

**Formulation and definitions of the Greek
national ideology in colonial Egypt (1856-1919)**

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1. The “giant national tree”

At an early afternoon of August 1904, while a person was enjoying his narghile in a crowded coffee-shop of Cairo just next to the pyramids, a black-dressed Cretan with a black beard entered the place and killed him with a large knife, repeating at the same time that it was about revenge. According to the Greek press, the murdered Cretan had been an Ottoman spy and had just arrived to Egypt, intending to start a new life there as a lawyer and hoping that nobody would remember his past. The murdered was supposed of having convinced his later murderer to follow him to Istanbul, where he presented him as a chieftain representing the Cretan supporters of the restoration of the sultan’s rule over Crete¹ through the appointment of a Greek *pasha*. Later, the “chieftain” regretted – or realized what was going on – and, although no formal juridical decision against him was ever made in Greece or Crete, he decided to stay in Egypt.² Nevertheless, he faced different sort of hardships, such as a difficulty to find a job through local Greek networks due to suspicions against him, even though he managed to live through the aid of some Cretans and by selling “patriotic poems” to a number of local Greeks. When his ex-“partner” arrived in Egypt, the “chieftain” tried to find him and, according to a reporter, who – by coincidence – was an eyewitness of the murder as well, had expressed his wish to slaughter him “like a billy goat” a couple of days before the incident.

After the murder was committed, the murderer exited the coffee-shop with the knife between his teeth, without any attempt to hide himself. He was soon arrested by the Egyptian authorities, but he claimed of being a Greek citizen and denied of having committed the murder, even though the incidence took place in front of many people. In this way, having made it clear to Greeks in Egypt and elsewhere that he was not related with his former partner and his activity, he was at the same time trying to gain time to prove he was a Greek citizen and avoid a trial in Egypt. There, the Egyptian authorities considered him a “local subject” and, not having the sensibilities of Greek

¹ Since 1898, Crete was given an autonomous status under the leadership of prince George of Greece and Denmark, the son of George, the king of the Greeks. The later was called in this way since his enthronement, in 1863, a definition aiming to make clear that the king ought to have rights on everyone he considered as a Greek and not only on the inhabitants of the Greek kingdom.

² When he applied, in 1901, to return to Crete, his issue was discussed by the autonomous Cretan authorities, for which it was not clear whether an official prohibition did exist. It was suggested, however, that people like him should be trialed, if they ever returned to Crete: Kritiki Politeia: Episimos Efimeris, proceedings of 08.06.1901, p. 276.

courts at that time, let him spend about six months chained in Egyptian jails, before papers proving his Greek nationality were provided. The arrested Cretan was then trialed in Greece, where he immediately admitted of having committed the murder and appealed to “national reasons”, something that touched the jury and the Greek public opinion, especially since the story of his family’s suffering in Ottoman Crete was also published in Athenian press. As for the dead body of the victim, it was left to the Egyptians, since the patriarch³ had forbidden its burial and, as mentioned in Greek press, nobody even asked for it.⁴

1.1 The Greeks in Egypt

Even if exceptional to some aspects, the preceding story is indicating for the main issues this study is dealing with. First of all, it reminds that it was far from self-evident who would be considered as a member of the Greek nation or recognized as a holder of the Greek nationality, depending on point of view, something not always stressed in the “Greek diaspora” literature. Furthermore, and in a dramatic way, it makes evident how stories in the northern shore of the Mediterranean might be present also in the lives of migrants in its southern shore, or vice versa. Stories of this kind are nevertheless not reproduced in a great part of the “Greek diaspora” literature, at least not with the easiness of presenting achievements of Greeks in Egypt as peaceful “cosmopolitans”,⁵ successful merchants and “patriotic”, but not violent in any apparent way. Another common weakness is that the life of Greeks in colonial Egypt, especially during the “*belle époque*” preceding the formal independence of 1922, is often examined cut off from the long 19th century context,⁶ as part of a permanent and self-evident “success story” of the Greeks living anywhere out of the

³ For the sake of brevity, the terms “Patriarchate” and “patriarch” are used in the present study in regard to the Orthodox Christian religious institution having its seat in Alexandria and the person in top of its hierarchy respectively. Any reference to the hierarchy of other religious faiths is made clear at each occasion.

