In the 1890s, of course, as a result of economic crisis and bankruptcy in the kingdom of Greece, the great wave of emigration to the United States that was to last until the outbreak of the First World War developed. One of the problems in assessing the numbers of Greek migrants to the US is that the relevant US statistics do not make it possible to isolate the numbers of Ottoman Greeks who migrated to the New World. During the 1920s and 1930s, with the introduction of the quota

system, Greek migration to the United States virtually dried up. But there was some limited migration to South America, to Africa and to Australia during this period. The third migratory wave, after the period 1890-1912 and the early 1920s, is that of the 1950s and 1960s, principally to Australia and Canada but, after the lifting of quota restrictions in the mid-1960s, once again to the United States.

Any attempt to construct an overall estimate of the size of the Greek diaspora must necessarily be a tentative undertaking. Wildly exaggerated statistics are frequently bandied about. A bulletin of the *Athens News Agency* (4 September 1991) spoke of a Greek community in Australia almost 600,000 strong, a considerable exaggeration. I am reminded of Charles Moskos's observation when some years ago he was showing me some of the sights of Greek Chicago, which attracted many of the early Greek settlers to the United States. He made the wise observation that the safest way to calculate the size of a given Greek community is to take the lowest estimate of one of its members and then divide this in half. But even applying this formula still leaves some very substantial communities.

Not so long ago a BBC television current affairs programme, for instance, referred to the "hundreds of thousands" of Greek Cypriots living in North London. The Cypriot community in Britain is certainly large but is on nothing like this scale. Mention of the Greek Cypriots raises the question of whether they are deemed to constitute part of the *omogeneia*, whether they can truly be considered "kith and kin". In the rhetoric of politicians in both Greece and Cyprus they are clearly so regarded. The reality, however, is somewhat different. In the 1990s, the weirdly named "Hellenic Observatory" (clearly scarcely an *asteroskopeio* [astronomical observatory] nor a *paratiritirio*, a [military] observation post) was set up at the London School of Economics in connection with the establishment of the Venizelos Chair of Contemporary Greek Studies. The associated publicity material stated that one of the objectives of the "Hellenic Observatory" is to develop close links with the "wider *Greek* [my italics]

community" in London, estimated to number some 16,000 strong. But this statistic ignores the presence in London of some 100,000 Greek-speaking Cypriots. For all the public rhetoric about the common fate of Hellenism, it is clear that many Greeks do not in their heart of hearts deem the Greek Cypriots to be part of the *omogeneia*, although such attitudes, for obvious reasons, are seldom explicitly articulated.

Clearly much the largest of the diaspora communities is that of the United States, followed by Australia, the republics of the former Soviet Union, Canada, South Africa (where the community, including Greek Cypriots, between 1965 and 1975 numbered some 170,000), Germany, Argentina and Brazil. Some diaspora communities are now much reduced in size compared with their heyday. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Greeks, some 100,000 strong, were the largest of the several foreign communities of Egypt. By the 1970s they numbered a few thousand at most. The decline in the size of the Egyptian Greek community was somewhat compensated for by the emergence of a substantial (20-30,000 strong) Greek community in the oil-rich states of the Persian Gulf, the Arabian peninsula, Iraq and Libya. Unlike the established Greek community in Egypt, these were for the most part *Gastarbeiter*, working with limited contracts. The Belgian Congo had a flourishing Greek community of some 20,000 in the 1960s (some of them living in a town called Kalamata[15]) but this is now very much reduced, as is that of Morocco, now down to a few hundred from a peak of 10,000 in the 1930s. We should not forget the very large Greek migration to Western Europe and,

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[15] One occasionally comes across in second-hand bookshops a book with the title *The Road to Kalamata*. This is not, as one might imagine, a book about the Peloponnese but is the memoir by "Mad Mike" Hoare about his experiences as a mercenary in the Congo (Zaire). The full title is *The road to Kalamata: a Congo mercenary's personal memoir* (London: Cooper 1989). By contrast, Leonard Marsland Gander's *Long road to Leros* (London: MacDonald 1945) does have a concluding section about the fiasco of the attempt to capture and hold Cos, Leros and Samos in the autumn of 1943. Churchill, who inspired the campaign, unfairly dubbed "Jumbo" Wilson, the commander-in-chief in the Middle East, as the "Wizard of Cos".

more particularly, to West Germany that took place in the 1950s and 1960s, when Greeks in their tens of thousands became *Gastarbeiter*.

