



To my family

MODERN GREEK ENLIGHTENMENT  
AND 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY GREEK NATIONALISM

The Institute of Economics and Social Sciences  
of  
Bilkent University

by

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in

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **MODERN GREEK ENLIGHTENMENT AND 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY GREEK NATIONALISM**

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This thesis analyzes modern Greek enlightenment and 19<sup>th</sup> century Greek Nationalism, in the light of nationalism theories. It confronts with the process of Modern Greek enlightenment which took place within the lands of the Ottoman Empire and the Greek nationalism which was the second phase of the modern Greek enlightenment. The thesis argues that the lands where today Greeks live had been invaded and settled by various ethnic groups. As a result it lost its ethnic ties with the ancient Greeks. Modern Greeks are not the descendants of ancient Greeks as they accept. Modern Greek national identity is a constructed one and Greek nation which is a mixture of different Balkan Orthodox people such as Slavs, Albanians, Macedonians and Bulgars. Greek Nation was built within the Ottoman Millet system by the help of the European Philhellenes and Greek intellectuals. This assumption is based on Fallmayer theory which suggests that ancient Greeks had disappeared completely and the modern Greeks were merely descendants of Slavs and Albanians.

Keywords: Modern Greek enlightenment, Greek Nationalism, Ottoman millet system, theories of nationalism.

## **ÖZET**

### **ÇAĞDAŞ YUNAN AYDINLANMASI VE 19. YUZYIL YUNAN MİLLİYETÇİLİĞİ**

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İşbu Tez, çağdaş Yunan aydınlanması ve 19. yüzyıl Yunan milliyetçiliğini milliyetçilik teorileri ışığında tetkik etmektedir. İş bu tezde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu topraklarında cereyan eden modern Yunan ayaklanması ve ikinci safhası olan Yunan milliyetçiliği incelemektedir. Modern Yunanlılar'ın bugün yaşadığı topraklar tarih boyunca birçok etnik grup tarafından istila edilmiş ve yönetilmiştir. Bütün bu istilaların sonunda Yunanlılar antik Yunan ile olan etnik bağlarını yitirme noktasına gelmişlerdir. Çağdaş Yunanlılar'ın antik Yunanlılar'ın torunları olduğunu tezi doğru değildir. Çağdaş Yunan kimliği sonradan oluşturulmuş bir kimliktir ve Yunan ulusu Slav, Arnavut, Makedon ve Bulgar gibi çeşitli insan gruplarından oluşur. Bu varsayım Fallmayer'in: antik Yunanlılar'ın tamamen yok olduğu ve Çağdaş Yunanlıların Slav ve Arnavut kökenli insanlardan oluştuğu tezine dayandırılmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Çağdaş Yunan aydınlanması, Yunan milliyetçiliği, Osmanlı Millet sistemi, milliyetçilik teorileri.

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## INTRODUCTION

Only a few nation states existing today have a long and continuous existence like the Greeks. Unlike the Chinese who have race and culture or the Jews who have religion to bind them together, the Greeks have had no single, unchanging element of identity.<sup>1</sup>

The emergence of Balkan nationalisms can be traced back to the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries corresponding almost to the same time as the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. There existed different cultures, languages and religions in the Ottoman Empire. They were organized under different groups called “*millet*” based on their religion. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, when national identity became more important than religious one in peoples’ lives, the *millet* system, which had been limping, totally collapsed. Nationalist ideology earned legitimacy from the French Revolution of 1789 and spread all around Europe. It was carried to the Mediterranean through Napoleonic Wars, Orthodox Church, and Greek merchants. It spread all around the Empire and was welcomed especially by the *non-Muslim Millets*.

Greeks or *Millet-i Rum* was one of the most important and influential *millets* within the Ottoman Empire. The Greek uprising of 1821 was the result of a long process called “modern Greek enlightenment.” Among the non-Muslims, *Millet-i Rum* was the readiest. Greek scholars living abroad such as Korais and Rigas were engaged in a process of organizing people and reinventing Greek people's past for

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<sup>1</sup> D. Kousoulas. (1974). **Modern Greece: Profile of a Nation** , (Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York), p.xv

the liberation of Greece from the Ottoman Turks. Since mid 18<sup>th</sup> century the Greeks believed that they were descendants of the ancient Greeks. This idea was exported by the Europeans who had admiration for classical Greek civilization. This was the most important support to the Greeks for the creation of a nation with a mythical past and invented tradition, which consisted of half-truth, and half imagination of a common past.

“The *millets* of the Ottoman Empire were based on religion; all Christian Orthodox peoples were included in the Rum *Millet*, regardless of the language they spoke, even though Greek was the lingua franca of the area. Many considered themselves descendants of the Eastern Roman Empire, thus taking pride in orthodoxy and the victory over the Ottomans.”<sup>2</sup> The Greeks lived like a separate community within the Ottoman empire like the other *millets*. Some held important positions many of them were affluent as the control of Ottoman trade was in their hands. They had their own education facilities, such as printing, press civil society and so forth.

This dissertation tries to explain modern Greek enlightenment and early nation building process that took place within the Ottoman Empire which finally led to the Greek uprising and later a Greek nation state. The subject is presented in line with the theories of nationalism (especially modern ones) and it argues that modern Greek national awakening and Greek nationalism is a reinvention or creation of a common Greek history by the Greek scholars as a result of the nation building process. (like many other examples of nationalism)

Present work is structured into four chapters. In the first, there is a theoretical framework, in which the main ideas of scholars of nationalism such as Gellner,

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<sup>2</sup> E.J. Hobsbawm.(1992), **Nations and nationalism since 1780**. (Cambridge:Cambridge University Press) p.10.

Smith, Hobsbawm and Anderson are outlined. Second chapter begins by discussing how the Greek culture survived after all the invasions and foreign control to be followed by a more detailed section about the Greeks in the Ottoman Empire. It talks about the important aspects of Greek presence in the Ottoman Empire. This section examines the Ottoman *Millet* System which is very important for the survival of the Greek identity within the Ottoman Empire. Third chapter focuses on Greek enlightenment and the rise of nationalism in Greek provinces of the Ottoman Empire. It sets out the views of very important ideologues of Greek nationalism such as Rigas, Korais and Kapodostrias. The fourth chapter concentrates on the nation formation process after the revolution and transformation of Rum Orthodox Identity into a Greek Nation. And the final chapter, parallel with the modernist theory of nationalism, tries to prove that the Greek national identity was invented in almost the same manner as many others have been.

## CHAPTER I:

### THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND DEFINITIONS OF NATIONALISM

#### 1.1 Theories and Definitions of Nationalism

Nations, nationalism and other relative concepts such as ethnicity and race became popular fields of study in the early 1990's, particularly at the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union. This produced a new wave of nationalism across the former Soviet lands and a new debate over nationalism emerged and divided the nationalism theorists into categories according to their perception of nation and nationalism as ancient or modern phenomena. There is not any common definition of what nation and nationalism is. In this chapter I will discuss different theories of nationalism and secessionism. I will, first of all, define ethnic group, nation and nationalism.

Anthony Smith argues that

“the rediscovery of an ethnic past furnishes vital memories, values, symbols, and myths, without which nationalism would be powerless. But those myths, symbols, values and memories have popular resonance because they are founded on living traditions of the people . . . [and they invoke] presumed kinship and residence ties to underpin the authenticity of the unique cultural values of the community.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> A.D.Smith.(1998) **Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations Nationalism**, (Newyork: Routledge) pp. 45-46.

Nations may be build up from one or more ethnic groups. Max Weber defines ethnic group as ‘those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization or migration’<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, one can say that ethnic group is not always made up of a single race, and that there may be racially different people sharing the same culture. An ethnic group is not a biologically refined group of people and, being from the same race is not always enough to form an ethnic group, as it is the case in Balkans. But one may argue that it facilitates an ethnic group formation if necessary ground already exists. Weber points out that a common historical background, wars, victories, defeats, disasters even the legends ease the construction of a national consciousness. As it is the case in the Serbian nation building process, the memories of the Kosovo war of 1389, which resulted in the defeat of the Serbs at the hands of the Ottoman Turks, had an important effect over the Serbian people in the way of building Serbian nation state in the nineteenth century.

### **1.1.1 Nation**

Nation is made up of one or more ethnic group. It is a group of people who feel as one community bound together with historical ties, culture, and a common ancestry. Nations have ‘objective characteristics which may include a territory, a language, a religion, or common descent (though not all of these are always present), and subjective characteristics, essentially a people’s awareness of its nationality and affection for it. In today’s world, nations usually have their own states and those, which consist of more than one nation, are usually ready for secession with the

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<sup>4</sup> M. Weber, (1968) **Economy and Society**, (Los Angeles: University of California Press)



exception of a few. In contrast, empires of the previous centuries were multinational states, which consisted of more than one nation. One of the leading thinkers of modernist theory, Benedict Anderson, in the 1980s, defined nation as an ‘imagined community’

“It is imagined because members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. It is imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. It is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.”<sup>5</sup>

According to Hobsbawm, there are two kinds of definitions of a nation an objective and subjective one. According to the objective one, the group should have some common features to qualify as a nation while the subjective describes the nation with the sense of belonging that group members have.

According to Gellner, a nation is either a cultural entity, which needs a common culture, or the members of the nation should voluntarily recognize each other as members of the same nation.<sup>6</sup> Anthony Smith makes a detailed definition of the nation, “a named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members”<sup>7</sup> Common history, religion and culture bind the individuals to each other in a country and those with different

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<sup>5</sup> B.Anderson.(1991). **Imagined Communities**, (Newyork: Verso Publishing) pp.6-8

<sup>6</sup> E. Gellner, (1983), **Nations and Nationalism**, (Oxford: Blackwell). p.7

<sup>7</sup> A.D.Smith, (1991), **National Identity** . (Harmondsworth: Penguin). p.14

language, culture and history become others. The competition between the others normally gives rise to the concept of nationalism.

### **1.1.2 Nationalism:**

Nationalism is a mature ideology. It is a universal political movement and a social doctrine, which provides the feeling of unity and loyalty to the political unit of the same ethnicity or at least same historical background. At the same time it is a controversial issue, because it does not have a single definition, and examples of nationalism are extremely diverse. Any intrastate or interstate dispute, ethnic tension or diplomatic problem between two states can easily turn into national ones and mobilize their nationalists.

What nationalists argue is that, if nations are free to govern themselves independently, they will be in a better position. Jingoism is the term used for the idea that one nation is superior to the other. Each nationalism has to define who belongs to a nation and who does not, so there should be a process of inclusion and exclusion.

Depending on the situation, nationalism can mean protecting the unity of a nation state, or advocating a secessionist movement. Besides this very general definition, there are definitions of nationalism theorists, which describe the doctrine more profoundly. Kellas, for instance describes nationalism as both an ideology and a form of behavior. The ideology of nationalism builds on people's awareness of a nation (national self consciousness) to give a set of attitudes and a program of action. These may be cultural, economic, or political. Since 'nation' can be defined in 'ethnic', 'social' or 'official' senses, nationalism can take these forms as well.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> J.G.Kellas,(1991). **The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity** (London:Macmillan) pp.2-3

According to Gellner, one of the most cited modernity theorist of nationalism, it is not the awakening of nations to self consciousness, it invents nations where they do not exist.<sup>9</sup> Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent. It is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones and separate the power holders from the rest.<sup>10</sup> For states, ‘official nationalism’ means patriotism and the defence of ‘national sovereignty’ in international relations. All types of nationalism seek a political expression for the nation, most strongly in independent statehood. Nationalists may settle for less, however. They may be content for the nation to be a unit in a federal state or to have devolution in a unitary state. As a form of political behavior, nationalism is closely linked to ethnocentrism and patriotism. Nationalist behavior is based on the feeling of belonging to a community, which is the nation. Those who do not belong to the nation are seen as different, foreigners or aliens with loyalties to their own nations.

#### **1.1.2.1 Emergence of Nationalism**

If we compare the history of mankind to the history of nationalism, we realize how recent the history of nationalism is. Nationalism is not older than the second half of the eighteenth century. There are arguments supporting this assumption: its first great manifestation was the French Revolution, which offered the new movement an increased dynamic force. Gooch describes nationalism as “a child of the French Revolution.”<sup>11</sup> Although we accept the French Revolution as the event, which

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<sup>9</sup> E.Gellner.(1964). **Thought and Change** (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson) p.169

<sup>10</sup> E.Gellner.(1983). **Nations and Nationalism** (Oxford: Basil Blackwell) p.5

<sup>11</sup> G.P. Gooch. 1931. **Studies in Modern History** (London: Longman), p. 217

intensified and spread the ideas of nationalism throughout Western Europe, the history of nationalism is much older than that.

Two spiritual events, Renaissance and Reformation, were important steps in the formation and development of nationalism and national identity. Kohn argues that “in Renaissance the purely vegetative group feeling developed for the first time into a national consciousness, which received its inspiration from the ancient classics and from the Old Testament, both now read in a new light and with a new understanding.”<sup>12</sup> Although individuals began to have a kind of national consciousness with Renaissance and Reformation, it is not correct to call these periods “the age of nationalism” because Western Europe was still dominated by religious thought and emotions. In spite of the frequent expressions of literary nationalism in the Renaissance, emerging nations were divided by civil wars. Kohn’s description of the situation is as follows: “rival factions of magnets knew no loyalty to the nation and the people themselves remained entirely outside the reach of nationalism.”<sup>13</sup>

The treaty of Westphalia (1648), and related developments led to the growth of middle classes, whose desire for political power was somewhat connected to the emergence of contemporary nationalism. Theorists of the French Revolution argued that people should establish governments of equality and liberty for everyone. According to them, the nation was inseparable from the people, and for the first time people could create a government in accordance with the nation's general will.

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<sup>12</sup> H. Kohn. (1958). **The Idea of Nationalism: a study in its origins and background** (New York: Macmillan), p.120

<sup>13</sup> H.Kohn. (1958). **The Idea of Nationalism: a study in its origins and background**, p.124

Although their aims were universal, they glorified the nation that would establish their aims, and nationalism found its first political expression.<sup>14</sup>

In the course of the wars of Reformation, nations fought each other but people were still loyal to the sovereign rather than the land or other people. The peace of Westphalia put an end to the thirty years war in Europe. With the peace of Westphalia, European states recognized the principle of state sovereignty and the state borders were preserved and recognized collectively by law. Each signatory agreed not to intervene in the territory of other states and established a fiscal regulation for linking currencies of states to each other in order to stabilize the value of money across different states.

Kohn further argues that “at the beginning of the seventeenth century the national states of Western Europe continued to regard themselves as parts of the one Christian polity. They were united around Christianity, which was more influential than any of the national divisions into which the continent began to split up. National policies were pursued with a universal goal set firmly before the people as their guide.”<sup>15</sup> Christian identity still dominated the scene, and such a collective identity was necessary for the protection of the continent from the common enemy: the Muslim Turks. The spirit of the Crusades was still alive.

Two other important events that had to do with the emergence of nationalism are the industrial revolution and French revolution. It is true that many discoveries in natural sciences had been made before the 19<sup>th</sup> century but application of these

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<sup>14</sup> [http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/section/natlism\\_History.asp](http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/section/natlism_History.asp), 21.03.2005

<sup>15</sup> H.Kohn. (1958). **The Idea of Nationalism: a study in its origins and background** p.187

inventions to production began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The middle class grew stronger after the industrial revolution. But they were still weak in political terms. The aristocrats and religious class continued to enjoy their special status given by the king. The bourgeois lacked this, so it struggled against the aristocrats and the religious class on behalf of equality and new emerging political order. Peasants joined in the middle class and together they limited the rights of the king to a constitution. All this certainly contributed to the birth of the concept of nation state. The doctrines of French Revolution were then exported to other European states through wars.

Hereafter governments were neither divine nor natural creations but man made. Another concept came about that is the citizen-army whose soldiers were citizens of the nation, and thus were serving their nation. This army was different from the armies of other European states in which there was no understanding of loyalty to the system. Medieval armies consisted of aristocratic warriors with limited numbers and the rest were unskilled peasants. The new army of France was full of educated high-ranking soldiers and low rank privates who had national consciousness.

French revolutionists supported personal liberties; they rejected any kind of constraint,<sup>16</sup> monopolies on commerce, feudal charges upon the land, vestiges of servitude such as serfdom, and even black slavery overseas. They held that political legitimacy required constitutional government, elections, and legislative supremacy. They demanded civil equality for all, denying the claims of privileged groups, localities, or religions to special treatment and requiring the equality of all citizens before the law. A final revolutionary goal was expressed by the concept of fraternity,

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<sup>16</sup> <http://mars.acnet.wnec.edu/~grempe1/courses/wc2/lectures/rev891.html> , 15.3.2005

which meant that all citizens regardless of social class, region, or religion shared a common fate in society, and that the well-being of the nation sometimes superseded the interests of individuals. The resounding slogan of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity expressed social ideals to which most contemporary citizens of the Western world would still subscribe.

### **1.1.2.2 Theories of Nationalism**

Theories of nation formation may be divided into two schools. These are modernists and perennialists, or in Anthony Smith's words modernist and anti-modernist. Modernists subscribe to the view that nation and nationalism are recent social-political phenomena that serve the modern social structure. Perennialists, on the other hand, maintain that nations have always existed throughout history in different social or political forms.

According to modernists, nationalism emerged when societies passed from agrarian to industrialized ones. In the agrarian society there was a complex division of labor in which everybody's role was defined. When the peasants moved to cities following modernity, they did not have a defined role and these people needed a standardized identity so they created their roots in folk culture with which they identified themselves.

Smith was the first scholar to survey theories of nationalism and classify them. According to him, modernist theories take the view that nations were wholly modern in the sense of being recent, i.e. since the French Revolution, nations were the product of modernity and had to emerge through the process of modernization. Nations were not deeply rooted in history but were an inevitable consequence of the revolutions that constituted modernity. Nationalism was embedded in modernity.

When the process of modernization has become completed, nationalism, too, would wane and disappear. Nations and nationalisms were social constructs and cultural creation of modernity designed for an age of revolutions and mass mobilization, and central to the attempts to control these processes of rapid social change.<sup>17</sup>

The most important thinker of modernist approach and teacher of Anthony Smith is Ernest Gellner. He suggests that nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist, but it does not need some pre-existing differentiating marks to work. Anthony Smith does not agree with Gellner about the issue of invention. He categorizes himself as an ethno-symbolist under the category of modernist nationalism theorists. According to Smith, although nations are modern and product of the industrial society, they have an ethnic past, and this ethnic past has to be used by the nationalists to create a new nation. Therefore, nationalists, according to the preoccupations of the present, can use the past. In other words, the present creates the past. Modern nationalist intellectuals will not only invent a historical past, but also use it which is already there, select the necessary parts from it, and mix them for the desires of the nation.