⁴ The story of the two Cretans has been presented following descriptions in Greek press and other sources: APA - ELIA 470B, 1902; Tilegrafos, 10/23.05.1904; Tachydromos, 06/19.08.1904; Omonoia, 06/19.08.1904; HAMFA 69.4, 1904; Omonoia, 09/22.08.1904; Akropolis, 10.08.1904; Akropolis, 17.08.1904; Empros, 18.09.1904; Empros, 02.10.1905; Empros, 12.12.1905; Akropolis, 11.01.1906; Empros, 13.01.1906.

⁵ When not otherwise explained, the term “cosmopolitan” in the present study refers to a concept antithetic to nationalism, combined with an openness to cultures and even the ability to speak many languages. This is in fact the commonest way this term is used to describe Greeks in Egypt.

⁶ In the present study the expression “long 19th century”, when referring to the Greek case, extends from the formation of an independent Greek state in 1830 until as late as the end of the 1910s decade of wars and the population exchange of 1923.

Greek state. The second half of the 19th and the early 20th century was a period of many negotiations and shifts regarding nation, migration and the Greek state. Anargyros Simopoulos, a Greek economist and minister going on a visit in Egypt during 1901, spoke about local Greeks as the “branches” of a “giant national tree” there.⁷ Some “roots” were older than that period, but it was then that the “tree” grew as a “national tree” in a large “forest” with other such “trees”, i.e. exclusive communities claiming for a common national history, culture and state, but including various “branches”, not necessarily “vigorous and thriving”, as Simopoulos mentioned when describing the Greeks in Egypt⁸ and many others would expect.

Due to technical difficulties, not to mention the question of who was recognized as a Greek citizen,⁹ one ought to be careful with numbers regarding Greek citizens or Greek migrants in general in 19th century Egypt. A considerable number of people, for example, must have evaded registration,¹⁰ Greeks usually appealed to the consular authorities only when they were in the need of them,¹¹ whereas Greek consular sources suggested that at least 20% of the Greek citizens living in Egypt in 1885 did not inscribe themselves in Greek consular records.¹² The editor of an 1889 census about Greek citizens not living in Greece mentioned of difficulties in detecting those resident in Egypt due to their fear that, if declared, they would have to pay a tax for the residence permit or need to do their military service; it was further mentioned as additional difficulties both the chaotic “Arabic neighborhoods” of Alexandria, where the Greek census-takers might easily miss streets, as also the cohabitation of many families of Greek migrants together in the same house.¹³

In spite of reservations as such, some numbers may be useful in order to get an approximate impression as also to detect some tendencies regarding Greek migration to Egypt. Combining different estimates and indications, Panzac claimed that there were about 2000 Greeks among the 6000 Europeans and 3000 Greeks among the

⁷ Empros, 20.04.1901.

⁸ Ebenda.

⁹ For more details on this issue see chapter 8.

¹⁰ Legitimate suspicions about Egyptian censuses are explicated in: Panzac, Daniel: The population, pp. 11-13.

¹¹ Compare: Assabghy, A. + Colombani bey, E.: Les Questions de Nationalité, p. 36 and Kerkinos, Pantelis E.: I elliniki ithageneia, pp. 29-30.

¹² Akropolis, 28.07.1885. Compare with similar mid-20th century information in: Tsagkaradas, Kostas: Ta provlimata tis xeniteias, pp. 46-47.

¹³ Ypourgeion Esoterikon: Statistiki tis Ellados, p. 107.