Another fascinating chapter in the saga of Greek migration and of the development of the modern Greek diaspora is the story of the communist refugees who fled to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the aftermath of the 1946-49 civil war. A sizeable proportion of these ended up in Tashkent in Uzbekistan and strenuous, and largely successful, efforts were made to retain a sense of Greek identity on the part of the children who were born in exile. The case of the civil war exiles in the Eastern bloc countries has a particular interest, for a sense of ethnic identity had to be maintained in a secular context, without the benefit of the churches that were established elsewhere in the diaspora and which were an important means for the preservation of religion, language and culture.

Many of the communist exiles have now returned to Greece and I much hope that someone will attempt a proper study of this particular episode in the history of Greek emigration, voluntary and enforced, while those involved are still alive to speak of their frequently harrowing experiences. Research is needed into the educational and cultural mechanisms by which a sense of Greek identity was sustained in the children of the refugee generation and in the twenty-five thousand or so children evacuated in 1948 towards the end of the civil war from areas controlled by the communist Democratic Army, for their own protection and with the consent of their parents in the communist view, as part of a new *paidomazoma*, or janissary levy, in the view of the Greek government and nationalists.

A few years ago I attended a most interesting conference in Hungary devoted to the history of this second *paidomazoma*. It was held at Fehérvarcsurgo in a splendid mansion that had been confiscated from the aristocratic Karolyi family (and now restored) by the post-war communist government to house some of the evacuated children, who were widely dispersed throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. They were housed and

educated in *paidikoi stathmoi* or “children’s stations”, of which there were three in Albania, seventeen in Bulgaria, ten in Hungary, nine in Romania, three in Poland, one in East Germany, and fifteen in Yugoslavia.

Although the occasion was an academic conference, a number of the evacuees who had been housed at Fehérvarcsurgo in the late 1940s and early 1950s returned after half a century for a reunion. It stands to reason that only those who had cause to be grateful for what had been done for them would have returned, but it was nonetheless moving to witness their genuine gratitude for the new life that had been opened up for them behind the Iron Curtain. There was one group of four who were born in a Vlach-speaking village near the Albanian border. It was only when they were taken to Hungary that they learned Greek. So much for the argument that the purpose of the *paidomazoma* was to de-Hellenize the Greek children and inculcate in them a sense of Slav-Macedonian identity. One of the alumni of Fehérvarcsurgo was Georgios Vassiliou, who was subsequently to become a millionaire and President of the Republic of Cyprus in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The children were taken from poor, often desperately so, villages, with very limited educational opportunities. In the Eastern bloc, they achieved in many cases a higher standard of education than they would have received had they remained in Greece. A significant number were to follow professional careers. The physical conditions in which the children were held were often good. For, for propaganda reasons if no other, the communist authorities were determined to demonstrate that the conditions at the homes were a marked improvement over those that they had left behind in a “monarcho-fascist” Greece, in which the “imperialist” Americans pulled the strings.

From the 1950s onwards some of the children were repatriated to Greece and re-united with their parents. But not all those who returned were happy with what they met with in the old country. Some of them had become accustomed to classical music, of which there was a total absence in their home villages.

The girls and young women did not relish being obliged to wear headscarves and give up wearing trousers and the (relatively) fashionable clothes to which they had become accustomed in the Eastern bloc. Nor were they enamoured of the idea of arranged marriages with villagers of a lower educational level. By the 1980s, however, when there was a renewed wave of repatriations, the situation was reversed. Rural Greece, thanks in part to EU subsidies, was now prosperous. Peasant farmers took to driving BMWs and installed the latest labour-saving devices in their homes. Their standard of living was now markedly higher than that prevailing behind the Iron Curtain. Removing young children from their parents, for whatever motives, was indeed a harsh measure. Nonetheless, for a fair proportion of the evacuees their life in the Eastern bloc opened up new opportunities which would have been denied them had they remained in Greece.

Finally, I should like to say a few words about a question of definition central to the study not only of the Greek diaspora but of all diasporas. How does one define a Greek, particularly a third, fourth or even fifth generation Greek of the diaspora? This is a problem that is assuming some urgency now that we witness the phenomenon of Greeks from the former Soviet Union and Northern Epirus migrating to Greece, the only migratory inflow of ethnic Greeks as opposed to foreign workers of any significance since the Exchange of Populations in the 1920s, which, in any case, as it was involuntary, cannot properly be described as a migration.