According to Smith, the following is the characteristics of the anti-modernists (Perennialists): they believe that the nation is a politicized ethno-cultural community, the nation is persistent and immemorial, rooted in place and time and belonging to a nation means possessing certain qualities. The underlying principles of the nation are those of ancestral ties and authentic culture and nations are seamless wholes with a single will and character.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> A.D.Smith.(1998). **Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism** (New York: Routledge) p.22

<sup>18</sup> A.Smith.1998. **Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism** (New York: Routledge) p.22-23



Primordialism which can be counted under the category of anti-modernist theories argues that ethnic bonds are 'natural', set by the basic experiences that human beings go through within their families and other primary groups. According to Llobera, in primordialist understanding, group identity is a given and exists in all societies, and they are irrational attachments based on blood, race, language, religion, region.<sup>19</sup> According to another primordialist, C. Geertz, primordial identities are natural or given, ineffable, which means that it cannot be explained or analyzed by referring to social interaction, but are coercive and deal essentially with sentiments or affections.<sup>20</sup> Geertz further discusses that ethnic groups are ineffable and yet coercive ties, which are the result of a long process of crystallization. Modern states, particularly, but not exclusively, in the Third World, are superimposed on the primordial realities, which are ethnic groups or communities.<sup>21</sup>

One other argument primordialists put forward is that ethnic identity, as a result of historical experience of human beings becomes a given one. The last group of theory is instrumentalist one, which bases its view on ethnic groups rather than nations.

According to Llobera's definition of instrumentalism, ethnic identity is flexible, and the determining variable is that both the content and boundaries of an ethnic group change according to circumstances. Under the label of instrumentalism one can detect a variety of approaches based on the idea that ethnicity is the result of economic, social or political processes, and hence that it is by definition a flexible and highly adaptable tool. Ethnic groups have no fixed boundaries; they are rather collective entities, which change in size according to changing conditions. As to individuals, not only are they not assigned permanently to an ethnic group, but they

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<sup>19</sup> J.R.Llobera, (1999). **Recent Theories of Nationalism** (London:University College) p.3

<sup>20</sup> C. Geertz. (1973). **The Interpretation of Cultures**. (New York, Free Press), 16.

<sup>21</sup> C. Geertz. (1973). **The Interpretation of Cultures**. (New York, Free Press), 20

can be members of more than one at the same time. Ethnicity is a dynamic element. Some instrumentalists insist that ethnic affiliation is simply a ploy to promote economic interests, and that individuals are ready to change group membership if that suits their sense of security or their economic interests.<sup>22</sup>

Another instrumentalist, Fredrik Barth, argues that ethnic groups are biologically self-perpetuating, the members of the group share fundamental cultural values; the group makes up a field of interaction and communication; and its members identify themselves and are identified by others as belonging to the group.

Prominent experts on nationalism theories Shaw and Wang presented a model for explaining how allegiance was transferred from small ethnic groups to large nations and multinational states. Here are some of the hypotheses put forward by the authors: First, over evolutionary time, individuals have identified themselves with groups larger than their nucleus ethnic group due to balance-of-power considerations. They have done so voluntarily or through coercion, that is, defeat and forced amalgamation with the conqueror

Secondly, belonging to, and fighting for, a larger group, priorities of inclusive fitness maximization and related biases in mental development must be linked with priorities and choices in cultural environment. Thirdly, the identification mechanism operates continually to answer two questions: to what group should the individual belong and fight for, assuming choices are available. If choices are not available, if membership in a larger group such as a state is mandatory, with what degree of intensity and commitment should the individual serve that group in warfare? Fourthly, cognition and emotion work simultaneously to produce powerful group alliances.

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<sup>22</sup>J. R. Llobera.(1999). **Recent Theories of Nationalism** (London:University College), p.8

Lastly, when group cohesion is threatened, the identification mechanism will tend to direct membership and allegiance to a subgroup, thus fostering inter group strife, secessionist movements with the larger one, and perhaps civil war. To avoid this, cultural incentives must be introduced to foster and protect inclusive fitness priorities. In this case, patriotism is typically used by leaders to promote group cohesion and mobilize for warfare"<sup>23</sup>

The nation building process in Western Europe and in other parts of Europe is not the same. For instance, before the establishment of the French nation, there was the Kingdom of France. The transfer of the identity from king's vassals to the citizen of nation was not as problematic as it was in central and eastern Europe. This region of the world was governed by multi-national states such as the Ottoman Empire, Russian Empire and the Habsburgs. They were part of a multi-national state and as it was in Ottoman Empire, they were called *millets* (in religious sense such as the Rum Orthodox *Millet*) and their shift from such an identity to a nation was not so easy as the Greek example will demonstrate.<sup>24</sup>

In the Balkans, divided between the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires during most of the nineteenth century, nationalist uprisings first emerged among the Serbs. Nationalism developed as a reaction to the Janissaries who were the local Ottoman military forces and the next phase of nationalism in the Balkans was Greece, which is a very good example of modern nation building in the peninsula.

In the light of these theoretical explanations I raise some related research questions: What are the ethnic origins of Greek nation? Is Greek nation an imagined community as described by the modernist theorists? How did enlightenment occurred

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<sup>23</sup> P.Shaw, Y.Wong.(1989), **Genetic Seeds of Warfare**. (London, Unwin Hyman).

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.theihs.org/libertyguide/hsr/hsr.php/21.html> , 27.03.2005

among Ottoman Greeks and what was the role of Enlightenment in the emergence of Greek nationalism? The fundamental problem of modern Greek history may be fairly epitomized in the form of two related questions. What are the ethnic origins of the Greek nation? What are the sources and components of Greek culture?<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> A. Vacalopoulos. (1970). **Origins of the Greek Nation: Byzantine Period, 1204-1461**. (New Jersey:Rutgers University Press) p.1.

## **CHAPTER II:**

### **GREEK ENLIGHTENMENT: CREATING A NATION WITHIN AN EMPIRE**

#### **2.1 Origins of the Greeks**

As mentioned before, Gellner suggests that nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist. Modern Greek nation is not descended directly from ancient Greeks. As Kousoulas mentions, “ever since the days of Alexander, being “Greek” was more a question of culture than a matter of biology.”<sup>26</sup> Greek nation is a mixture of different ethnic groups, which settled in the Greek peninsula in different times in history. It is possible that today's Greeks are different from the ancients.

In fact, after the Greek war of Independence, the German historian Jakob Phillip Fallmerayer put forward the question of ethnic origins of Greeks. This was a challenge for the philhellenists and civilized world that had great hopes for the political regeneration of Greece. According to him, ancient Greeks had disappeared completely and the modern Greeks were merely descendants of Slavs and Albanians.<sup>27</sup> Another scholar who shares similar ideas with Fallmayer was Viennese Slavist Bartholomaeus Kopitar who was known as the father of Fallmayer's theory. He says: “Therefore, the Greeks who not only have Greek beliefs but also speak modern Greek we might with good conscience allow to pass, moreover, as

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<sup>26</sup> D. Kousoulas. (1974). **Modern Greece: Profile of a Nation** , (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), p.xv

<sup>27</sup> A. Vacalopoulos. (1970). **Origins of the Greek Nation: Byzantine Period, 1204-1461**. (New Jersey, Rutgers University Press) p.1

descendants of the Greeks (*Die Griechen also, die nicht nur griechisch glauben, sondern auch neugriechisch sprechen, können wir mit gutem Gewissen auch ferner für Nachkommen der Griechen gelten lassen*)<sup>28</sup> Naturally, other Scholars had answers to these ideas. Everyone tried to analyze such an important ethnological question.

## **2.1.1 Origins of the Greeks: Assimilation of Different Groups into Greekness**

### **2.1.1.1 Slav Settlements and Their Assimilation into Greekness:**

Incursions of the Avaro –Slav peoples started in the sixth century. During these years, the Byzantine Empire was preoccupied with internal problems. After the death of Emperor Maurice, the borders of the Byzantine Empire became unprotected. The Slavs invaded the south and reached Peloponnesse. The Greeks were displaced by the Slavs and many of them sought refuge in Sicily and Italy.<sup>29</sup> The Christianization and hellenization of the Slavs took place after the defeat against Byzantine Emperor Patras in 805 by which the Greeks took control over the Slavs.

The Albanians migrated the Greek peninsula in the eighth century. They were speaking Albanian language and Latin. In 1348 when Byzantine armies were defeated by Serbian Stefan Dushan and the Serbs conquered a large part of Northern Greece, the Albanians easily penetrated the undefended south. Stepan Dushan used the Greeks and Albanians together in forming armies. Later when Serbian domination ended the Greeks assimilated and used Albanians in their armies.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> P. Enepekides. “**Kopitar und die Griechen [Kopitar and the Greeks]**,” Wiener Slavistisches Jahrbuch, III, p.67

<sup>29</sup> P.Charanis. (1953). “**On the Slavic Settlement in the Peloponnesse**” (Athens: Testu) p.42

<sup>30</sup> C. Jirecek, (1911). **History of the Serbs.** (Germany: Gotha) p.394.

### **2.1.1.2 The Vlachs, the Francs and Their Assimilation Into Greek**

Vlachs were the descended of the colonists of the Roman Empire. They were Latin and also a mixture of Thracians and Romans<sup>31</sup> These people arrived in the Greek lands when the Latin language was still spoken. They interacted with the native Latin speakers of the land and formed a new element known as Vlachs who were speaking a Latin dialect. Towards the end of Byzantine Empire, these Vlachs united with the Greeks in order to confront the Turks more effectively.<sup>32</sup> After 1821, the Vlachs were referred by the Greeks as Greco-Vlachs.<sup>33</sup>

Latin occupation of the Greek peninsula began in 1204 and Constantinople was captured by the Latins during the fourth Crusades. For a very long period, the ethnic Greeks migrated from the region. The remaining ones were assimilated by the Latins. The Latin rule did not last long in the region while the Byzantine and Turkish armies swept away the Latins. It is possible nevertheless to find the Hellenized descendants of a Latin ethnic infusion on the Aegean Islands of Tenos, Naxos, Syros and Santorini.<sup>34</sup>

### **2.1.1.5 Turks and Their Assimilation**

The Turkish components in the ethnic structure of the Greek nation was limited by the fundamental differences in the religion which always separated the Turks and the Greeks though thousands of Greeks were converted to Islam.

Before 1850's identity of the people were changing according to the place they had in the social structure. In other words social mobility meant acculturation of

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<sup>31</sup> G.C.Rozias. 1808. **Investigations, Founded on Ancient Testimonies, concerning the Roman, or So called Vlach, Who Dwell on the Other Side of the Danube** (Hungary:Pest) pp.81-89

<sup>32</sup> A. Vacalopoulos. (1970). **Origins of the Greek Nation: Byzantine Period, 1204-1461**. (New Jersey,Rutgers University Press) p.14

<sup>33</sup> Nikolaos Kasomoulis. (1939). **Military Reminiscences of the Greek Revolution, 1821-1833**( Athens: Dias) p.104

<sup>34</sup> A. Vacalopoulos. (1970). **Origins of the Greek Nation: Byzantine Period, 1204-1461**. (New Jersey,Rutgers University Press) p.15

the people. According to Victor Roudometof, in Macedonia, Serbia, and Bulgaria, class and ethnicity overlapped resulting in the use of the term “Serb” and “Bulgar” to specify the peasants because most of the peasants were Slavs. When Slavs moved into the urban world and became a middle class, they generally shifted their identity to Greek. In Belgrade, Serbian townsmen were dressed in the Greek style. Newspapers included rubric Greece, and the local Christian higher stratum was speaking Greek until 1840. All Orthodox merchants and peddlers many of whom were either speaking Greek or hellenized were Vlachs, Serbs or Orthodox Albanians.<sup>35</sup> During the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, thousands of Orthodox Albanians and Vlachs became completely hellenized. Prior to the 1820’s, then most of the middle class Balkan Orthodox Christians were either ethnic Greeks, or largely acculturated into Greekness, or under heavy influence of Greek language.

The dominance and existence of hellenic culture up to now can be explained by the fact that the new coming ethnic groups were always small in number than the Greeks. The assimilation of newcomers who were small in number was inescapable. There were many strong elements of hellenic culture. The Greek language survived as the vital living organism through which the essence of civilization was preserved and transmitted. Orthodox Christianity provided a common framework of religious belief, which was constantly propagated by the Greek clergy.

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<sup>35</sup> V. Roudometof, (1998). "**From Rum Millet to Greek Nation: Enlightenment, Secularization, and National Identity in Ottoman Balkan Society, 1453-1821,**" *Journal of Makrides*, V. 1991 '**Orthodoxy as a Condition sine qua non: Religion and State Politics in Modern Greece from a Socio-Historical Perspective**', (*Ostkirchliche Studien*), December p.13



## **2.2 Survival of Greek Civilization**

### **2.2.1 Survival of Greek Civilization of the Roman Conquest and Byzantine Empire**

The heterogeneous races and peoples within the Roman Empire lived for centuries in a social and political framework composed of elements of different cultures of the East, the Hellenic Empire of Alexander the Great, Christianity and the Roman culture. But since the Greek civilization was deeply rooted in the East, it was the Greek-speaking element, which had the most profound and lasting influence upon the civilization of the Eastern Roman Empire. The artistic and intellectual life of the Empire was mostly Greek

*Pax Romana* is the period of peace, which started in 31 B.C. when Augustus Caesar declared an end to the great Roman civil wars of the first century, until 180 AD, when emperor Marcus Aurelius died. It was a time in which Roman commerce boomed, unhampered by pirates and/or enemies. Roman Peace was applied only in the central areas of the empire, including Greece and the Greek East. This peace and security environment allowed the Greeks to promote their culture and economy, and they were involved in the ruling elite of the empire. The Roman Empire authorities silenced the revolts and put a temporary end to the fights between rival leaders. Besides the internal peace environment, external threats relatively diminished. The borders were more secure than ever though the Romans had to still fight Germanic tribes.

Greece became an Eastern province of the Roman Empire. The Romans sent their colonies to Greece and the interaction between the Romans and Greeks

contributed to a change in Roman culture and, at the same time, life in Greek cities incorporated Roman features, and new generations of "Romanized" Greek citizens appeared. Roman authors began to write in Greek and the Greeks came under the influence of Roman culture and Christianity. This period of Greek history is known as the Greco-Roman culture.

Today's Greek territories became divided into two provinces called Achaia, covering central and southern Greece, and Macedonia, which included Thessaly, Epirus, and Macedonia proper. Greek provinces were not obliged to support Roman military in their expeditions, therefore, their position as tax payers and not warring people were relatively better. Greek cities became economic, and administrative centers of the eastern empire. A Greek urban elite developed in production and commercial centers such as Athens, Alexandria, Corinth, Miletus, Thessaloniki and Smyrna. The Greeks even entered the Roman Senate. An example of such new Greek citizens was Herodes Atticus, a fabulously wealthy financier and landowner from Athens, who rose to be the consul of Rome in A.D. 143. Roman emperors such as Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius took an active role in Greek culture and traditions, which contributed to the Hellenization of Roman culture. Together, Latin and Greek became the dominant languages of the empire. Greek culture influenced literature, art, oratory, rhetoric, education, and architecture.

Under the Roman Empire the Greeks lived as a periphery under the political influence of Rome. After the establishment of Constantinople in 330 A.D. for the purpose of enlarging the influence of Rome to the East, Greek lands continued to live under the influence of Rome until 395 A.D when division between east and west was formalized by Theodosius. Constantinople became the center of Eastern Roman

Empire and southern Greece constituted geographically a large province of the empire. This contributed to the survival and consolidation of Hellenism in the area.

Ferdinand Gregorovius writes about the importance of Eastern Roman Empire on the continuity of Hellenic Culture.

“The peculiar significance of Constantine’s creation was understood by neither the Greeks of that time nor their descendants. The building of Constantinople in itself not only ensured the perpetuation of the Greek nation but the preservation for prosperity of the incomparable treasures of Greek civilization. Without Constantinople, indeed, Greece and the Peloponnese would have been conquered and colonized by barbarous peoples.”<sup>36</sup>

Eastern Roman Empire, named Byzantine in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by European Humanists, was a multi-ethnic Christian empire when it first emerged but later it was hellenized and in 1453 when it collapsed, it was an Orthodox Greek state. The people never called themselves “Byzantine,” they were “*Romanioi*”, the name of the state and the country was “Romania”. The Turks called this land “*Rum Ülkesi*”(Land of Romans) and the people were called *Rumi*. After they conquered these lands, they continued to call them the same way. (*İklim-i Rum, Sultan-ı Rum*). Any philosopher of this land was called *Rum* such as *Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi*. The people of this land called the Turkish ruler *Vasilikos Romanioi, Vasilikos Turkos*. Since then the Turks continue to call the hellenes of the Empire *Romalı* or *Rum*. Even today they call the Peloponnesian Greeks *Yunanlı-İon* and İon; people from Asia Minor *Rum*. Indeed, the church was called *Rum-Orthodox*.<sup>37</sup> In the early years of the empire, the state was ruled by Roman law and political institutions, and the official language was Latin. But as part of the population was Greek and Christian, they spoke Greek. In

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<sup>36</sup> F. Gregorovius, (1889). **History of the City of Athens in the Middle Ages, from the Time of Justinian to the Turkish Conquest**. (Stuttgart) p.89.

<sup>37</sup> İ. Ortaylı.(2004). **Osmanlı Barışı** (İstanbul: Ufuk Kitap). p.14

school, students read ancient Greek classics of literature, philosophy, science, medicine, art and rhetoric. The Greek classical literature survived in the Byzantine Empire as the Byzantine schools taught ancient Greek literature.

Byzantine Empire lived its strongest times under the leadership of Emperor Justinian (483-565). It regained some territories that the Roman Empire had lost. It controlled most of the lands surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, conquered much of Italy, North Africa, and Spain. But, Justinian's war efforts brought a heavy burden to the Byzantine budget. The defense of borders became very hard because of economic difficulties. External threats such as Persians and Sassanid Empire reappeared and the Empire began to decline, which continued for 300 years and, during this period, Muslim forces took control of almost all the Byzantine territories. In addition, the Slavs were invading Byzantine lands from the west and north in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. They invaded much of the Balkans. Native peoples of the Balkans left their homelands and went to safer places. But it is interesting to note that the Slavs soon came under the influence of Christianity, and they culturally changed, finally becoming hellenized, so the Greek culture survived and even flourished though this time it became imbued with Christianity.