22.000 Ottomans of Egypt in 1840.¹⁴ Different calculations in the middle of the century suggest of a number of Greeks ranging from 10.000 to 15.000, mainly newcomers of the previous few decades, artisans, merchants, sailors and remnants of the Greek volunteer corpus of the expedition of Napoleon in Egypt.¹⁵ Typaldos, a Greek visitor of Egypt in the late 1850s mentioning of the existence of about 7000 Greeks there, commented that “everywhere in Egypt and beyond, from Alexandria to Abyssinia, one can find Greek merchants”.¹⁶ This was a statement to be repeated plenty of times in different variations during the following decades, from Greek as well as non-Greek authors,¹⁷ referring not just to big merchant houses, but rather to retailers and shopkeepers, originating mostly from Metsovo, Pilion, or Cyprus and other eastern Mediterranean islands.¹⁸

A number of reasons, including the construction and opening of the Suez Channel and the “cotton-boom” due to the civil war in the United States, gave the opportunity to a greater number of migrants to go to Egypt in the 1860s. An important factor attracting many Greeks was the possibilities provided by the Capitulations, since Greece was a capitulatory state in Egypt since 1856.¹⁹ Greeks in Egypt were estimated to be about 30.000 to 34.000 by consular servants in the 1870s²⁰ and an Egyptian census of 1882 counted 37.301 people of Greek nationality.²¹ The number of migrants defined as Greeks by various authors increased considerably in the last two decades of the century, with different Greek calculations of that time mentioning of the existence of 50.000 to 65.000,²² of 85.000²³ or even of 100.000²⁴ Greeks. The

¹⁴ Panzac, Daniel: *The population*, pp. 25-26.

¹⁵ Hadziiosif, Christos: *La colonie grecque*, pp. 74-88, 256.

¹⁶ Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, p. 82.

¹⁷ In the present study, the prefix “non-” added to any description of a population group does not suggest of a homogeneous population, but is useful for a number of reasons. Firstly on the sake of brevity, but also in order to achieve accurate definitions, avoiding at the same time nationalistic and / or arbitrary ones. By using the description of “non-Greek Egyptians”, for example, it is suggested that being both a Greek and an Egyptian is a possibility and that the two terms, unlike the nationalistic usages of ethnic terms, are not necessarily, but only potentially exclusive.

¹⁸ Hadziiosif, Christos: *La colonie grecque*, pp. 234-241; Hadziiosif, Christos: *Banques grecques*, pp. 158-159.

¹⁹ About the possibilities provided by the Capitulations to those who could claim to be Greek citizens see chapters 5.1 and 8.

²⁰ Panzac, Daniel: *The population*, p. 25; de Regny, E.: *Statistique de l' Égypte – 1872*, p. 131; Bemmelen, Pieter: *L' Egypte et l' Europe – vol. 1*, p. 31.

²¹ Panzac, Daniel: *The population*, p. 25.

²² Akropolis, 28.07.1885; Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: *Ellines en Aigypto*, p. 74; Empros, 06.01.1900.

²³ Metarrythmisis, 16/28.02.1893.

²⁴ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: *Aigyptiakai anamniseis*, p. 42.

Egyptian statistics of 1897 and 1907 referred to 38.208²⁵ and 62.973²⁶ Greek citizens respectively, whereas the Greek consul mentioned a total of 132.947 Greeks in 1913.²⁷ Visiting Egypt at 1911 Vlasios Gavriilidis, director of *Akropolis*, an influential Athenian newspaper of that time, made a rough estimation of the presence of 200.000 Greeks there, “as many as Athens and Piraeus together”;²⁸ three years later, a reporter of the same newspaper would ask the Greek government to pay extra attention to Egypt, the “field of activity” for more than 150.000 Greeks.²⁹ Even though exaggerating numbers probably served so as to stress the importance of Greeks of Egypt and support various demands, a considerable number of ethnic Greeks, including many of Greek nationality, lived in Egypt for some period of time during the second half of the 19th and the first couple of decades of the 20th century.

1.2 Egyptian Greeks beyond the legacy

The Greeks in Egypt were not considered important only for their number. In a 1901 satirical verse of Georgios Souris, a popular Greek humorist of that time, the Greeks he saw during one of his trips in Egypt would even reject a visit of Cromer, the British consul in – and actual ruler of – the place in the late 19th and early 20th century.³⁰ This was an extremely important statement at a period Greece was considered as being a state submissive to the British and other “Great Powers” and one can hardly imagine a similar verse of Souris referring to politicians or other personalities in Greece. The prime minister of Greece Eleftherios Venizelos stressed, during a visit in Egypt in 1914, that “we”, referring to the Greek state, expect more from “you”, i.e. the “Greeks abroad”.³¹ Even though most of the people defined as “Egyptiot Greeks” in the following decades were not living in Egypt any more, they nevertheless constitute an important part of a renewed interest for “Greek diaspora”, often articulated together with a more or less intense critique to the Greek state and / or with expectations from them.³² Their second world conference, held in Athens in

²⁵ Panzac, Daniel: *The population*, p. 25.