While doing some research on the Greeks of Utah in Salt Lake City in the summer of 1991, with the invaluable help of Helen Papanikolas, I learned of the existence of a "Hellenic Latter-Day Saint [i.e. Mormon] Society", formed in the late 1950s to bring together what were described as the many Mormons of Greek ancestry in Utah and to work for the day "when the Greek people will turn to the Restored Gospel in greater quantity". The early Greek migrants to Utah were almost exclusively male and tended to marry local girls, many of whom in Utah were of course Mormons. At meetings of this group, the first verse of the Greek

national anthem was sung in Greek by those who knew it and one verse of the Star Spangled Banner was sung by all. It was stressed that it was important when preaching the Gospel to non-L(atter) D(ay) S(aint) Greeks that "we point out our firm intention of preserving our Greek identity, our Greek names, and our characteristics of Hellenic origin". Certainly, the Mormon Greeks appear to have remained on friendly terms with the local Orthodox community.[16]

My question is: to what extent can someone who has lost both his/her language and religion in any meaningful sense be described as Greek? Is a self-perception of being Greek such as is manifested by Mormons of Greek descent in Utah enough? Or are there any objective criteria of Greekness? I might frivolously answer that, until the early 1990s, there was one clear criterion. Ethnic Greeks, whether citizens of Greeks or members of the worldwide Greek diaspora, were not required to pay, at the behest of Melina Mercouri, the larger-than-life Minister of Culture, to get into museums and archaeological sites in Greece. But a European Community directive requiring an end to this discriminatory policy, which benefited, besides Greeks, Italians, Spaniards and Portuguese and others of broadly "Mediterranean" appearance, even Turks, provided they had the sense to keep their mouths shut when they approached the ticket kiosk, when they would be waved through, has done away with this "objective" criterion! Now everyone, whether Greek or non-Greek, has to pay.

A useful definition of who is a Greek is that given by Eleftherios Venizelos when advancing Greek territorial claims at the Versailles Peace Conference in the aftermath of the First World War. "A Greek", he declared, "is a person who wants to be Greek, feels he is a Greek, and says he is a Greek."[17] Venizelos's

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[16] See Harry George Greaves [Theokharis Georgios Grivas] and Sarah S. Greaves, *Hellenic Latter-Day Saints.* I. A Summary of the Activities of the Hellenic Latter-Day Saint Society (1959-1965) (mimeographed ms compiled Salt Lake City, 1964-67, Marriott Library, University of Utah).
[17] Recorded in the Saint Photios [Greek Orthodox] National Shrine at Saint Augustine in Florida. This is constructed on the site of the house

pithy formulation was a distillation of the official definition advanced by the Greek delegation at the Versailles Peace Conference, which was of course led by the Cretan statesman. This reads as follows:

> the condition, which the Greek government, and with it the whole of Hellenism, put forward as the basis of nationality [...] is [...] national consciousness. Religion, race, language, cannot be considered as certain indicators of nationality. The sole unmistakable criterion is ethnic consciousness, that is to say the expressed wish of people as they determine their fate and decide to what national family they wish to belong.[18]

The debate as to what precisely it is that defines the ethnicity of a Greek or, for that matter, a Jew, an Armenian or, indeed, a Scot, for the Scots are very much a diaspora people, is an endless one that falls beyond the scope of this paper. May I conclude, however, by making a plea for the integration of the study of the Greek diaspora with the study of the Greek state? The history of the Greek people, irrespective of the way in which national boundaries have been drawn, should be seen as part of a seamless entity. *Xeniteia*, sojourning in foreign parts, the diaspora experience, call it what you will, has been so central to the history of the Greek people in modern times that it merits much greater attention than we historians have so far chosen to give it.

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where the bedraggled Greek remnants of the ill-fated New Smyrna colony gathered for Orthodox worship following its collapse.

[18] This passage is taken from a memorandum submitted to the Supreme Council of the Paris Peace Conference, *Observations sur la réponse bulgare au sujet des questions territoriales* (Paris 1919), cited in Konstantinos Svolopoulos, "Εθνικισμός και φιλελευθερισμός στην Ελλάδα και η «Μεγάλη Ιδέα»", in: *Φιλελευθερισμός στην Ελλάδα: φιλελεύθερη θεωρία και πρακτική στην πολιτική και στην κοινωνία της Ελλάδας* (Athens 1991), p. 85.