In 867 the Macedonians took the Byzantine throne and they ended the 300 years decline of Byzantine. They reconquered Syria, Georgia, Armenia, Crete and Muslim forces were driven out of the Aegean. They brought Bulgarian Kingdom under their control again. Throughout the 9<sup>th</sup>, the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries Macedonian Emperors governed the empire very effectively. Bulgarians were completely defeated by Basil II in 1014. In 1054, the Greek speaking East and the Latin speaking West had become officially separated from each other.

The Byzantine Empire began to decline after the Macedonian dynasty once more, In the late eleventh century, a Norman army allied with the Pope and commanded by Robert Guiscard, ravaged parts of what is now Greece, including Thebes and Corinth. Civil war among rival military factions impaired the Empire's ability to respond to such incursions. In a disastrous loss at Malazgirt (in present-day eastern Turkey) in 1071, Seljuk Turks from Central Asia captured Romanus IV, one of the first powerful and important rulers after the end of the Macedonian Dynasty. Through the next century, the Empire became more and more a European domain. The worst humiliation came in 1204, when marauders of the Fourth Crusade plundered Constantinople, carrying off many of its greatest treasures.

Greece was carved up into tiny kingdoms and principalities ruled by Western princes. Venice gained control of substantial parts of Greece, some of which were not relinquished until 1797. As a result of the growing aristocracy, the military system was corrupted. In addition to the old enemies such as the Roman Empire and the Abbasid Caliphate, Turkish conquerors coming from the Middle East appeared as a real threat. A new force, the Ottoman Turks, arose from the east in the wake of the Mongol invasion led by Genghis Khan in 1221.

The Ottoman state began as one of many small Turkish states that emerged in Asia Minor during the breakdown of the empire of the Seljuk Turks. Osman I. was the leader of this Turkish tribe. Osman I. unified the local Turkish tribes under the Ottoman state and In the early thirteenth century the Ottoman Turks began their piecemeal conquest of the Byzantine Empire. In 1326, they occupied Bursa in Bithynia; by 1354 they had established themselves on the European shore of the Dardanelles; in 1361 they captured Edirne and later made it their capital; in 1380

they occupied Macedonia; in 1393 they overran Thessaly; and in 1430 they captured Jannina.<sup>38</sup> Asia Minor and the Balkans fell to the Ottoman Turks, but Constantinople was still under the control of the Byzantine. Finally the forces of Fatih Sultan Mehmet took the capital city after a lengthy siege. Constantinople became a Muslim city in the Ottoman Empire. Greek Byzantine Empire had now come to an end.

### **2.2.2 Theory: Byzantine and Emergence of Greek National Consciousness**

Although there is a consensus on the emergence of Greek national consciousness under the Ottoman Empire, new research seems to suggest<sup>39</sup> that the origins of the Greek feeling of national consciousness could be traced back to the Byzantine period. Experts point to the continued existence of language and folk songs as sufficient indication of the early awareness of a Greek cultural identity. According to the scholars who believe in the emergence of Greek national consciousness during the Byzantine era, the Byzantine Empire became weak by the fourth crusades and high taxation, which caused a decrease in the lands owned by the peasants. The decrease in agricultural products made the life of people harder. They were forced to make a choice between submission to the enemy and loss of freedom, or resistance and loss of property. Certain cities and nobles submitted for certain independence in the expectation that their property and privileges would remain intact. Others went to the mountains to organize resistance against the enemy. Their resistance and hostility created certain consciousness of Greekness and the Latin-Greek conflict made it easier for the Ottomans to conquer the Greek lands.

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<sup>38</sup> D.Dakin. (1973). **The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821-1833**(Los Angeles: University of California Press) p.5

<sup>37</sup> A. Vacalopoulos. (1970). **Origins of the Greek Nation: Byzantine Period, 1204-1461**. (New Jersey,Rutgers University Press) p.27

### **2.2.3 Survival of Greek Civilization in the Ottoman Empire**

#### **2.2.3.1 Greeks Under Ottoman Rule**

The conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Empire was not only the end of the Eastern Roman Empire, but also the death of Constantine XI who was the last Roman Emperor. The conquest was important for the establishment of full Ottoman control over the Eastern Mediterranean and Balkans.

During and after the conquest of Istanbul, population of the city decreased dramatically. Large numbers of Orthodox people left it because of poor conditions during the Ottoman siege and the fear of getting under the rule of Ottoman Muslim administration. The city had to be repopulated. Fatih Sultan Mehmet planned to prevent a Christian league against the Ottomans. He wished to maintain Istanbul as the center of Orthodox Christianity; in this way, Orthodox Church would be under control of the Ottoman Empire and the Balkan peoples whose majority was Orthodox could be controlled by a religious authority in Constantinople under the influence of the Ottoman Empire.

Tolerance towards the Orthodox religion was the characteristic of Turkish rule, at least, from 1453, when Fatih Sultan Mehmet took Constantinople.<sup>40</sup> In the first days of 1454, Fatih Sultan Mehmet invited the last patriarch of East Rome Ghenadios Scholarios and appointed him as the *Rum*-Orthodox patriarch of the Empire. His appointment was political, as it might have been religious and humanistic because Ghenneadios was against the unification of Orthodox and Catholic churches. According to Kemal Karpat, this meant the establishment of

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<sup>40</sup> D.Dakin.(1973) **The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821-1833** Los Angeles: University of California Press). p.6

Orthodox-Christian *millet* and this *millet* was under the control of the Patriarch who for political and traditional reasons had to be a *Rum* (Greek).<sup>41</sup> The attention and kindness towards the new patriarch was incomparably exaggerated with that of the Byzantine Emperors. He ate dinner with the Sultan; he was given presents<sup>42</sup>. Ghennadios as the patriarch and *ethnarch* (*milletbaşı*) of all the Orthodox Christians, including the Bulgars, Serbs, Vlachs and even the Arab and Albanians as well as the Greeks became the spiritual, administrative, financial, cultural and judicial authority. Education and publishing affairs were under control of the church. Roman Law was the ruling code and the administration based on the Roman law was called *Turkokratia* for the Ottoman period. Roman law was used by the non-Muslim people of the Empire.

Fatih Sultan Mehmet's initial policy was not to rely upon the patriarchate to control the Greeks of the capital, but rather to turn to the leading Byzantine civil official still in the city, the Grand Duke Loukas Notaras. But later he, found the grand duke unreliable and had him executed. Fatih Sultan Mehmet's initial choice of a civil official suggests that the Ottomans had no predisposition to use ecclesiastical authority to control non-Muslim groups and eventually turned to the church, but the patriarchal seat was not filled until January 1454, six months after the conquest.<sup>43</sup>

According to İlber Ortaylı, Fatih Sultan Mehmet used the title "Roman Kaiser (*Kayser-i Rum*), the first Roman Empire was polytheist, the second was Christian and why the third Roma (Ottoman Empire) not to be a Muslim empire? However, this title was abandoned by the succeeding sultans. Fatih was interested in Roman culture, and he knew the Greek language. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman Empire, most

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<sup>41</sup> K.H.Karpat.(2004). **Balkanlarda Osmanlı Mirası ve Ulusçuluk** (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi) p.15

<sup>42</sup> İ. Ortaylı. **Osmanlı Barışı** p.14

<sup>43</sup> B. Braude. (1982). "Foundation Myths of the Millet System" in Benjamin Braude(ed.) **Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society** Volume 1 (New York:Holmes&Meier Publishers, Inc.) p.77



of the people were Christian but with the conquest of Muslim lands in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the majority became Muslim. And the *Rum* (Grek)-Orthodox church remained influential over the Orthodox *millet* and the Patriarch became a very important figure.

The Orthodox Church which had disappeared because of Catholic-Orthodox rivalry in Byzantine times had a revival under the Ottoman Empire's authority and began to challenge the West Roman Church. This way, Fatih Sultan Mehmet prevented the rapprochement of the two churches.

With the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Ottoman Empire became more secure as further conquests in the rest of the Balkans became easier. By the year 1453 most of the Greek lands except some islands, and some parts of Anatolia were in the hands of the Ottoman Empire. Between the years 1456 and 1460, the Ottomans captured the island of Limnos, Imvros, Samothraki and Thasos, and controlled the Duchy of Athens. During the next two centuries they captured the islands of Lesbos in 1462, Euboea in 1470, the Ionian Islands in 1479. During the sixteenth century, the Ottomans took Rhodes and Chios (Khios) in the Dodecanese Islands (Dodekanisos), Naxos in the Cyclades, and Cyprus. Naxos and Chios were taken in 1566, Cyprus in 1571 and Crete in 1669.

The movement of the Ottomans in the Balkans was to be interrupted. The Ottoman Empire stopped at the gates of Vienna in 1683, and in 1698 it was to be defeated by Austrian, Russian and Venetian forces and at the peace of *Karlofça* they surrendered *Azovon* in the Black Sea to the Russians and the Peloponnese to the Venetians. The Venetian rule in Peloponnese did not last long though. The Ottoman Empire regained that region and following the treaty of *Pasarofça* (Passarowitz) in 1718 entered upon a second occupation, which was to last a century or more. The

inhabitants found this renewed Turkish rule preferable to that of the Venetians: taxes were lighter; the administration was less efficient and, therefore, less harsh; and the infidel was much more tolerant than the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>44</sup>

During the years of Ottoman domination, Greek speakers resettled over a wide area inside and outside the Empire. They moved in large numbers to Romania, along the coast of the Black Sea, and into all the major cities of the Empire as merchants and artisans. Over 80,000 Greek families, for example, moved into the territories of the Habsburg Empire. Thousands more settled in the cities of the Russian Empire. Commercial dealings between the Ottoman Empire and the outside world were increasingly monopolized by the Greeks. Important merchant colonies were founded in Trieste, Venice, Livorno, Naples, and Marseilles. Amsterdam, Antwerp, London, Liverpool, and Paris also received sizeable Greek populations.

The diaspora communities played a vital role in the development of Greek culture during the Ottoman period. Greek enclaves in foreign cultures reinforced national identity while exposing their inhabitants to new intellectual currents, including the ideology of revolution. Many diaspora Greeks became wealthy and helped to support communities in Greece by founding schools and other public institutions.

Within the Ottoman Empire, the population of Greeks was around 13 million, this was because all the Orthodox *millet* was considered Greek. Not all the Greeks spoke Greek though. Some known as Karamanlis spoke Turkish; some spoke Slav tongues-Serbian or Bulgarian; others spoke Albanian and some spoke the Vlach tongue, a Latin language with close resemblance to Roumanian spoken in the Danubian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia and in certain adjacent regions.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> D.Dakin.(1973) **The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821-1833** p.6

<sup>45</sup> D.Dakin. **The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821-1833** p.9

Those who spoke Greek as their mother tongue were approximately three millions. Besides the assimilated population who became Greek culturally, some people despite their membership to the Orthodox Church, preserved their separate identities by speaking their mother tongue and rarely marrying outside their ethnic community. It is impossible to say ethnically who was Greek and who was not, as it is true for most of the ethnicities today. But according to the German scholar Fallmayer, as a result of the Slav invasions of the sixth and seventh centuries not a single drop of pure hellenic blood was left in Greece.<sup>46</sup> William Martin Lake in *Travels in Northern Greece* gives a description of Ionnia:

“Ioannina contains about 1000 Musulman houses, 2000 Greek, and 200 Jewish. The Musulman families are not more numerous than the houses, but of Greeks there are supposed to be near 3000 families, and of Jews not less than four to each house upon an average. The Christians have six or seven churches served by fifty papadhes, or secular priests, who attend also to the private religious observances of Greek families. The bishop and the priests attached to the metropolitan church are, as usual, of the monastic order. There are sixteen mosques, including the two in the citadel, where the Jews have two synagogues. Since Ioannina has been the residence and capital of Ali Pasha, its permanent population has been gradually in part exchanged for that of a more transitory kind. The town is now constantly full of the natives of other parts of Greece and Albania, attracted here by the affairs or the expenditure arising from its being the seat of government of a large portion of Greece and Albania. Many families from distant parts of the country are forced to reside here as a security for the fidelity of their relatives who may be in the Vezir's employment either here or in other parts of his dominions. The household establishment and troops of the Vezir and his sons, together with the Albanian soldiery, who are constantly here in their passage from one part of the country to another, increase the moveable population, but probably have not much augmented the whole amount beyond that which Ioannina contained fifty years ago, as many of the old families, both Greek and Turkish, have removed elsewhere to avoid the perils and extortion of the present government, and particularly the inconvenience of lodging

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<sup>46</sup> J.P. Fallmayer, (1830) *geschichte der Halbinsel Morea Wahrend des Mittelalters*, 2 vols, Stuttgart and Tübingen, quoted in D.Dakin. **The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821-1833** p.10

Albanians, from which the Turkish houses are not exempt.”<sup>47</sup>

### **2.2.3.2 The Ottoman *Millet* System, Orthodox *Millet* and the Role of the Greeks**

Nation building process among different societies within the Ottoman Empire during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century came about over against the background of socio-economic heritage of the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman *millet* system. The Greek state, like any other nation-state born in the Ottoman lands, had its essence in the religious establishment of Ottoman *millet* system. Therefore, in order to study the Greek nation building process within the Ottoman Empire, one should study the Ottoman *millet* system. Understanding the nature of *millet* system helps us understand the Greek state and any other Balkan one.

*The millet* system was the tool used by the Ottomans from 15<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century for the internal control of the multi ethnic and multi religious state. Minorities enjoyed a vast degree of religious and cultural freedom, and a degree of legal and fiscal autonomy under their own ecclesiastical leaders. *Millet* was a religious community. In the nineteenth century, while still maintaining its original meaning, it also came to denote such modern concepts as nation and nationality. The Ottomans were not the first to use it. The Muslims (Umayyad, Abbassid) and non-Muslims (Persian, Byzantine), had used the term to govern their peoples.

In fact, the *millet* system, as it developed in the later centuries of classical Islam, owed its specifically Islamic legal bases to the very beginnings of Islam, to the events of Muhammed’s Medina years (622-632). In those years, the prophet and his

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<sup>47</sup> W.M.Leake, (1835), **Travels in Northern Greece** (London,) IV, pp. 139-50; 205-10; 266-8; 269-70; 272-4.

followers achieved majority power in one town, at least in Arabia, where they had to consider the question of the Muslim community's relationship to minorities, in the case of Medina specifically, a Jewish one.<sup>48</sup>

In the Orthodox-millet, the civil and religious authority of the Orthodox-*millet* was the patriarch who lived in the Fener district of Istanbul. It had representatives in the provinces called high clergy. The Orthodox *millet* was under the leadership of the patriarch for civil as well as religious matters. Under the Ottomans, he acquired more power than he had had as only a spiritual chief in the Byzantine Empire. He became a political head vested with fiscal, judicial, and administrative matters of the Orthodox peoples of the Empire. The same powers were exercised by the high clergy, his representatives in the provinces, who intervened in worldly affairs. The *berat* (decrees) issued by the sultan to the patriarch and the high clergy in the provinces did not differ from each other, except that the patriarchal *berat* contained defined geographical extent of jurisdiction. In judicial matters bishops were counterparts of the Muslim judge or *kadı*. As the *kadı* heard cases between Muslims or between Muslims and non-Muslims, according to the *şeriat*, the bishop heard cases between the Orthodox on the basis of the canon law or the civil law of the Byzantines, as recorded in the manual of Constantine Armenopoulos (1320-1380), a jurist from Salonica.<sup>49</sup>

The *millet* system was a socio-cultural and communal framework based firstly on religion, and secondly on ethnicity, which in turn often reflected linguistic differences. The community was the basic organizational unit of the *millet* without

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<sup>48</sup> C.E. Bosworth. (1982). "The Concept of Dhimma in Early Islam" in Benjamin Braude(ed.) **Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society** Volume 1 (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc.) p.37

<sup>49</sup> S. Skendi. (1982). "The Millet System and its Contribution to the Blurring of Orthodox National Identity in Albania" in Benjamin Braude(ed.) **Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society** Volume 1 (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc.) p.244

which its existence was inconceivable. The leadership of the community in the villages and in the towns quarters *Mahalle*, consisted of the representative of the religion. The priest acted as the spiritual head of the community and as the intermediary between it and higher ecclesiastical authorities. The communal leaders at the town level formed the second layer of leadership and enjoyed greater authority and influence, not only because of their connection with higher Ottoman authorities and their own ecclesiastical heads, but also because of their wealth and their responsibility in collecting taxes and supervising the distribution of state lands to cultivators.<sup>50</sup>

The *millet* system appeared as a solution to the efforts of the Ottoman government to allow for the organization and culture of various religious-ethnic groups it controlled. The system provided religious, cultural and ethnic continuity inside these communities, then again it permitted their incorporation into the Ottoman administrative, economic and political system.

The *millet* system was a necessity for Pax Ottomana, which was the last model of Pax Romana. *It*\* was a compartment, and individuals as a member of their own *millet* could obtain the highest position in their own *millet*. Until the *Tanzimat* period, the leader of the *millet* was called *milletbaşı* who began to lose his importance after the *Tanzimat* as a result of secular movements.