²⁶ Ministry of Finance: *Statistical Yearbook of Egypt for 1909*, p. 24.

²⁷ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, pp. 69-70.

²⁸ Gavriilidis, Vlasios: *Taxidia*, p. 108.

²⁹ *Akropolis*, 25.03.1914.

³⁰ *Omonoia*, 18/31.05.1901.

³¹ *Nea Zoi*, 1914, p. 380.

³² In more detail see chapter 2.2.

1992, opened with a brief statement by the prime-minister of Greece at that time, Konstantinos Mitsotakis, acknowledging “the huge contribution of Egyptian Hellenism to our nation [since] Egyptian Hellenism has offered us [the Greeks] great national benefactors like Averoff, Tositsas, Benakis and so many others, great intellects and artists such as Kavafis and Parthenis, thousands of volunteers at the national calls to arms as well as huge financial aid at cases of national disasters”. The speaker went on claiming that it was above all with their education, multilingualism and culture that Greeks in Egypt “have made the best cultivated and noble material of the Greek soul known and respected at the ends of the earth” and that those who knew them “learned to respect and appreciate everything Greek”.³³ The stereotypical understanding of “diaspora Greeks” as wealthy, well-educated, patriotic and representing the best example of all positive qualities of the Greeks, evident in the abovementioned citation of the Cretan politician, has been in no way exceptional among Greeks all over the world and of a variant political orientation, the “Egyptians” forming probably the best case for that matter. Furthermore, during different periods of the 20th century, a number of Greek authors originating from Egypt and usually involved in local Greek communal life and / or educational institutions, from Politis³⁴ to Kottis,³⁵ wrote about the Greek achievements in Egypt, stressing from their point of view that they had been the result of individual initiatives and were made possible not because of the ability of the Greek state to assist the migrants, materially or otherwise, but actually in spite of its weakness. The Greeks in Egypt are mostly considered an exemplary case of the “Greek diaspora”, “successful” in as much Greece is supposed of having “failed” in different matters, a generalization that is not only unjust to both, but also makes it necessary to see its 19th century root of this perception.

During the years I have been dealing with the Greeks of Egypt, the commonest first reaction of people with a different origin and background was that: a) I could have not been dealing with anything else than antiquity, or that Greeks in colonial Egypt formed a direct continuity of the Greco-roman, Byzantine or Ottoman past and certainly not a relatively recent phenomenon anyhow connected to a scholar’s interest on “migration” or “colonial history”,³⁶ or b) I must have been dealing with the Greeks

³³ Syndesmos Aigyption Ellinon, 2o Pagkosmio Synedrio, p. 6.

³⁴ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, pp. 354, 462-464.

³⁵ Kottis, Spyros: I Aigyptos ton Ellinon, p. 88.

³⁶ A mid-19th century catalogue of Greek merchants in Egypt, however, included only 2 having a background of many generations in Egypt: Hadziiosif, Christos: La colonie grecque, p. 256.