The most important character of the Pax Ottomana (*millet* system) was its establishment, which gave the Greek Orthodox priority and an advantage over other

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\*In Quran(9:16), Millet refers to a pre-Islamic community, millat Ibrahim, "the people of Abraham" and although in medieval usage it may mean Jews, Christians, or Muslims, its most common Ottoman Turkish usage, before the period of Reform, denotes the community of muslims in contradiction to dhimmis. (A.Levy Christians. 2000. **Jews and Muslims in the Ottoman Empire: Lessons for Contemporary Coexistence** (Boston:Near Eastern and Jewish Studies Department Brandeis University) p.2)

<sup>50</sup> K.H.Karpat.(1997). Millets and Nationality: "The Roots of Incongruity of Nation and State in the Post-Ottoman Era" in Benjamin Braude(ed.) **Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire:The Functioning of a Plural Society** Volume 1 (New York:Holmes&Meier Publishers, Inc.) p.143

Orthodox *millets*.<sup>51</sup> The *Millet* system was an obligation for the Ottoman Empire, since it was a response to the heterogeneous society in the Balkans. It was, in effect, an extension of Ottoman administrative practices. In an age that lacked modern technologies of administration, communication and control, the Ottomans, like other contemporary states, had little choice but to deal with the masses of their population corporatively, allowing each group wide latitude in the conduct of its internal affairs. At the same time, the Ottomans attempted to control their population as much as possible through the centralization of government. This led them to develop and support strong hierarchical administrative structures in different communities. It was, in effect, a system intended to centralize government in an age that lacked modern technologies of governance. Except in certain areas of great importance to the state, such as security and taxation, the Ottomans generally adopted a policy of *laissez-faire* in the internal affairs of the minority communities and they strongly supported, but at the same time held accountable, the community's leadership.<sup>52</sup>

The *millet* system was a working tool, which provided the necessary social environment for the peaceful living of peoples from different religious backgrounds. It was working efficiently as long as the Ottoman State was strong enough to control all its *dhimma* from the Sublime Port. By the change within the Ottoman Empire, as a result of decrease in its military and economic power, the *millet* system began to lose its efficiency. Local administrators became more powerful and the Sublime Port lost its control over the locals. In the nineteenth century, the *millet* system was transformed into one in which non-Muslim *millets* became minorities. *Dhimmis* paid a special tax called *Haraç* which was later converted into *cizye*, and in the nineteenth century it became known as *bedel-i askeri*. *Haraç* was the tax taken from the non-

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<sup>51</sup> İ. Ortaylı. **Osmanlı Barışı** p.1

<sup>52</sup> İ. Ortaylı. **Osmanlı Barışı** p.1

Muslim inhabitants of the conquered lands. *Cizye* was taken also from the non-Muslims but not for the land, every non-Muslim had to pay *cizye* to the Ottoman authorities in return for the protection and security services provided by the Ottomans. Other events that led to change in the millet system were the birth of a new entrepreneurial-commercial elites in towns and the rise of a secular intelligentsia. There was also mass migration, which changed the *millet* system. After the annexation of Crimea by the Russians in 1873, the Serb and Greek revolts of 1804 and 1821 respectively and Crimean and Russo- Ottoman wars of 1853 and 1877, Ottoman territories in Europe and Anatolia became subject to exceptionally important demographic changes. Muslim populations of the lost lands migrated to Anatolia and the Balkans where the non-Muslims were affected.

### **2.2.3.3 The Orthodox Millet**

The Ottomans ruled a variety of peoples from different faiths within the Balkan Peninsula, North Africa and the Middle East. They accomplished this by grouping populations into *millets* constituted on the basis of religious confession rather than ethnic origin. Besides the ruling Muslim *millet*, there was the Jewish *millet*, the Gregorian Armenian *millet*, the Catholic *millet* (in the nineteenth century, a Protestant *millet*) and finally the Orthodox *millet*, the largest after the Muslims. The Ottoman Turks called the Orthodox the *millet-i Rum*, or ‘Greek’ *millet*.<sup>53</sup>

The *millet-i Rum* in the Ottoman Empire, embracing as it did all the Orthodox Christian subjects of the sultan, reflected in microcosm the ethnic heterogeneity of the empire itself. It contained Serbs, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Vlachs, Orthodox

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<sup>53</sup> R.Clogg. (1992). **A Concise History of Greece** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) p.10



Albanians, and Arabs, while the strictly “Greek” element itself, although firmly in control of the *millet* through its stranglehold over the Patriarchate in Istanbul, the Holy Synod, and the higher reaches of the of the Orthodox ecclesiastical hierarchy, was by no means homogenous. A Greek of Epirus, for instance, would have had much difficulty in comprehending one of the Greek dialects of Cappadocia, while a Greek of Cappadocia would have experienced equal difficulty in understanding the Greek of Pontos.<sup>54</sup> One of the many reasons of the dialect differences between different Greeks was the interaction between the Greeks and the Turks. For example, in the Kayseri region Greeks spoke a mixture of Greek and Turkish which could only be understood by those with a knowledge of both languages, and there were also Greeks who spoke Turkish and wrote in Turkish with Greek characters. In many quarters of Istanbul, Samatya, Kumkapı, Narlıkapı and Yedikule, “Greek” populations were almost wholly Turkish-speaking.<sup>55</sup>

Maria Todorova, in her book, *Imagining the Balkans*, argues that the primary result of the establishment of the Pax Ottomana was the collapse of the feudal power and state authority.<sup>56</sup> The *millet* system contributed to the assimilation of different ethnic groups. The most comprehensive of them was the *Rum-Orthodox millet* in which all the other ethnic groups became assimilated to hellenic culture. The Patriarch in Istanbul was always Greek. The Greeks strengthened their position because of the Ottoman consideration that religious ties were the most important distinction among different societies according to which the Muslims were the

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<sup>54</sup> R.Clogg.(1982). **The Greek Millet in the Ottoman Empire** in Benjamin Braude(ed.) **Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire:The Functioning of a Plural Society** Volume 1 (New York:Holmes&Meier Publishers, Inc.) p.185

<sup>55</sup> R.Clogg.(1982). **The Greek Millet in the Ottoman Empire** p.185

<sup>56</sup> M.Todorova. (2003). **Balkanları Tahayül Etmek**(Imagining the Balkans).(İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p.347

governors but non-Muslim Greeks were free in their internal organizations. They were able to preserve their ethnic and religious identity.

The divided status of the Catholic and Orthodox churches was in the interest of the Ottoman state. In the fourteenth century, the Ottomans conquered Macedonia. The Church of Ohrid was recognized by the Ottomans. This church had been founded as a patriarchy by the Bulgarians; the Byzantines reduced it to the Archbishopric of Ohrid. The Ottomans preserved it, and it became the first and earliest Orthodox church within the Ottoman Empire<sup>5</sup> When the Union of Florence was declared in 1439, the Archbishopric of Ohrid rejected it.

Orthodox churches were part of the Ottoman state system. Their area of influence was defined by the Ottoman state and within their own *millet* they had a distinct hierarchical order. At the beginning, *millet* system developed very slowly and the privileges given to the Orthodox Church by Fatih Sultan Mehmet did not come forward very quickly. The *ferman* given by Fatih Sultan Mehmet about the legal status of Orthodox Church was lost and seventy years later the *ferman* had to be prepared again with the witness of three old janissaries.<sup>57</sup>

What was expected in return for giving such great privileges to the Orthodox Church was its obedience to the Ottoman Empire. If there was disobedience to the Sultan, the Patriarch was responsible for this as the *millet başı* and the highest religious authority. The leader of the Orthodox Church Patriarch V. Grigorios was hanged by the Ottoman authorities in 1821 as he was held responsible for the Greek uprising.

There was a real competition for the Patriarchy as this position, besides religious force, bestowed political authority to the person who was elected.

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<sup>57</sup> R.Clogg **A Concise History of Greece** p.11

Therefore, the candidate for the patriarchy had to have political and economic support from wealthy Ottoman-Greeks.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, Greek culture was very influential among the Balkan societies and the Greek language became the symbol of a higher culture. Education Greek schools offered was well advanced. Among the non-Greek members of the *millet-i Rum*, Greek culture and language were considered as higher culture, and they had an enthusiasm about acquiring them. The Balkans were culturally so much hellenized that western ideas and innovations reached non-Greek members of the *Rum millet* through the censor and filter of Greek authorities. In later periods the non-Greek Balkan peoples began to oppose the situation by reacting to Greek culture.

An example of the attempts to hellenize the Balkans was the speech by the Metropolitan Ignatios Oungrovalachias, at the opening meeting of the Greco-Dacian Literary Society in Bucharest In July 1810 where he said:

“I see Greeks and Dacians /Romanians for long united by Holy Religion and this our government, today united by another bond of sacred philosophy. The Greeks, deeply aware of, and grateful for, the asylum which Dacia has given them, try to repay this holy debt with the illumination of learning and philosophy. The Dacians, being very proud, do not wish to remain on a lower plane than the Greeks. Enlightenment was not something new to the Greeks. For the Dacians, however, it was totally new...Let Socrates be your exemplar and model in virtue, Aristotle in justice, Epameinondas and Phocion in honor.<sup>58,</sup>”

Though the Orthodox millet held a privileged status, it is argued that the Orthodox and other *millets* were not equal to the Muslim people in the Empire. As the major *millet* of the Ottoman Empire was the Muslims, they had exceptional rights. For example until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, witnessing in the court of a non-Muslim

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<sup>58</sup> R. Clogg. (1979) **Elite And Popular Culture In Greece Under Turkish Rule** (*Indiana Social Studies Quarterly*, 32, No. 1) p.110

was not equal to a Muslim. Muslim-non Muslim marriages were forbidden, Christians were neither allowed to carry gun. Ottoman officials used to collect children of non-Muslim families for the service of Ottoman military and administration. This system was called *devşirme*, and was welcomed by some of the non-Muslims. *Devşirme* started during the reign of Murad and abolished by Murad III. This was a chance for the children to get into the palace and become a high ranking official in administration or military. The Muslim families are said to have registered their children as non-Muslim so that their children could become high-ranking officials in the administration.

The Ottomans, besides establishing the *millet* system, did not interfere with the internal affairs of the Orthodox-*millet*, so the Orthodox Christian society continued its evolution under the Ottoman roof without outside supervision. Small groups were assimilated to the bigger groups; as a result, Greek and Slav cultures established their dominance over other cultures. However, ethnicity was not an important fact for the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman subject. An ordinary Ottoman subject regardless of his ethnic background, whether Slav, Bulgarian or Vlach, identified himself as Orthodox Christian or as Greek (Rum) which was equivalent to Orthodox Christian.

The view of the extreme hellenizers among the non-Greek Orthodoxy found expression in Daniel of *Moschopolis Eisagogiki Didaskalia* printed in İstanbul in 1802, a rudimentary tetraglot Greek, Rumanian, Bulgarian and Albanian lexicon, designed to facilitate the learning of Greek by those benighted enough not to possess it as a native language. Characteristically, Daniel prefaced the work with the following verses:

Albanians, Vlachs, Bulgarians, speakers of other tongues, rejoice  
And prepare yourselves all to become Greeks,

Abandoning your barbaric language, speech and customs,  
So they may appear to your descendants as myths.  
Do honor to your Nations, together with your Motherlands,  
By making your Albanian and Bulgarian Motherlands Greek.<sup>59</sup>

Daniel of Moschopolis, significantly, was himself a Vlach and his attitude was by no means untypical. There were others of Vlach origin who embraced Greek nationality in the nineteenth century and even later. Modern Greek frequently acted as a filter through which the learning and literature of the West percolated to the other members of the Orthodox *millet*, particularly in the Balkans but also in the Arab world.

During the 19th century with the rising nationalisms, non-Greek members of the Orthodox *millet* began to express their discontent with Greek domination of the Orthodox church. Up until the period of Greek independence there was a widespread admiration for, and a determination to, acquire a facade of Greek culture on the part of many non-Greek Orthodox Christians. This was indeed acknowledged by Paisii Khilandarski, the progenitor of Bulgarian nationalism, in his Slavo-Bulgarian history compiled in 1762 . In a famous passage he attacked the Graecophilic of the emergent Bulgarian bourgeoisie and urged them to employ the Bulgarian language and to interest themselves in the glories of Bulgaria's past. "There are those," he wrote, "who do not care to know about their own Bulgarian nation and turn to foreign ways and foreign tongue... but try to read and speak Greek and are ashamed to call themselves Bulgarians."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> R.Clogg.(1982). **The Greek Millet in the Ottoman Empire** p.189

<sup>60</sup> R.Clogg.(1982). **The Greek Millet in the Ottoman Empire** p.189

#### 2.2.3.4 The Role of the Greeks in Ottoman Administration

The Ottoman Empire divided the conquered Greek lands into six administrative units called *Paşalık*. These were Morea (Peloponnese), Negropont (The Island of Evia) and the mainland opposite, South Albania (Including Western Greece), Salonica (Selanik) and most of Macedonia), Crete and the Aegean Islands. Under these units there were subunits responsible to the central government (Sublime Port). Each *paşalık* was divided into districts to which the pasha appointed his subordinates known as *muteselims*. These officials had overall charge of the military forces, tax-collection and the judicial administration, which dealt not only with the sultan's Muslim subjects but also with the non-Muslim subjects in so far as they were amenable to Ottoman law.

In Greece not all the non-Muslims were under control of the Ottoman government. Some parts of Greece were able to escape direct effects of Ottoman rule. The remote mountains of central Greece, for example, were called the *Agrapha*, the "unwritten", because the empire had no census or tax records for the region. Other areas were granted special status because they filled particular needs of the empire. Dakin says that:

“Since Cavalry was not effective outside the plains, the Ottoman Turks had failed to subjugate higher regions such as Mani in southern Peloponnese, or the Pindus-Agrafa mountains, Vermio, Pieria, Olympos or Parnasos. The so-called Zagorochoria and the Kefalochoria rarely saw a Turk and the villages in Mani were left alone to the rivalries of the clans of Mavromichalis and Tzanetakis.”<sup>61</sup>

Greece is a mountainous country and throughout the mountains there were *kleftocharia* bandit villages. Ottoman authorities were concerned with the security of

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<sup>61</sup> D.Dakin. **The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821-1833** p.17

the important routes, and control of the mountains was not that important for them. These important routes were patrolled by local militia who were employed by the Ottomans. These men were called *armatoli* and the land they controlled was called *armatoliki*. These *armatoli* were ex-bandits and brigands of the Greek territories, they were lawless and usually attacked the villages and took them under this control. On occasion, they even attacked Ottoman military quarters and Turkish settlers. In order to control them, the Ottoman Empire employed these bandits and gave them the mission of controlling important routes. Besides *armatoli*, there were bandit groups who were employed by the rich Greek landholders in order to protect their property.

In Peloponnese, the number of Greeks was ten times more than the Turks but the amount of land owned by the Turks were larger in proportion to the Greeks. But the upper class Greeks became so strong and wealthy because the tax collection business was left to them by the Turks.

Some Greeks who could speak foreign languages were employed by the government as representatives of the Ottoman Empire. The chief interpreter of the palace was usually chosen from Greek phanariots. The Greek dragoman of the Ottoman fleet was a very important man. He was secretary to the minister of marine and governor of the islands. One other important position that the Greeks held was the “*vekilides*” whose privilege was reporting the performance of the local Turks. These officials had direct access to the Ottoman government, and it was sometimes as a result of their reports that a tyrannical pasha would be removed or some local grievance redressed.

In Greek lands of the Ottoman Empire, like any other part of the conquered Ottoman territories, the land was granted to the local military leaders by the sultan in

compensation for their services. This system was called *timar-sipahi*. After a while, the estates became hereditary and stopped serving their intended function and they turned into private *çifliks*. In Greek territory, this policy left massive landholdings controlled by the Ottoman Turks and worked by dependent Greek peasants. As a result, many provinces such as Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia and Arabia had become almost independent. Strong local rulers like Ali Pasha of Janina and Pasvanoglu who became pasha of Vidin extended their power. This was how the Ottoman military and land system became spoiled and turned into a decentralized feudal one.

One of the most important offices controlled by the Phanariot Greeks was the Hospodars (governor) or prince of the Danubian principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. Over these, from their luxurious courts in Bucharest and Jassy, they ruled as the viceroys of the Ottoman Sultans. As was the case with high office in the Church, there was fierce and corrupt competition for these much-coveted posts, the average tenure of which was less than three years. Phanariot rule was much resented by the Romanian inhabitants of the Principalities but their reputation for capricious rapacity was not wholly deserved.<sup>62</sup>

Hospodar usually appointed a delegate near the Divan in Istanbul, who received directly from the ministers of the Grand Vezir's orders which concerned his government; and who ought, in case of need, to answer the questions of the members of Divan, principally relating to the management of his principality. This delegate was called *Baş Kapı Kahyası* who was also Greek.

Swan describes this office as:

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<sup>62</sup> R.Clogg **A Concise History of Greece** p.21



“I call this office important; and in truth, it could not be more so, since he who is invested with it holds, if I may say so, the destiny of his principal between his hands”... “It is from amongst these attendants, that the prince usually selects a trusty person, who secretly watches over the conduct of the Bache Capi Kiahaya; for, in this country, where intrigue and perfidy are the order of the day, there is no confidence which does not admit of some suspicion. The representative of the Hospodar is almost always full of occupation, if he wishes to perform his duties; for he ought, on the one side, to execute the commands of his prince, and dispatch those which he receives from the Divan; to distribute with all possible circumspection the necessary feasts to the great men of the empire; to study the character of one, and the thoughts of another, wholly for the interests of his master. On the other side, he should have his eyes continually open to the intrigues which the ambitious Fanariotes, and particularly the fallen princes, direct against the Hospodar;”<sup>63</sup>

### **2.2.3.5 The Economic and Intellectual Progress of Greeks:**

The presence of a population alien to the ruling group in Istanbul was not an innovation of the Ottoman period. Due to the role it played as the capital and especially as a great commercial center during the Byzantine period, particularly under the Comneni and Palaelogi dynasties, the city had already accommodated not only colonies from the West- Genoese Venetians, Amalfitans, Pisans, Catalans, and Provençals- but also from the East-Armenians, Arabs, Turks, Georgians, Jews.<sup>64</sup> As Mantran describes, Istanbul was always an important commercial center. After its conquest, in order to repopulate the abandoned city, Fatih Sultan Mehmet invited people who had skills in craft and commerce. He was not only planning to make the

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<sup>63</sup> C. Swan (1826) **Journal of a Voyage in the Mediterranean**

<sup>64</sup> R.Mantran .(1982). “Foreign Merchants and the Minorities in İstanbul During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries” in Benjamin Braude(ed.) **Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire:The Functioning of a Plural Society** Volume 1 (New York:Holmes&Meier Publishers, Inc.) p.127

city a trade capital, but also a trade center for the whole Mediterranean. To this end, he employed Jews and especially Greeks who had contacts with the west .

Within the Ottoman Empire, trade was done in three ways. The stable markets, weekly markets, and annual fairs.<sup>65</sup> Fernard Baudel noted:

“in Turkey the urban bourgeoisie-essentially a merchant class- was foreign to Islam: Ragusan, Armenian, Jewish, Greek and Western. In Galata and on the islands there survived pockets of Latin Culture... Two foreign businessmen were prominent in the Sultan’s entourage, one, Michael Cantacuzenos, was a Greek, the other, Joseph Nasi, a Jew.”<sup>66</sup>

Galata district of Istanbul was the international trade center of the Ottoman Empire. Greek merchants dominated commerce in Galata and rich Greek merchants lived in Pera where they built residences from the seventeenth century-onwards. They were specialized in “fur” trade. They worked as translators between Turkish officials (tax collectors) and foreign traders because they were well located in the internal market. They also worked as agents in the provinces for Western merchants. Greeks benefited from ship ownership and their dispersion throughout the Empire. They were employed by foreign embassies as dragomans.

Greeks were scattered all around the Ottoman Empire, especially around the seaports and trading ports of the Empire. They had established colonies in Russia, Austria, Netherlands, Italy, France, England and India. According to Richard Clogg, one reason for this expansion was the general attitude within the Ottoman Empire, which was against the business entrepreneurs.<sup>67</sup> They benefited considerably from

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<sup>65</sup> H.Milas. (1994). **Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu**. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p.78

<sup>66</sup> R.Mantran .(1982). “Foreign Merchants and the minorities in İstanbul during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries” in Benjamin Braude(ed.) **Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society** Volume 1 (New York:Holmes&Meier Publishers, Inc.) p.135

<sup>67</sup> R.Clogg. (1981) **The Greek Mercantile Bourgeoisie: “Progressive or Reactionary?” Balkan Society in The Age Of Greek Independence**. (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd.)

the treaty of Karlowitz (1699) which granted trading rights to Turkish subjects in the Habsburg dominions.<sup>68</sup> Greeks benefited from the decline of Venice and Genova in the Levant as they benefited from the Russian expansion on the Black Sea. In 1779, they got the privilege of flying the Russian flag and the protection of Russian consuls. During the revolutionary wars, when the British drove the French out of the East Mediterranean, Greeks replaced them. By 1813, they had 600 ships with a tonnage of over 150.000. Dakin explains the situation of Greek commerce as follows: “that is no exaggeration to say that Greece had a commercial Empire before she had a state; and it can with equal truth be said that the Greeks as traders, just as the Greeks as Christians, formed a kind of state within a state.”

Mantran summarizes the role of the merchant Greeks in the Ottoman Empire as follows:

“The growing influence of the West during the seventeenth century gave more importance to minority intermediaries and enhanced the role they played especially since the Turks continued to shun international trade. They arose an alliance between the minorities and the westerners to the detriment of the Empire. As middlemen the Greeks in particular sought the protection of a great power to profit from their two-fold position. Some gained wealth and a variety of new contacts. Faced with the inefficiency and stagnation of the Ottomans, they began to consider the possibility of playing a political role. Feeling superior to the Turks, they considered working against their authority by promoting a “national” resistance based on a “national anti-Ottoman consciousness” which eventually cleared the way to independence. In the eighteenth century the Greeks began to process; the Slavs followed suit. To a large degree counting on the support, open or tacit, of the Western Powers, they preserved. With the blessing of the Powers, this process brought about the independence of the Balkan states, the reforms of the Nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire, and the growing presence –even in the highest position- of minorities in the administration and government of the Ottoman Empire during the second half of the nineteenth century. The disintegration and

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<sup>68</sup>D. Dakin, (1973). **The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821-1833**(Los Angeles: University of California Press).p.21

dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire had begun with the economic and later political penetration of westerners, and was to culminate in the close ties of cooperation which the west established with the minorities who were the ones to gain the greatest advantage”<sup>69</sup>

### 2.2.3.6 Greek Civil Society in the Ottoman Empire

Civil society refers to that arena in which manifold social movements and civic organizations from all classes attempt to constitute themselves as an ensemble, so that they can express themselves and advance their interests.<sup>70</sup> Within the 18<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman Empire, such an environment had developed which played an important role in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Greek revolution. There should be some conditions for the constitution of a civil society. Presence of a physical space which is suitable for the conduct and effective organization of forces is important. Experts point to the necessity of “a construct”, an image of themselves in social, political and cultural terms and means of asserting their existence and interests. And finally the people who are to constitute civil society have access to sources of power that are beyond the immediate reach of state authorities. All these are necessary components of a civil society because “no matter how it is defined, the term “civil society” is meaningful only when used in relation to and especially in opposition to, the state”<sup>71</sup>.

Historically, Izmir and other port cities provided a setting where groups could exist and interact in an environment that was relatively free from close government supervision. This was because the Ottoman government had left the administrative

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<sup>69</sup> R.Mantran.(1982). “Foreign Merchants and the Minorities in İstanbul during the Sixteenth and Seveenteenth Centuries in Benjamin Braude(ed.) **Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire:The Functioning of a Plural Society** Volume 1 (New York:Holmes&Meier Publishers, Inc.) p.135

<sup>70</sup> A.Stepan, (1988) **Rethinking Military Politics** (Princeton University Press)

<sup>71</sup> R. Kasaba. (1999). "Economic Foundations of a Civil Society: Greeks in the Trade of Western Anatolia, 1840-1876," C. Issawi and D. Gondicas eds., **Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism**, (Princeton: Darwin Press), p.78.

status of these places intentionally indistinct in order to encourage the continuation of trade especially in Izmir. A series of international treaties had curbed the ability of the Ottoman Empire to interfere with these places.

During the nineteenth century, activities of Greeks in western Anatolia exhibited all the elements of a civic life. There were newspapers, schools, professionals associations, social clubs and political organizations that addressed the various concerns of their community. Most of these institutions were administered by autonomous local councils. The growth of non-state arena with autonomous means of wealth and mobilization was an important factor that undermined the effectiveness of many of the reform measures that the Ottoman government tried to implement in the nineteenth century. Though the central Ottoman authority conceived itself as the sole authority within the Empire, it wasn't the case.

The movement for Greek independence constitutes the best example of how this wealth became a vehicle for cementing a civil society within the Ottoman Empire. The organized activities of the merchant communities scattered around the Eagean and the Black Sea played a decisive part in determining the outcome of this movement.

## CHAPTER 3:

### GREEK ENLIGHTENMENT AND THE EMERGENCE OF NATIONALISM

#### 3.1 Greek Printing and Press

Printing machine was first brought to the Ottoman Empire in 1512 by the Jewish society of Salonika. The first printing office of the Greek society was established by the Patriarch Kyrillos Loukaris (1623-1638) in 1627.<sup>72</sup> At the same time, Loukaris, in collaboration with enlightened Theophilos Korydaleas had worked to translate the Holy Bible into Modern Greek language, which could be understood by ordinary Greek people. However, the conservatives of the church had given a negative reaction: he was accused of being Calvinist<sup>73</sup>. Loukaris had been dismissed, the Greeks had destroyed the printing office and finally he was killed.

Greek printing, that is to say, printing for a Greek readership, was established in Italy at an early date but in the course of the 18th century it underwent a dramatic increase.<sup>74</sup> Venice was the center of Greek printing. The Greeks established several printing houses. There were also many Greek printing houses in Vienna, Pest and Leipzig. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Greeks published a certain number of books

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<sup>72</sup> H.Milas.(1994). **Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p. 44

<sup>73</sup> E.Macar. (2003). **Cumhuriyet Döneminde İstanbul Rum Patrikhanesi** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p.41

<sup>74</sup> R.Clogg. (1980). "Elite and Popular Culture in Greece Under Turkish Rule." in. John T. A. Koumoulides (Ed). **Hellenic Perspectives** (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America). p.113

under control of the Ottoman Empire. Presses were established in Bucharest in the Danubian Principalities and, briefly, in Moschopolis.

The number of books printed by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century had increased incredibly fast. Between 1700 and 1730, out of 228 publications in Greek, 180 were concerned with traditional religious matters. By the decade 1780-90, this had changed: publications on religious on religious themes numbered 157, on secular themes 153. Between 1790 and 1800 out of a total of 320 only 128 were works of piety or on theological themes.<sup>75</sup>

The Greek Press was born at the end of the 18th century by the Greeks living abroad and in the context of particularly favorable historic and social conjunctures. The first Greek newspaper was published in 1784 in Vienna by the Zante Pressman and publisher Georgios Ventotis. As a result of the diplomatic pressure on Austrian authorities by the Ottomans, the publication was stopped in July of the same year. The *Ephemeris* of Markides Poulloi was also published in Vienna (1790- 1798) with news about the French Revolution and various European events but, also, with information of particular interest for the Greek people of that time. The publication of this newspaper was directly connected with hopes about social change -born out of the French Revolution- in the Balkans. Although the newspaper was shut down because of its relationship with Rigas Velesinlis and his revolutionary ideas, the Greek press had already taken its first fundamental steps. During the decade 1811-1821, much printed material was published in the printing houses of Vienna and Paris. In 1811, the clergyman Anthimos Gazis published the fortnightly newspaper *Logios Ermis* with the permission of the Austrian government. This newspaper

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<sup>75</sup> C.Dimaras.1969. *La Grece au temps des Lumieres*, (Geneva:Ritser) p.104

became the focal point of many spiritual quests and innumerable literary discussions. *Athena*, *Melissa* and *Mouseio* were newspapers published in Paris and *Irida* was published in London.

Before the revolution of 1821, Greeks established a press in the academies of Chios and Ayvalık, but they were to e short lived. As far as Greece was concerned, in 1812 the newspaper *Ioniki* was published in the Ionian Islands. *Salpigx Helleneke* of Ioannis Tombros with Theokletos Farmakedis as editor was characterized as the first official Greek newspaper. It was published on the 1st August 1821 in Kalamata at the same time of the Greek Revolution. The Greek conjecture played a decisive role in the progress of the press in the country. The new reality of the national liberation put new goals and demanded new options. The newspapers of the fight tried, on the one hand, to provide people with news about the development of the war and, on the other, inform them about more general political and social issues by publishing articles on political theory, criticizing the authorities and supporting the principles of the freedom of the press. In 1822, the handwritten newspaper *Aitoliki* was published in Central Greece (Sterea Ellada), while in 1824, the Swiss philhelene Iakovos Mayer published the newspaper *Ellenika Chronika* in Missolonghi.

The first newspaper in Athens was the *Ephimeris ton Athenon* which was published in 1824 by Georgios Psyllas. It was written in the language of the people (demotic- Romaic) and published a series of articles on the cultural activities of the period. The *Geniki Ephimeris tis Elladas*, which was later renamed into *Ephimeris tis Kyverniseos* (Official Gazette) and is still published to date, was published in 1825 in Nafplio with Theokletos Farmakedis as editor.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> <http://www.mfa.gr/english/greece/today/media/press.html>, 31.04.2005



It should be emphasized that the great bulk of Greek publishing during the Tourkokratia consisted of books of religious content. It has been estimated that between 60 and 90 per cent of the capital of the Greek printers of Venice was devoted to the publication of religious books, most of which were printed for liturgical use. Nonetheless, during the course of the 18th century one can detect a significant shift in the content of Greek books. During the first twenty-five years of the 18th century, that is to say between 1700 and 1725, a total of 107 books were published. Of these 80 were religious in content, ten were grammars of one kind or another, and seventeen were of miscellaneous secular content. During the last quarter of the century, that is to say, between 1776 and 1800, the total number of books published for the Greek market had risen to 749, from 107 during the first quarter. Of this 749, 395 were religious in content, 104 were works of grammar, while some 250 were of miscellaneous secular content. Thus at the end of the 18th century books of religious content still considerably outnumbered those of secular content. Nonetheless, whereas the publication of religious books had increased in proportion of 4.9 to 1 between the first and last quarters of the century, those of secular content had increased in proportion of 14.7 to 1.27. These figures certainly indicate a degree of secularization of Greek culture during this period; the ecclesiastical monopoly of learning had effectively been broken.

The publication of Greek books continued to accelerate during the first two decades of the 19th century. Whereas some 750 books were published in the last 25 years of the 18th century, well over 1300 were published in the first twenty years of the 19th century. Moreover the trend towards an increasingly secular content accelerated dramatically. During the five year period before the outbreak of the War of Independence in 1821, books of secular content amounted to some 66 per cent of

total output, while books of religious content totalled only 34 per cent. Liturgical texts constituted only some 14 per cent of the total. New titles amounted to some 58 per cent of total output, while repeat editions fell to 43 per cent. Whereas, in the 17th century, Venice had enjoyed a virtual monopoly in the printing of Greek books, in the five year period before 1821 its share of the total output fell to 36 per cent. 28 Many more Greek books at this time were being printed in Central Europe.

### **3.2 Greek Education**

Education was provided in a number of schools scattered all over Ottoman Balkans, most prominent among them being the princely academies of Bucharest, founded between 1678 and 1688, and Iassy founded in 1707. Their instructors included some of the most influential members of a new Greek Orthodox Balkan intelligentsia that emerged in the late 1750s.

A book written in western languages did not have to be translated into Greek for circulation among the Greek intelligentsia because most of them were located outside the Ottoman Empire. Greek merchants were capable of speaking at least one western language. Commercial ties between northern Greece and Central Europe during the early years of the nineteenth century were so well developed that one traveler, J.L.S. Bartholdy, found in the Thessalian town of Ambelakia, much of whose produce of spun red cotton was exported to Central Europe, an amateur theatre in which productions in German were performed. He discovered that a German theater “*wie in der ganzen uberlagen cultivierten Welt Kotzebue's Menschenhass und Reue*” was being performed and that, as elsewhere, it reduced the audience to tears. It was also noted that in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century all the best connected and wealthy Greek youths of Istanbul were learning Italian and French.

### 3.3 National awakening and reinvention of history in the Greeks:

The first time Greek nation was imagined in the sense Benedict Anderson described in his book “Imagined Communities” with the influence of enlightenment and by using the Greek language as the tool for communication. For the first time distinct ethnic identities were pointed out in literature written under the influence of enlightenment and was printed in Greek

The spirit of nationalism grew strong in Germany, where thinkers such as Johann Gottfried von Herder and Johann Gottlieb Fichte had developed the idea of Volk, which then became the roots of national awakening in Europe. It was this hypothesis, upon which the well known historians such as Konstantinos Papanikolaou had built their ideas. He tried to introduce his state with a long history of nationality, linking contemporary Greece to medieval past and seeking to establish uninterrupted continuities of national existence beginning from the ancient Greece. Besides the local historians of Greece, Western historians helped the Greeks to justify this assumption by writing on Balkan politics and history similar to their Balkan counterparts.

The movement known as “Greek Enlightenment” had begun in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and reached its climax in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In this period, two important events that influenced the Greek *millet* were the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774) as the Russians began to use Orthodoxy to influence the Orthodox *millets* and the French Revolution (1789). It is not proper, however, to see the enlightenment movement as a result of these two events.<sup>77</sup> It would be more appropriate to see these events as the accelerator of the movement. The famous

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<sup>77</sup> H.Milas.(1994). **Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p. 46

thinkers of this Enlightenment period were those who worked for spreading Greek language and the ideas which came originally from the west: M. Anthrakites, E. Boulgares, Beniamin Lesbios, K. Koumas, Th. Kaires, Kh. Pamplekes, Th. Pharmakides, Katartzes and most importantly Rigas and Korais. These enlightened Greeks had emerged in the industrial and commercial centers and were working in schools, which were called “lyceum” or “academy”. These schools were at the beginning financed by rich people and later by the Greek society.

Enlightenment impact on the Greeks was felt mainly among the middle classes, as they were the literate people. The educated youth was under the influence of France. During the eighteenth century European education and ideas made themselves felt among a considerable part of the intellectual Greeks. This was only two percent of the whole population and considerable proportion of this two percent was antagonistic to the impieties of west, preferring to remain within the traditional ideological structure. As in France, before the revolution, so in the Greek world publications, which expounded new ideas, were met with a counterblast of traditional doctrine.<sup>78</sup>

Reforms in education boosted in the enlightenment period. The Phanariot princes of Moldavia and Wallachia supported some excellent schools and collected libraries of European books. Knowledge of French was quite widespread at their courts.<sup>79</sup> In Istanbul there were good schools, and foreign languages were spoken and foreign literature was read. Wealthy merchants founded. Under Venetian rule the

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<sup>78</sup> D.Dakin. **The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821-1833** p.23

<sup>79</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson.(1977). "**The Greeks and the 'Great Idea', Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism**", (Colorado: Westview Press), pp. 110-117.

Ionian Islands offered Greeks the chance of education and access to Italian culture. Small but growing numbers of Greeks from the Ottoman Empire studied abroad, especially at Padua but also at Vienna, Leipzig and other German universities. Greek colonies in Western Europe helped the education of their compatriots both by inviting individuals to study in the West and by sending money to found and support schools on Ottoman territory. Increasing contact with the West introduced the ideas of the European Enlightenment to Greeks. This process was encouraged by many of the Phanariot rulers of Moldavia and Wallachia, but was disapproved by the Patriarchate, although individual priests and even bishops favored it. Natural science and rationalism were perceived as a threat to Orthodox piety.

The Orthodox hierarchy disliked this mixture of classics and rationalism. They, too, were becoming impatient with the Ottoman rule as they saw it declining, and, were becoming affected by a new pride in being Greek. But if the Ottoman Empire were to be destroyed, they hoped that it would be replaced by something like the old Byzantine empire, based on autocracy and Orthodoxy, probably under the protection of autocratic Orthodox Russia.

The struggle between the supporters of Orthodox Church and reformists had been very violent in the period of Greek Enlightenment. Both sides were uncompromising, and criticizing each other very harshly and were even trying to destroy the other side. Neophytos Bambas, a Greek intellectual and student of Korais, explains this faction among the Greek society as:

“Either apathy or as a result of its principle, the Sublime Port never challenged the reemergence of education in Hellas. The real enemy of this happy development is among us. As being the most important element of the Hellen nation, if the prejudices or

disinterestedness of this very strong spiritual class is taken under control, nothing important we have to do against the Turks.”<sup>80</sup>

The enlightenment movement witnessed among the Greek intellectuals of the Ottoman Empire was basically a late adoption of the developments in Europe. Between the years 1748 and 1751 there were cultural developments, which shocked the European continent such as Montesquieu’s *The Spirit of Law*, Buffon’s *Natural History*. For the first time in 1776 Boulgares translated Voltaire’s works into Greek.<sup>81</sup>

### 3.3.1 Criticism of the Greek enlightenment

Most of the Greek intellectuals of the 18th and 19th centuries in general, and nationalists in particular, were greatly influenced by the spirit of the Enlightenment. But the Enlightenment did not come to Greece in an “ideal” form. Many ‘neo-Hellenic Enlightenment’ thinkers sought to translate the basic ideas of the Enlightenment to the geographical, social and cultural environment of what was to become modern Greek kingdom. Besides, many of these thinkers were clerics, and understood Enlightenment through the lenses of Orthodox dogma.<sup>82</sup>

Greek enlightenment had two dimensions; one was the reforms in language, the spread of Greek language and developments in the Greek philology. Some intelligentsia tried to reemerge ancient-Greek (attic dialect) while others tried to make popular Greek as the language of Greeks. The conservatives were the supporters of the ancient-Greek, which was used in the Byzantine period and could

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<sup>80</sup> H.Milas.(1994). **Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p. 120

<sup>81</sup> H.Milas.(1994). **Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p. 46

<sup>82</sup> Nikos Chrysoloras, (1996)**Orthodoxy and Greek National Identity An analysis of Greek Nationalism in light of A. D. Smith’s Theoretical Framework**. Department of Government and Hellenic Observatory, LSE p.10

not be understood by the contemporary Greeks while the westerners were in favor of the popular language.

### **3.4 Rediscovery of the Ancient Past**

The second dimension of the enlightenment movement was the rediscovery of ancient-Greece. Ancient culture became popular among the Greeks. Greek families began to give names of the ancient people to their children. The reemergence of classical ancient-Greek history during the Western Enlightenment strongly affected the secularization of the Rum *millet*. During the Enlightenment period, philosophers saw history as the unraveling of human progress. Within this understanding, ancient Greeks were acknowledged as the “fathers” of civilization. Reason, philosophy, and freedom to shape one’s personal destiny were the central features of ancient Greek culture. As a result, while the rest of Eastern Europe was depicted throughout the eighteenth century as essentially “backward,” travelers to Greece emphasized and reinforced a romantic, nostalgic view of ancient Hellas <sup>83</sup>

For centuries, ancient Greek language existed through icons, literature and history among contemporary Greeks. However, with the effect of Renaissance and reform movements, Greeks of the Ottoman Empire began to pay attention to the ancient Greeks more than ever.

There was the reaction of the Orthodox Church to the rediscovery of Ancient Greek culture. Patriarch Grigorios in his patriarchal encyclical says

“...and the innovation introduced, as we have heard, of giving ancient Greek names to the baptized infants of the faithful,

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<sup>83</sup> V. Roudometof, (1998) **From Rum Millet to Greek Nation: Enlightenment, Secularization, and National Identity in Ottoman Balkan Society, 1453–1821**, p.23

taken as a despising of the Christian practice of naming, is altogether inappropriate and unsuitable. Therefore it is necessary that Your Reverences give strong commands to the priests of your parishes, and spiritual admonitions to your blessed parishioners, to abandon forthwith this abuse ... and parents and godparents in future are to name at the time of the holy and secret rebirth with the traditional Christian names, to which pious parents are accustomed, the [names] known in Church, and of the glorious saints that are celebrated by it, so as to be overseers and guardians of the baptised infants ...”<sup>84</sup>

Greek enlightenment movement was the reflection of the nationalist movements and romanticist philosophy of European thinking in Greece. The argument about the language of the Greek nation was not between two totally different ideologies, but it was between the two different perceptions of one romantic movement. Some thought the current society as ideal and the language of the current society as supreme, while the romantics thought the ancient as original and as supreme and defended the ancient Greek language.

In the Academy of Ayvalık, one of the well known schools of the Greeks in the Aegean, the aim of the scholars was to use ancient Greek as the language of the Greeks. “Under the direction of Theophilos, Grigorios and Efstratios, teachers in the Academy (Ellinomouseion) of Kydonies, on the 20 March 1817, the undersigned have resolved: wishing to take up our ancestral tongue, and ardently desiring to reject the gross and vulgar language, as wholly unbecoming to us the descendants of those Hellenes, we have all decided to decree this law, so that each of us, whenever we gather together, is obliged to converse in the Hellenic tongue [ancient Greek]... Each of us is to speak, as far as possible, in the Hellenic language. Whoever does not do this, is, as a punishment, to recite a page of Homer before us”<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> K. Th. Dimaras. (1953). **O Korais kai i Epokhi ton** (Athens,) pp. 299—304

<sup>85</sup>R.Clogg.(1972). **Two accounts of the Academy of Ayvalık(Kydonies) in 1818-1819**, (1972) pg 78-79



Again, another Greek Grigorios Zalikoglou in 1809 talks about the importance of preserving the ancient language:

“Fellow countryman, we must guard our language, if we want our nation and our faith to exist vigorously for all time... the language...makes it easier for us once again to assume the enlightenment of our ancestors. It is the only ancestral treasure that remains to us, the one certain pole, which draws us together and embraces us, the one natural bond that unites us. Myriads of others share the same faith, but not having the same language, will never become one with us. For as long as we preserve uncorrupted this divine language, this sacred fire, the race of the Greeks remains immortal, and we, and our descendants, bear the marks of our nobility, that we are the true blood descendants of those who laid the first foundations of the civilization of the human race, both now and in the future, until the end of the world. What happened to the descendants of the Greeks in Asia, in Africa, in Sicily, in so many other islands, in Italy, in Greater Greece? Neglecting the tongue of their fathers, they forgot both name, glory and pride. But what do we seek afar? Those around us called Turks, are they not, most of them, the descendants of Greeks? Are they not our brothers? Are they not Greeks? In fact the millions of them that inhabit Greece today came neither from Asia, nor elsewhere, but because they abandoned the language and name of their ancestors, they do not partake of their glory.”<sup>86</sup>

In addition to the defenders of Ancient Greek as the language of the new nation, there were also those who opposed them. But they were harshly criticized by the supporters of ancient Greek. For instance, in a letter sent by Daniil Philippidis of Iasi, Moldavia, to Barbie du Bocage, Paris in 27 October 1803, Philippidis complains about the ancient passion of some Greeks:

“O my friend, how most of our lettered Greeks are pedants! Stupidly attached to antiquated words and phrases, they regard true knowledge, knowledge of the things so useful and necessary to man in all respects, as something frivolous, which ordinarily concerns men

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<sup>86</sup> R.Clogg.(1972).**Two accounts of the Academy of Ayvalik(Kydonies) in 1818-1819**, pg 78-79

without religion, atheists. This, dear friend, is the epithet that the ignorant and superstitious lavish on those who try to develop the faculties that the Creator has endowed them with, on those who study nature and whom I regard as truly religious. A few days ago they denounced me as an atheist to the metropolitan. The scoundrels! When one is not ignorant and immoral as they are one is an atheist! But I have replied to their infernal informing in a manner satisfactory to everyone. This is what caused their abominable protest. Some time ago the overseers of the public school, where up to the present only literary Greek has been taught, in a pedantic manner that is to say never learning it, have proposed that I accept a place to teach mathematics and physics. I have agreed. My agreement made the Greek teacher furious. He wanted to oppose it, and not having any other argument against me, for I enjoy here with the prince and his court some reputation, he employed the insults that the ignorant usually hurl at educated people, but by this step he only attracted the scorn of almost all the nobles.”<sup>87</sup>

There was enthusiasm about ancient Greece in Europe beginning from the Enlightenment period. Philhellenes were aristocratic young men, recipients of classical education, who saw themselves as the inheritors of a glorious civilization and were willing to fight to liberate its descendants from the Ottoman Empire. They were all around the world. Most famous of them were Goethe, Schiller, Victor Hugo, Alfred de Musset and Lord Byron many of whom were involved in the Greek revolution. Greek philosophy was seen as superior to Christianity. Greeks living outside the Ottoman borders also learned about their past from this literature. Greek history was presented to the Greek public from the eyes of European philhellenes

As a result, schools were founded, curricula was modernized with the introduction into schools of the natural sciences, new textbooks were written, Greek printing presses were founded, libraries were created, and scholarships were provided for young Greeks to study in Western universities. The nascent bourgeoisie

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<sup>87</sup> Daniil Philippidis. (1966) in Catherini Koumariou (ed.), **Barbie du Bocage-Anthimos Gazis, Allilographia (1794-1819)** (Athens,) pp. 122-3.)

was becoming increasingly aware of its rights and sought to train its leadership. Contacts with the West, which in earlier times had been encouraged by a section of the enlightened higher clergy and by the Phanariots, now took on a new significance. Wider social strata had come of age so they had the power to satisfy their thirst for learning and their need for a meaningful and effective education. What in previous decades had been the privilege of certain limited groups was now opened up to a broader cross-section of society. Education took on a new, more substantial importance. It began to develop at an altogether faster pace.<sup>88</sup>

There were various books published by the Greek intelligentsia during the 19<sup>th</sup> century According to Catherina Koumarianou<sup>89</sup> among these books *The Elliniki Nomarkhia* is one of the most well-known works of the Greek revolution, in which the anonymous author analyses the problems confronting the nation, and also makes proposals for their solution:

“Come, brothers, the time of deliverance is upon us. Do not weep for a little blood shed for your freedom and your happiness . . . Take up the sword of righteousness and let us storm against the cowardly Ottomans, and grind our chains to dust . . . Let us now examine the reasons why it will be easy to bring about the regeneration of the Greeks. The first is the progress of our nation in learning. O what a difference can be seen between Greece often years ago and the Greeks of today! A great difference, my brothers”

Within and outside the Ottoman Empire there were many Greek academies, which had very large libraries with modern books written in modern Greek. Among them was the Academy of Ayvalık (Gymnasion Kydonion), which was the most famous. It offered international education around the Aegean and with the

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<sup>88</sup> R.Clogg. (1992). **A Concise History of Greece** .Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p.10.

<sup>89</sup> C. Koumarianou (1993)“The Contribution of the Intelligentsia” in Richard Clogg (ed) **The Struggle for Greek Independence**. London: Macmillan Press p.81

establishment of a printing house in Ayvalık, it became the center of Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment in the Aegean. As Richard Clogg mentions it in his book “Two accounts of the Academy of Ayvalık (Kydonies) in 1818-1819”,

Ayvalık and the academy was once visited by an unknown individual and his words about the library gives information about the situation of Greek enlightenment in the Ottoman Empire. “ ...They then showed me the library consisting of 700 or 800 volumes among which is a complete set of Greek Classics. They have also many astronomical and other scientific instruments... The college, library, Printing Press and every thing of this kind is wholly undertaken and supported by the liberality of the natives of Haivali. The Public, national spirit of the Greeks deserves great commendation.” and he continues his observations the next day “ Friday May 22. This morning I went to the College to attend the lectures. Gregorius had about fifty scholars sitting round the large room, whom he lectured scientifically on Greek Grammar. He was explaining the tenses, which he did as well as Lindley Murray... I next attended Theophilus. About thirty were present, while to my surprize he lectured on the 11<sup>th</sup> section of Newton... they mentioned that the elder scholars taught the younger... I asked how many Masters they had furnished for Greece? They enumerated about twelve schools in various towns & islands, which had sprung from them. They are small, but it is a hopeful sign!<sup>90</sup>

The Patriarchy was against reforming the ancient language.

Patriarch Grigorios, mentions the importance of learning ancient Greek.

“ For it is not possible for us to pass over in silence some unbecoming things, which coinciding with this pleasing inner disposition of ours, have cut short our hopes ... These things are some satanic obstacles hindering the progress of our youth in achieving true education, and in the fulfillment of its end, that is the accomplishment of Christian works. In some places there flourishes a despising of grammatical teachings and a complete- neglect of the arts

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<sup>90</sup> D. Philippidis, (1966) in Catherini Koumarianou (ed.), *Barbie du Bocage-Anthimos Gazis, Allilographia (1794-1819)* Athens pp. 122-123

of Logic and Rhetoric, and above all the teaching of the highest Theology. This despising and neglect derives from the complete dedication of pupils and teachers as well wholly to mathematics and the sciences, and [there exists] a coldness towards our unblemished faith, and an indifference to the traditional past, deriving from certain immoral men...They put it about that the language of [our] ancestors, that Greek voice, is both difficult in comprehension and use and is in a way superfluous to the Nation today, and intrude some grotesque innovations and new rules, so that some have dared, as we have learnt, openly to come out against it and to use against it insulting and unbridled language ...This Greek language is admired and applauded by all learned Europeans, and is the only valuable treasure vouchsafed to us, and the only characteristic relic of ancestral nobility so that those crooked lipped ones and acrobats with words and misfits are manifestly raving mad and are shamefully lying. And the teaching of grammar, in comparison and contrast, is more beneficial to the nation and more necessary than the teaching of mathematics and the sciences, for the one [grammar] contributes generally to all, or to most professions and the usefulness of the other [mathematics] is seen in other things. And the present state of the nation demands that the former [grammar] be taught in the schools, and that the main work should not become a sideline and the sideline not become the main work, and the merely useful receive preference over the necessary. For to what benefit are the young dedicated to such teachings, to learn numbers, and algebra, and cubes and cube roots, and triangles and triangulated tetragons, and logarithms and symbolic logic, and elliptical projections, and atoms and vacuums, and whirlpools, and power and attraction and gravity, and peculiarities of light, and the northern lights, and optical and acoustic matters and a myriad of the same kind and other monstrous things, so as to measure the sand of the sea, and the drops of a rainstorm and to move the earth if a place to stand is given to them, in the words of Archimedes. If as a consequence in speech they are barbarians, if they are ungrammatical in their writings, ignorant in the things of religion, degenerate and frenzied in morals, injurious to the state, obscure patriots and unworthy of their ancestral calling? ...”<sup>91</sup>

According to Greek intelligentsia, the Patriarch and the Phanariots were in

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<sup>91</sup> K. Th. Dimaras, (1953) *O Korais kai i Epokhi ton* (Athens:Kais) pp. 299-304.

betrayal of the Greek nation by remaining loyal to the Sublime Port. The merchant class was only thinking of their own interests. This behavior of the upper class came under heavy criticism. One way of criticizing the Greek upper class was through satirizing by poems. One of the best example of this kind of poem was an anonymous one entitled “Rossanglogallos” in which a Russian, an Englishman and a Frenchman, are touring Greece and perceiving its shameful situation, In order to understand why it is like this, they ask first a Greek patriot, and after him a metropolitan, then a hospadar of Wallachia, then a merchant and then a notable. And last of all they met with Greece itself. A part of the poem is like this:

All:

Tell us, patriot, how you bear slavery,  
And the inconsolable tyranny of the Turks?  
How the beatings, the abuse and iron bondage,  
The unheard of spoliation of children, maidens and women?  
How the daily slaughter of your own kind,  
Unjust, without cause and without mercy?  
Are you not descendants of those Hellenes,  
Free, wise and patriotic?  
How is it that while they died for freedom,  
You now submit to such a tyranny?  
And what race was as enlightened as yours  
In wisdom, strength and in all things renowned?  
What have you made of enlightened Hellas!  
Alas! as a skeleton, as a burned out candle!  
Speak, beloved Greek, tell us the cause;  
Do not hide anything from us, remove our doubt  
The Patriot:  
Russian, Englishman and Frenchman  
Hellas, and none other,  
Was, as you say, so great.  
But now [she is] wretched,  
And unworthy,  
From the time that ignorance set in.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> K. Th. Dimaras, (1962) *To keimeno tou Rossanglogallou*, (Athens:Ellinika), pp. 189-99.

### 3.5 Greek Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire

Nationalism energized and gave definition to the various ethnic groups residing within the Ottoman Empire, challenging not only the temporal authority of the Ottoman Sultans but also the spiritual authority of the Greek Orthodox Church and the Patriarch of Constantinople.<sup>93</sup> The Greek insurrection cost the Patriarch his life and terminated the careers of many Greeks in the administrative service of the Ottoman Empire.”

Greek national consciousness which contributed to the emergence of the Greek nation was first expressed by individuals in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and appeared as a social force in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Plethon Gemistosv (1355-1452) is known as the first individual (philosopher and politician) to publicly say, “We... are the members of the hellenic race.” He was living in the Mistras region of Morea and he worked for the unification of the churches. Gemistos’s call did not find any hearing and just after him came the Ottoman administration in which for a long period hellenistic ideas were shelved. Other than Gemistos, nationalistic approach was observed in Konstandinos Laskaris who was involved in the humanism movement and in 1476 had published a Greek grammar book.<sup>94</sup> The first modern Greek book was published in 1526. National consciousness was also rooted among the Greek speaking people outside Greece who were following the reforms.

Among the individuals expressing national consciousness, there was Leo Allatius (1586-1559) who was a member of the Uniate sect. He had expressed the salvation of the “genos” (a word similar to nation) in his book *Helleas* that he wrote

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<sup>93</sup> K.Legg&J.M.Roberts. 1997. **Modern Greece: A Civilization on the Periphery** (Colorado: Westview Press) p.15

<sup>94</sup> H.Milas.(1994). **Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p. 49

in Greek.<sup>95</sup> In the same period Nikolaos Sophianos, living in Italy had expressed the backwardness of the Greek “genos” in comparison with the Europeans. Frankiskos Skoufos, a scholar who was born in Crete in 1644 wrote in popular Greek, and in his pamphlet he advocated the rights of the “genos”. Konstandinos Mavrokordatos (1711-1769) and Eugenios Boulgares (1716-1808) were also members of intelligentsia who were familiar with the ideas of the west. Boulgares had expressed “the salvation of the nation”<sup>96</sup> The Greek speaking Orthodox *millet* defined itself as “ethnos” or “genos”. These words meant “community” or “race”, and when it was written in capital letters it was referring to the Greek Nation.

### **3.6 Debates Over the Name of the new Nation**

There was a debate about the name of the nation. What should the name of the new nation be? Rum, Greek or Hellen? The Greeks wanted both religious and secular rhetoric, which would appeal both to classical glory and to Orthodoxy. The use of word “Hellen” can be seen very rarely in Greek history. A century after the fall of Istanbul, Antonios Eparkhos wrote “a requiem for the fall of Hellas”. Kosmas Aitolos (1714-1779) predecessor of Korais and Regas, visited many villages and advised people to teach Greek. He said: “Learn Greek, because your church speaks hellenic and your race is helen.

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<sup>95</sup> H.Milas.(1994). **Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p. 50

<sup>96</sup> H.Milas.(1994). **Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p. 50



According to Rigas Velestinlis, this nation was composed of “Romios”. Rigas also used the word “helen” but this word did not refer to an ethnic identity. What he meant by the hellenic community were people living in the Ottoman Empire regardless of religion or language.

There were also those who opposed the name Rum. Korais, one of the leading ideologue of the revolution said: “ you are not Romanian, this name stands as the brand of slavery on our forehead... it may seem as if we are pleased with slavery. ”<sup>97</sup> Some Greeks had reservations about the name “helen”. For centuries the name “helen” was used to identify the idol worshippers of the ancient times. A Phanariot intellectual Demetrios Katartzes (1730-1807) asked: “How could it be that the name “helen” is proposed as the name of the new nation?”

However, the word Hellene was soon accepted as the name of the Greek people, and the new word Ellinismos, which combined the two meanings of Greek civilisation and of the whole Greek community in the world, came into general use by politicians and intellectuals.

### **3.7 Ideologues of Greek Nationalism**

The intellectual basis of nationalism came from the affluent and prominent diaspora Greeks of the eighteenth century. The two most prominent leaders of this group were Adamantios Korais and Rigas Velestinlis. These intellectuals worked for the spread of nationalism among the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire

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<sup>97</sup> H.Milas.(1994). **Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p. 53

### 3.7.1 Rigas

One of the most well known ideologue of the Greek national movement was Rigas Velestinlis Fereos, son of a merchant. He was born in 1757 in Velesino near the ancient Ferai-Thessaly. He was educated either at the Greek school of Ambelakia or at Zagora.<sup>98</sup> Later on, he left the region; his quest for further education took him to İstanbul (1774) where he met with Phanariots. He became the secretary of Alexandros Ipsilantis, the dragoman of the Porte, and later (1774) prince (*hospador*) of Wallachia. He then went to Wallachia, where Ipsilantis established a regular army of 12000 men nearly all of whom were Greeks. Ipsilantis was planning to establish an independent Greek state with the help of Russia.

Rigas was aware of Ipsilantis' plans. Soon the Ottoman government had realized what was going on. Ipsilantis returned to İstanbul to clear his name. Rigas, meanwhile, began to work as a secretary to Grigorios Brancoveanu who was a hellenized Vlach and in 1787 he entered the service of the *hospador*, Nikolas Mavroyenis, who appointed him governor of Craiova. Mavroyenis was executed by the Ottoman government for alleged complicity with the Russians. With the capture of Bucharest by the Austro- Russian alliance he moved on to Vienna for a period of six months (1790), where he met with Kirlianos, Baron de Langenfeld, and became his secretary. In Vienna he printed his first two books *The School for Delicate Lovers* and *A Handbook of Physics* and announced the future publication of a translation in Greek of Montesquieu's *Esprit des lois*, although this latter project was never realised.

His knowledge of foreign languages, which enabled him to follow European intellectual developments, served to broaden his horizons. He spent the next five

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<sup>98</sup> D.Dakin. **The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821-1833** p.27

years in Bucharest, became dragoman to the French consulate of Bucharest and also secretary to the *hospador* Michail Soutsos. He closely followed the developments in France after the Revolution, and studied the new republic's constitution. He fostered a vision of a pan-Balkan, multi-ethnic democratic republic. He eventually went back to Vienna (1796) where he published in twelve sections his famous pictorial and commemorative map of Greece and also a portrait of Alexander the Great. He wrote for the newspaper *Efimeris*. In October 1797 the Markidis-Poulios printing house published 3000 copies of Rigas's revolutionary manifesto, which contained a proclamation, a declaration of the rights of man, a Greek constitution, and a martial hymn calling on the Balkan Christians to fight for liberty.<sup>99</sup>

Napoleon's military success impressed Rigas. He decided to ask Napoleon for his support in the Greek uprising. To that end, he went to Vienna, where he talked with the large Greek community and told them of his plans. He created a map of Greece that involved many territories, including Istanbul of "Great Greece" that included all Greek-speaking territories. He then sent this map anywhere where there were Greek communities. Rigas decided to meet Napoleon and went to Trieste from there he was to go to Venice where Napoleon was. At Trieste he was arrested by the Austrian police for attempting to cause a revolution. It was these publications, which led to his arrest by the Austrian authorities. He was taken into custody in Trieste along with seven other companions. After spending months in prison in Vienna he was handed over to the Turks in Belgrade where he was executed in the summer of 1798.

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<sup>99</sup> D.Dakin. **The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821-1833** p.28

The Greek people were influenced by the writings of Rigas Fereos. His famous poem *Thourios* greatly influenced the people; the poem was like a revolutionary manifesto. It was especially the following verses of one of his poems had influenced the Greek revolutionists:

Shall we live in mountain passes, like warriors of old?  
Shall we live alone like lions, on the top of mountains?  
No! better an hour of freedom, than forty years as slaves

Rigas had helen culture and education, he was writing in Greek, and he could be classified as a member of the Greek national movement but what he imagined as a social system was a multinational construct.<sup>100</sup> He believed in the supremacy of the law “let the law be our country’s only guide” Rigas proposed as a state's basic principles: liberty, equality, security of life, security of property, freedom of speech and of religion. Rigas uses both religious and secular rhetoric in his poems and speeches. While he wants the revolutionists to swear on the cross he also wants people to swear on the King of the World.\*

Rigas’s constitution was part of the revolutionary manifesto with the declaration of the rights of man and *Thourios*. Rigas imagined a Balkan-Asian state with a dominant Greek culture. This state was to be composed of all ethnic groups

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\*On the other hand according to Milas, the poem was written not for ethnic purposes but for mentioning class differences. The main purpose was the destruction of what he called “the tyrants.” “When the government harasses and disdains the rights of the people, then the people should take the arms and punish their tyrants.” So he addressed called the Muslim rulers and *reaya* who were unhappy with the Ottomans. For example Pasvanoğlu (Pasha of Vidin) was a warlord who had defied the Sublime Port. Rigas in his poem for Pasvanoğlu says:

Pasvanoğlu, why do you remain so impassive  
Throw yourself on the Balkans, nest there like an eagle  
Join with the rayas if you wish to conquer.

(H.Milas.(1994). **Yunan Ulusunun Doğuşu** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları) p. 98)

living in the Balkans regardless of their religion. The Turkish ruling elite and the Patriarchy which was in collaboration with the Turkish elite had no place in this new government. This state, or Hellenic Republic, though embracing different races, tongues and religions, was one and indivisible. Everybody, including the Muslims, would have the right to vote and to hold administrative office. The state would be a centralized one with a common Greek language. Rigas was impressed by the victories of Napoleon in Italy and he was excited with the occupation of the Ionian Islands. He wanted to meet with him and offer the cooperation of Greek revolutionary organizations, which Rigas thought, would be towards the East.<sup>101</sup>

### **3.7.2 Korais**

Korais was one of the most influential member of the Greek intelligentsia during and after the Greek revolution. Korais was born in 1748 as son of a merchant but spent most of his life in Paris where he died in 1833. He was inspired by the ideals of the French Revolution; he committed himself to Greek independence and worked to draw the attention of the chief European Powers against the Turkish rule.

From 1772 to 1779 he worked in his father business company in Amsterdam. In 1782, his father's business collapsed, and he went to Montpellier where he studied medicine, and did translation for earning money. He translated German and English medical works into French. He then settled in Paris where he lived until his death in 1833. Korais encouraged awareness of the intellectual heritage of classical Greece. On the other hand, the Byzantine influence in the society prevented him from doing so. He criticized the ignorance of the clergy and their subservience to the Ottoman Empire. His first great effort towards reviving and eliminating foreign words and

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<sup>101</sup> D.Dakin. **The Greek Struggle for Independence 1821-1833** p.29

terms from the language was to compile a hellenic dictionary.<sup>102</sup> Even though Greek had undergone fundamental changes over time than most ancient languages, the problem facing Korais was to balance the common language spoken by most Greeks at that time, while removing from the language foreign words and constructions. In effect, Korais' solution was what he called the 'middle way'- a compromise between ancient Greek and the language spoken in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Accordingly, Korais' version of this 'pure' language, based on ancient principals known as *katharevousa* 'purist Greek', came into existence.

For Korais, the need for modern Greeks to rediscover their historical origin reflected a broader program of political modernization. By adopting the knowledge of the ancients that was preserved in the West, modern Greeks could rise again and regain their proper position in the world. Of fundamental importance to such a program was the assumption of continuity between the “ancients” and the “moderns.” In Korais’s writings, this continuity was strategically employed in order to establish the necessity for modernizing the hellenic world<sup>103</sup>. In order to become worthy of the sacred name they bore, modern Greeks needed to be “enlightened,” an argument justifying Korais’ modernist orientation without directly questioning the traditional ecclesiastical discourse. But even if cultural continuity with Orthodox philosophical tradition was to be preserved in principle, most of the Balkan intellectuals emphasized Western scientific achievements in order to defeat Orthodox religious conservatism.

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<sup>102</sup> <http://www.sfu.ca/hellenic-studies/katharevousa.html> , 21.04.2005

<sup>103</sup> V. Roudometof, *From Rum Millet to Greek Nation: Enlightenment, Secularization, and National Identity in Ottoman Balkan Society, 1453–1821*, p.26

Korais wrote many times to Jefferson asking for his support to the struggle of Greece for independence. He lived in Paris, met Jefferson there around 1785, when Jefferson served as the ambassador of the new Republic to France. Following Jefferson's return to America in 1789, the two men continued their friendship through correspondence. Korais' letters to Jefferson were passionate and full of patriotic expressions, repeating all the time why it was to the best interest of America and the American people to help Greece. "Help us, fortunate Americans," wrote Korais in a letter dated July 10. 1823, "We are not asking you for a handout. Rather, we are providing you with an opportunity to augment your good fortune." Korais knew that appealing to powerful and enlightened philhellenes, such as Jefferson, to intervene and influence their respective governments for the recognition of the Greek cause was the right thing to do. As an "enlightened revolutionary", he believed that the power of intellect and diplomacy was more effective than the might of soldiers and arms. Through correspondence and personal contacts, Korais convinced many foreign intellectuals that the unbroken use of the Greek language since classical days together with a continuous habitation of the same lands and of common religion, history and tradition were conclusive evidence of the existence of a Greek national identity, thus establishing a strong argument for the recognition of an independent Greek state.<sup>104</sup>

Korais began work on the *Elliniki Vivliothiki* (Greek library), a publishing program initiated in 1805 which lasted for sometime and which aimed to familiarize the Greek public with the ancient writers. In his book *Prolegomena* with which he introduced various texts, he examined contemporary Greek problems, putting special

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<sup>104</sup> <http://www.ahepafamily.org/d5/Grk%20Inde-mar02.htm> , 28.02.2005

emphasis on educational matters. He set out his own attitude towards them, and proposed ways and means of overcoming the problems. He worked ceaselessly in this endeavor, along with his other intellectual pursuits for the fifteen years preceding the outbreak of the war of independence. Even during the war he continued, with special classical texts chosen, to serve the needs of a time of crisis to strengthen the morale of a nation at war, or to help in the political education of the Greeks. He also published texts which were purely political in nature, in which, despite his advanced age, he re-discovered the fighting passion of earlier times, when, inspired by the French revolution, he had written and published polemical pamphlets, some advocating new ideas, others seeking to counter conservative attitudes but all with the common aim of preparing individuals to take a conscious part in the struggle to gain their freedom.<sup>105</sup>

Korais has often been criticized for his opinion that the revolution of 1821 broke out somewhat prematurely. Similar observations were also expressed by other responsible Greeks, among them the metropolitan Ignatios of Oungrovlakhia and Alexandras Mavrokordatos. Their reasons were the same: they considered that if such a harsh and unequal struggle was to be undertaken successfully, if, in other words, the Greeks were to be ensured not only freedom, but, equally important, independence and good government, then a period of moral and material preparation was indispensable. They did not believe that this process of preparation had yet been fully carried out.

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<sup>105</sup> C. Koumarianou. (1993) "The Contribution of the Intelligentsia" in Richard Clogg (ed) **The Struggle for Greek Independence**. (London: Macmillan Press) p.81



### **3.7.3 Kapodistrias**

Ioannis Kapadostris was a Greek origin diplomat in the Russian Empire. He worked for the independence of Greece and after the independence he became the first president of the Greek nation state.

He was born in Corfu which was at that time under Venetian control. Kapodistrias studied medicine at Padua in Italy. When the Ottoman Empire and Russia ended the French control in the Ionian islands and established the suzerain Septinsular Republic, Kapadostris became the secretary of the new state. When France regained control of the islands in 1808, Kapadostris left Ionia for Russia and he began to work in Russian foreign service. He became an expert on Balkan affairs, which earned him a post with the commander of Russia's armed forces on the lower Danube River. After the army marched north to oppose Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812, Kapodistrias was assigned as a diplomat to the army staff in 1813 and later was sent by Alexander I on a special mission to Switzerland. He attended the Congress of Vienna as a Russian diplomat and helped negotiate the 1815 peace treaty between France and Russia. In the same year he was appointed Foreign Minister of Russia. He opposed Alexander's Holy Alliance with Austria and Prussia and criticized Alexander's approval of Austria's suppression of the revolts in Naples and Piedmont. As a result, Austria's Chancellor Metternich became hostile to him and he tried to undermine Kapodistrias's position. Kapodistrias, supported the Greeks in their rebellion against the Turks. Though earlier he had refused to lead the major Greek revolutionary organization. When Alexander refused to support the Greek revolt against Turkey, this time he decided to help the Greek revolts. In 1822, he resigned from the Russian service and settled in Geneva where he sought financial and diplomatic support for the Greek War of Independence. In April 1827, he was

elected as the president of Greece. He negotiated with Great Britain, France, and Russia, the settlement of Greece's frontiers and the selection of its new monarch. He worked to organize an effective government apparatus and to subordinate powerful, semiautonomous local leaders to the authority of the new state. In the process, however, he acquired many enemies, two of whom, Konstantinos and Georgios Mavromikhalis of Maina who in 1831 assassinated Kapodistrias as he entered a church.

#### **3.7.4 Katartzis**

Connection between Enlightenment, language and nationality was fully elaborated during the 1780s by Demetrios Katartzis, a high official in the court of Wallachia and one of the foremost theoreticians on the use of the vernacular as the language of education and culture in the Balkans of the time. Katartzis extolled the virtues of the Greek vernacular as spoken by his contemporaries in the urban centers of the Ottoman Empire, and argued that as a medium of communication and expression it was equal to classical Greek and much superior to any other language. He indicated that the cultivation of the vernacular through the composition of books in the language amounted to the best form of education for the 'nation'. Katartzis was probably the first among authors writing in modern Greek to use the Greek word for nation, *ethnos*, to describe a collectivity clearly delineated by its language and cultural heritage. The sense of a modern Greek nation defined by its vernacular language runs throughout Katartzis's writings and forms the major premise of his argument for the linguistic reform that would elevate spoken modern Greek into one of the major languages of civilization. The feeling of pride in the language reflected a deeper pride in the nation, which, Katartzis stressed, existed indisputably as a distinct

'civil society' with its civil laws and ecclesiastical institutions and partook through the privileges of its church in the exercise of authority in the empire to which it was subjected.<sup>106</sup>

### 3.7.5 Ipsilantis and the Friendly Society

Among the revolutionary organizations, which were established with the aim of liberating Greek lands from the Ottoman Empire, the most influential was *Philiki Etairia* or Friendly Society founded in Odessa in 1814. Founders of the society were three diaspora merchant Greeks: Emmanouil Xanthos, Nikolas Skouphas, and Athanasios Tsakaloff who set up a secret organization after the death of Rigas Velestinlis. According to Clogg, it was “strongly influenced from free masonry, the society insisted on elaborate initiation rituals for its four basic categories of membership. Betrayal of its mysteries was punishable by death.”<sup>107</sup>

In the first few years of its establishment the society could find very little support. But after 1818 especially in 1820's just before the revolution, the membership increased rapidly.

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<sup>106</sup> P M. Kitromilides.(1998) “**Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans**” p.153

<sup>107</sup> R.Clogg. 1992. **A Concise History of Greece** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) p.32

## **CHAPTER 4:**

### **NATION BUILDING IN GREECE AFTER THE REVOLUTION**

#### **4.1 Transfer of Identities from one imagined community to the other:**

Origins of Greek nationalism can be traced to the enlightenment and national awakening in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. An examination of this process of intellectual and cultural change shows how ethnic consciousness was cultivated so that a sense of national identity could be created upon a social group. As Benedict Anderson discusses in his book “Imagined Communities” this process can be described as the mental construction of nations as 'imagined communities'

As mentioned in the theory section, the nation building experience in Greece was not the same as the nation building process in Western Europe. The transfer of identity in the “imagined communities” of Western Europe was less problematic. In France, the King was the ruler of a community in which majority of the people were French so there was not any major problem of defining or transfer of the identities. Being in the center of Renaissance and Reformation movements, the intellectuals' influence over the society in France was more intense. In contrast, the Balkans were politically divided between the two Empires during most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Greek intellectuals were not able to freely express their revolutionary ideas. It took years for the revolutionary ideas and influence of enlightenment to spread among the

peasants. The new Greek identity formed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had some very important differences. In parallel with the necessities of the time, “Rum identity” transformed into “Greek” national one. In this change a number of very important components of the neo-hellenic culture were adapted such as the language of the new Greek nation and the role of Orthodox Christianity in the Greek national identity.

The incorporation of Greek national identity of Rum *millet* was an inevitable result of the Ottoman *millet* system. This had caused the ethnic Greeks to consider the ancient Greeks as their ancestors. They imagined the Hellenes as creatures of extraordinary stature and power, capable of superhuman tasks. Popular folk tales dated the Hellenes’ existence to the beginning of time.

#### **4.2 Erosion of Orthodoxy from the Greek identity after Independence**

For centuries, Orthodox Christianity in cooperation with the Ottoman Empire and its *millet* system played a major role by preserving and cultivating Greek culture and identity. Orthodoxy guided the “national awakening” but modern concepts of secularism and nationality associated with the ideas of the Enlightenment and Western rationalism weakened both Ottoman rule and Orthodox unity in the Balkans.

Reflection of the European Enlightenment in the Greek lands were different from the original ideas that rose in Europe since the ideas of Enlightenment were transformed to the Greek society by passing through the filter of the Orthodox belief. Enlightenment ideas were changed. They became autonomous of those who created them, in books, or orally interpreted differently, it experienced the effects of power

struggles, it mutated to adapt in different environments. This is the only way the Enlightenment survived and become influential in a variety of different contexts.<sup>108</sup>

In Greece the ideas of enlightenment had to be explained differently because of the different context of the Ottoman Empire because the Greek nationalists of the Ottoman Empire were constrained by the deeply Orthodox society. Orthodoxy was the force uniting the non-Muslim populations in Ottoman Greece because the people had very few common characteristic rather than being Orthodox Christian. It was an important part of everyday life of the non-Muslims. It was used by the nationalists for communicating with the people. Although the Patriarchy was formally against the Greek war of Independence, many low-ranking clerics supported the revolution. That was one way the nationalists communicated with the Orthodox people. In addition, although he declared his disapproval of the Greek revolution, Patriarch Gregory V who was executed by the Sultan, became a martyr of the revolution and his opposition was forgotten.

Despite the fact that the official position of the Patriarchate in Constantinople was against the Greek War of Independence, many low-ranking clerics supported the revolution this legitimized it in the eyes of the people. After the revolution, in the years of Greek nation building, the state took control of the Greek Church and used its authority and its popularity among the people in order to legitimize its policies. During the ten year war, the Orthodox Church had not fulfilled its obligations in the eyes of the revolutionaries who had freed the state so they initially wanted to extract the church from the nation building process. But later they used the church as an intermediary for communicating with the Orthodox people. As a result, the four hundred years old Orthodox Rum identity of the Greeks, which was present within the

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<sup>108</sup> Nikos Chrysoloras. **Orthodoxy and Greek National Identity An analysis of Greek Nationalism in light of A. D. Smith's Theoretical Framework** (Department of Government and Hellenic Observatory, LSE) p.10

multinational Ottoman Empire, was replaced in a smooth way with the Helleno-Christian identity, which was present within a nation state, which is composed of only the Greeks.

Helleno-Christianity is the term used to define historical intellectual and spiritual heritage that has contributed to shape modern Greek identity. In Greek historiography “Helleno-Christianity” became a term used by intellectuals to represent the historical and cultural continuity of ancient Greece, through Byzantium, into modern Greece<sup>109</sup>. Helleno-Christianity has played a key role in modern Greek identity. In Greece the Church has always had legitimacy in Greek society as the key player in the construction of the modern Greek nation. Helleno-Christianism became the most suitable type of identity among the options of nationalisms because it was more appealing to the people since it drew on pre-modern and pre-national existing communal ties. This type of nationalism was compatible with many of the other identities (familial, communal, religious, linguistic, ethnic) that subjects were holding during the formative periods of Greek nationalism, since it was based on myths, symbols, traditions and memories with which large parts of the population were familiar.

Speaking an archaic Greek dialect, going to the Church, and disliking the Turks were practices of this new national identity.<sup>110</sup> In the process of the Greek nation building, like in any other nation building, the national identity was built with a two sided formation, on the one hand, including the population with some common properties who began to call themselves “we”, on the other, this process excludes some, who are identified as the threat to the “we” who are called “them” . In the case of Greece, nation builders identified “Turks” or the Ottoman “Empire” as “them”

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<sup>109</sup> V.Makrides, (1991) ‘Orthodoxy as a Condition sine qua non: Religion and State Politics in Modern Greece from a Socio-Historical Perspective’, *Ostkirchliche Studien*, December

<sup>110</sup> Nikos Chrysoloras, **Orthodoxy and Greek National Identity An analysis of Greek Nationalism in light of A. D. Smith’s Theoretical Framework**, Department of Government and Hellenic Observatory, LSE p.10

These practices were experienced by individuals as aspects of the “Greek way of life”. National identity is constructed on the basis of different criteria by different types of nationalism. The Church remained the only pre-modern institution, which retained its importance throughout the modern era in Greece. It managed to ‘relocate’ pre-modern cultural material into the modern nation-state environment, thus enhancing national identity.

This possible function of churches is outlined by Jon Hutchinson:

“In spite of significant differences between pre-modern and modern societies, long established cultural repertoires (myths, symbols and memories) are ‘carried’ into the modern era by powerful institutions (states, armies, churches) and are revived and redeveloped because populations are periodically faced with similar challenges to their physical and symbolic survival.’

After the War of Independence, as part of modernization efforts the Church was placed under control of the State, which did not allow the creation or the development of an independent Greek Church. The Church of Greece is governed by its own Holy Synod but remains under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs which pays the salaries of priests and approves the enthronement of bishops and the licensing of church buildings for all religious denominations.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> C. Papastathis (1996) ‘State and Church in Greece’, in **State and Church in the European Union**, Ed. by Gerhard ROBBERS, Baden-Baden, Germany: Nomos, Verlagsgesellschaft.



### **4.3 The Process of Nation Building in accordance with the New Greek Identity.**

Greece emerged as an independent state in 1832 after a ten years war of liberation. Then it faced the problem of nation building. The building of a nation from a traditional society combined with religious ties was not an easy task that the new rulers had to tackle. Greek nation building had two dimensions: internal and external. Internally the traditional society had to be reorganized into nationalist Greek citizens and externally, the plan was to seize the Ottoman lands where Greek communities lived. The most critical necessity for the Greek nation state was “national unity” which had three dimensions. On the social dimension it expressed the national unity of Greece with uniformity and homogenization becoming prevalent norms of cultural discourse; on a geographical level it stressed the unity of hellenism, of the Greek nation as an integral whole bringing together its constituent parts within and outside the kingdom; and on a historical level it stressed the unity of the Greek nation along a temporal dimension, emphasizing its uninterrupted continuity throughout the centuries from Homeric through Byzantine to modern times.<sup>112</sup>

The projection of the Greek nation in course books on history underlined the positive aspects and the virtues of Greek nationality. Sometimes, negative aspects were included, too. These ‘national’ virtues are mentioned to create role models for Greek youth; they included wit, originality, inventiveness, studiousness, devoutness and patriotism.<sup>113</sup> The internal process of nation building attempted to bridge the gap between the new state that emerged in independent Greece and the traditional society upon which the modern state institutions had to exercise their control. Nation-

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<sup>112</sup> P M. Kitromilides. **Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans** p.167

<sup>113</sup> Stavros Skrinis. **Nation-State Building Process and Cultural Diversity: Greece** p.3

building, in the sense of cultivation of a homogenizing national identity had to mend social cleavages that independent Greece had inherited from its past and from the conflicts of the War of Independence.<sup>114</sup> The most problematic segment of the society was those who fought in the war of independence. For the establishment of a central authority, the banditry organizations, which had a long tradition going back to the Ottoman Empire, had to be abolished and these bandits had to be organized under a regular army. The state had to stop centrifugal sectionalism. Rapid solution to these problems was the establishment of a regular army by which sections of the Greek society would be adapted to the ideas of nationalism.

The next important tool for the nation builders was educational institutions. The primary education had to be provided to every individual in any corner of the country. In these schools, national history of the Greeks going back to the ancient Greece by the nation builder would be taught. The number of schools increased very rapidly. From seventy-one schools in 1830 the number rose to 1172 in 1879. This represented an increase of 1650 per cent<sup>115</sup>

One other problem that nation builders had to tackle was different dialects of Greek language which were not comprehensible by each other and the cultivation of non-Greek speaking people; especially the integration of Albanian speaking Orthodox population was necessary for a centralized Greek state.

The two ideological initiatives whereby the Greek state attempted programmatically to strengthen its national identity were the creation of an autocephalous national church and the establishment of a national university in the capital of the kingdom. The announcement of the independence of the Church of

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<sup>114</sup> P M. Kitromilides. **'Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans** p.161

<sup>115</sup> P M. Kitromilides. **'Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans** p.163

Greece from the Patriarchate of Constantinople was advocated in the very first year of the War of Independence by Adamantios Korais as an essential precondition of national liberation.<sup>116</sup>

The external dimension of nation building included the expansion of the nation state borders, reaching the Greek populations outside the national borders and involving them to the Greek nation state. This was obviously an irredentist policy. The new established Greek nation state was constructed over the most backward territories among the lands where Greeks lived throughout the Aegean. The new state contained only one-third of the total Greek population. The rest was still located within Ottoman lands and the purpose was to expand the territories until the nation state contained all the Greeks within the Balkans and Anatolia. On the Aegean coasts of Anatolia the population was speaking a variety of languages so there was no linguistic unity among them. This was a major problem for the Greek state which had irredentist plans over the Aegean coasts of Anatolia.

The revival of the language naturally opened the way for the cultivation of feelings of ethnic identity, the politicization of ancient memories, and the gradual transformation of traditional religious loyalties into national attachments. The teachers were soon followed by other groups who had benefited from the outlet of higher education provided by independent Greece. Lawyers, doctors and journalists trained in Athens rather than in Italy, France or Germany returned to their native cities in increasing numbers toward the end of the nineteenth century. They became protagonists of the transmission of the political culture of the Greek state among the Christian subjects of the Ottoman sultan and eventually played a leading role in

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<sup>116</sup> P M. Kitromilides. **'Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans** p.165

nationalist agitation.<sup>117</sup>

The Greek state established ties with the Greeks living outside the nation-state in Anatolia. They established schools in Greek language where Greeks could learn the language of their own culture. There were schools in Ankara, Kütahya and İzmir.

Stathis Gourgouris, in his book *Dream Nation* examines the role of the enlightenment on Greece nation building. He says that:

“it is misguided to perceive the Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment merely as the vehicle for the Westernization or the modernization of Greece. According to Gourgouris, neo-Hellenism “does involve the transposition of the currency of European ideas prevalent during the late eighteenth century a new tradition, it institutes a new image of what Neo-Hellenic culture is.”<sup>118</sup>

#### **4.3.1 Consolidation of State Formation in Greek Territories after Nation Building**

The most vital part of the process of national identity formation started after the War of Independence in 1821. After the war Greek revolutionaries opened a new phase in which the Greek identity was constructed and the borders of the Greek controlled areas were enlarged. As a new developing modern-nation state, Greece had to assign to one of the two categories.<sup>119</sup> The category, which is called state-first

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<sup>117</sup> P.M. Kitromilides. 'Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans p.172

<sup>118</sup> S.Gourgouris (1996) *Dream Nation Enlightenment, Colonization and the Institution of Modern Greece* (California: Stanford University Press) p.16

<sup>119</sup> K.R.Legg&J.M.Roberts. 1997. *Modern Greece: A Civilization on the Periphery*. (Oxford: Westview ) p.10

model, is the western European way of state formation. In this case, the boundaries of a small, centrally or strategically located kingdom, principedom, or duchy expands through dynastic marriage, inheritance, purchase, war, or annexation by using various centralizing institutions bureaucracies, schools and universities, military and the local loyalties of the population living within the boundaries, their languages and dialects, and sometimes even their religious affiliations. Parochial populations transform into a single, largely homogeneous national community.

The second category is the nation-first or national awakening model which is found mostly in the eastern and southern regions of Europe. The development pattern includes the eruption of a common national feeling among a minority population that is either living in a single state or is scattered across several different states or empires. In this scenario, a movement for national independence, usually one involving revolt and military action, is necessary in order to bring the state into existence. The nation, then, precedes the state.

In the Greek history models, the Greek state and the Greek nation developed simultaneously.<sup>120</sup> Peloponnesus, the territory where Greece was established and "old" Greece had never been unified under a single flag. Greece's enlargement occurred either with war or as a reward of Great Powers, then produced Greece's modern boundaries. If we look at the territorial expansion of Greece through military operations, Greece seems to have developed according to the state-first model. In the beginning of the process of state-building, Greek intellectuals of the new state constructed a national identity and worked for assimilating those populations with similarity to the constructed national identity regardless of whether they were Greek or non-Greek. History of the Greeks was mythologized. The "imagined" Greek

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<sup>120</sup> K.R.Legg&J.M.Roberts. 1997. **Modern Greece: A Civilization on the Periphery.** (Oxford: Westview ) p.10

national history became an important part of the process of producing Greek identity. For this purpose, political leaders explicitly designed the institutions of the new Greek state to promote a particular vision of the future.

Nation building and specifically the formation of the Greek national identity can be considered as the continuation or the second phase of modern Greek Enlightenment. The Greeks were enlightened by the French Revolution by connecting the ancients and the moderns through a genealogical tie while the Orthodox and Byzantine past had been undermined to some extent. The next step was the unification of these enlightened people under a single flag so at the end of this long process, what came out can be called the transformation of the pre-modern individuals into Greek 'nationalist subjects'.

As Alexis Politis mentions:

“ Greeks today have great difficulty in grasping that the sense of the continuity of the nation, as we encounter it in the general climate or at the school, was an invention of the mid-nineteenth century, and that the overwhelming majority of Greek intellectuals who envisioned, and saw the realization of an independent Greek state felt a cultural and political affinity with the ancient Greeks alone, and considered the entire Byzantine period to be part of the history of the Greeks under foreign subjugation, a mere continuation of Roman rule.”<sup>121</sup>

The undermining of the Orthodox and Byzantine past was a political necessity needed for the transformation of the religiously based identity into a national based one.

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<sup>121</sup> Alexis Politis.1998 From Christian Roman Emperors to the Glorious Greek Ancestors, in Ricks and Magdalino(ed) **Byzantine and Modern Greek** , (Kings College, London) p.1

#### 4.4 Reinvention of History

The idea of coming from the ancient Greeks was popular in the first years of the Greek state because there was an admiration by westerners for the Greek culture, and the language spoken by the contemporary Greeks was similar to the ancient one. But in the second half of the nineteenth century, and after the defeat by the Turks in 1897 which ended with the loss of territories, Greece paid war indemnity to the Ottoman Empire and an international commission began to control its finances. Greece declared its bankruptcy.<sup>122</sup> The problems of rural population and land acquisition for the peasants created problems which caused a significant increase in migration, largely to North America. As Skrinis mentions, “a resurgence of this kind (ancient Greece) implied a leap of two thousand years. This could not motivate those Greeks who did not speak Greek, even though many of them had played a major role in the War of Independence prior to 1832”<sup>123</sup> Response of Greek intellectuals to this was to offer redefinition of national culture away from purist language and antiquity and toward popular culture and language. They believed that if Megali Idea (the recapture of Constantinople and the reconstruction of Byzantium) was to be implemented, average Greeks would work for this purpose and under any circumstances would not migrate from Greece. Therefore the importance of history shifted from ancient to folk culture as a result of the growing middle class. Unlike the early intellectuals of the modern Greek state, the intellectuals of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century aimed at linking modern Greeks not only with the ancient classic city states but also with Hellenic empire of Alexander, Byzantine Empire, and even the

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<sup>122</sup>K. Legg & J.Roberts. (1997). **Modern Greece: A Civilization on the Periphery** Colorado: Westview Press pp.95-96

<sup>123</sup> Stavros Skrinis **Nation-State Building Process and Cultural Diversity: Greece** p.2

Ottoman past to the national history of the Greeks. But the ancient has always been mentioned as glorious while the word used for the Ottoman period was “oppression”.

Land demands of the Greek State changed too in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the early periods Macedonia was not mentioned in the geography books as part of ancient Greece but the Macedonians were considered Greeks as they were involved in the first Olympic games and speaking a language similar to Greek. The interest of Greeks in Ottoman Macedonia increased when nationalism rose in the Balkans and the Bulgarians expressed their demands on the same regions.<sup>124</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Greek national identity is an imagined one constructed as a necessity for the establishment of a Greek nation state from the ashes of a collapsing empire. Modern Greek Enlightenment started in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman Empire, inescapably followed by the Greek nationalism. These two movements finally led to the Greek uprising in 1821. The transition from Rum millet to Greek nation was a hard and bitter experience for the Greeks. In this mighty route to the nation state history of Greeks is invented. This phase is the universal method used in most of the nation formation processes.

*The millet* system was the tool used by the Ottomans from 15<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century for the internal control of the multi ethnic and multi religious state. In the Ottoman *millet* system, people were classified according to their religion. Muslim *millet* was the largest and most influential *millet*, although Ottoman Empire was a multi religious state, the Muslims were in a privileged position as being the ruling

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<sup>124</sup> Koulouri, Ch. (1988), **History and geography in greek schools (1834S1914)**. Athens. p.73



class. Besides the ruling Muslim *millet*, there was the Jewish *millet*, the Gregorian Armenian *millet*, the Catholic *millet* (in the nineteenth century, a Protestant *millet*) and finally the Orthodox *millet*, the largest after the Muslims.

Orthodox *millet* was also known as the *Rum millet* the name *Rum* which turned to an ethnic name in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the name given by the Ottoman Empire to all the Orthodox people within the Empire regardless of their ethnic background. It was not clear who was ethnically Rum(Greek) and who was not. Besides that Greek culture was regarded as the high culture within the Balkans. So many Slavs, Albanians, Vlachs and Latins identified themselves as Rum. As a result of this just before the Greek uprising Greeks claimed their population as 10 million.

Within the Ottoman Empire, *Rum millet* was influential in the Ottoman administration and trade. Rums were occupying a position in which there were working as a mediator between the Ottoman governors and the local people. Rum people were capable of speaking more than one language they were also controlling most of the Ottoman trade with the foreign countries which gave them the opportunity to contact with the west and knew about all the developments before any other *millet*. These facts explain why the environment was so ready for the enlightenment of the Greeks. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the effect of Enlightenment ancient Greece began to draw attention of Western Europe. They believed that ancient Greeks were the ancestor of all the European civilization they also believed that contemporary Greeks were the descendants of the ancient Greeks and should be freed from Ottoman control. This idea was mentioned by the group of people called Philhellenes among them were famous Lord Byron, Goethe and Pushkin. In addition to all these provocations the French Revolution brought the ideas of freedom equality , and brotherhood to the lands where Greek lived. As a result they underwent a

process in which they invented an imagined identity called Greek and Greeks revolt against the Ottoman Turks not as the Rum millet but as the individuals of the Greek ethnic group. After ten years of war in 1832, they became the people of the new established Greek nation state. They rediscovered their heroic ancient history with the help of the Greek intelligentsia. The Orthodox church lost its control over the Greek society and became an institution of the state. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Greek history changed according to the necessities of the time and the profile of the Greek nation was expanded according to the *Megali İdea*.

Today, modern Greece is exceptionally homogeneous in terms of its language culture and religion. This is the result of a conscious policy followed by political leaders from the beginning of the state designed to create a single national identity for all Greeks, including those within the state and those outside it. In reality, the existence of a single Greek nationality was the result of the Neo-Hellenic culture which had very strong components.

As the famous novel of Reşat Nuri Güntekin Yaprak Dökümü, (The Falling Leaves) portrays the disintegration of a family because of debt, deterioration of standards of living and misunderstanding of westernisation, similarly the crumbling of the Ottoman Empire and the setting up of nation states one by one by former Christian subjects were the falling leaves for the Ottoman Empire. It was first the Serbs, who obtained a large degree of autonomy, then the Greeks, leaving the old almighty Empire alone. Its subjects each time took land from the Empire. Now the great big tree was lonesome owing to the stripped leaves and was living its chilly autumn on its own.

As Ernest Gellner mentions: nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist.

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