of a “cosmopolitan” Alexandria such as the well-known poet, Konstantinos Kavafis, or prominent merchants and “benefactors”, like Georgios Averoff or Emmanouil Benakis. It is not just the rarity of studies beyond the classicist or “cosmopolitan” literature to blame, but also the power of some of the long 19th century generalizations that survived, even if sometimes adjusted to a renewed context and vocabulary. In spite of the size of the community in that period, the Greeks of Egypt are rarely associated with Greek mass migration, a result also of the connotations of that phenomenon as oriented mainly to America, Australia and post-war Europe. Posterior knowledge is also a factor since, even though the numbers of Greek migrants to Egypt was comparable to that in the United States of America at the turn of the 20th century,³⁷ it was estimated that about 1.100.000 people described as Greeks or of Greek origin were living in the United States of America by the end of the 20th century.³⁸ In Egypt, on the other hand, the author of a 1988 ethnographic study estimated that a percentage of 65% of the almost 10.000 Greeks still living there was already older than 50.³⁹ Currently, according to the home page of the Greek embassy in Egypt, there is a number of about 3800 Greeks in the country,⁴⁰ whereas Souloyannis, an author with a service as president of Egyptian Greek organizations in Greece, recently gave a number of about 1000 Greeks, “descendants of unmixed Greek as well as mixed marriages”, as he explained.⁴¹ Therefore, it is easier to represent the Greeks of Egypt, less visible in the present, as part of a glorious past of “Greeks Abroad”.

A goal of the present study has been to provide an account on the Greeks in colonial Egypt, including also important aspects of the story that have not been examined much – or at all – by research so far and are hardly present in the “Greek diaspora” literature, largely focusing on big merchant networks and “benefacting” activity. Major points of interest have been the different ways Greeks in Egypt were considered as “successful”, but also whether there were also other Greeks, which could not easily be included to the usual “success stories” promoted. Besides this attempt, a goal has been to contextualize and interpret the common juxtaposition of “Greek diaspora” and Greece in various representations and in correlation to the

³⁷ For a comparison see chapter 7, footnotes 43-48.

³⁸ Kitroeff, Alexander: *I metapolemiki metanastefsi*, p. 77.

³⁹ Würth, Anna: *Die Griechen in Ägypten*, p. 2.

⁴⁰ <http://www.hellas.org.eg/>, in the section about the “Greek community”.

⁴¹ Souloyannis, Euthymios: *Aigyptos kai Soudan*, p. 224.

meanings of “European”, negotiated differently by Greek and non-Greek agents in colonial Egypt. Already in the long 19th century, Greek perceptions of Europe often consisted of a mix of a defending emphasis of the “European” character of Greeks, in fact of the essentially Greek character of “Europe”, when a “European”, i.e. a non-Greek European audience was addressed, but also of the ascertainment of an imperfect or just superficial “Europeanness” and an exaggerated self-critique, when a Greek public was addressed.⁴² Besides dealing with some of the chapters of Greek colonial history, it has been attempted to explore the different meanings “Europeanness” acquired in variant contexts, in relation to Greek migration, as also to the global process of forming and negotiating a national community of “proper” Greeks.

1.3 A project of “making Greece abroad”

At least since the text of Barth on “ethnic group and boundaries”, social scientists tend to keep in mind that “boundaries persist despite a flow of personnel across them”.⁴³ Furthermore, recent studies may emphasize the need for “an explanation of national history in global context, where nation does not constitute the starting point of the research, but rather that, which ought to be explained in a global space, the *Explanandum*”.⁴⁴ An important trend in studies on migration and nation in the 1990s is the “transnational” one, which has as its starting point the problems in distinguishing between the terms, as developed mainly regarding the US-American example, of “ethnic”, when there was an orientation towards the incorporation of migrants in a state, and of “national”, when the emphasis was on individuals engaged in political activities in their place of origin.⁴⁵ Since many migrants forged and sustained simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that linked together their societies of origin and settlement, scholars suggested the term “transnational migration”, which emphasized the “ongoing and continuing ways in which current-

⁴² Skopetea, Elli: To “protypo vaseleio”, p. 244.

⁴³ Barth, Fredrik (ed.): *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, pp. 9-38.

⁴⁴ Conrad, Sebastian: *Globalisierung und Nation*, p. 336.

⁴⁵ Glick Schiller, Nina + Basch, Linda + Blanc-Szanton Cristina: *Transnationalism*, pp. 5-6; Basch, Linda + Glick Schiller, Nina + Szanton Blanc, Cristina: *Nations Unbound*, pp. 5-7.

day immigrants construct and reconstitute their simultaneous embeddedness in more than one society”.⁴⁶

The transnational perspective challenged different kind of nationalistic methodologies concerning the relation of migrants to states of origin or settlement. Nevertheless, critique arose to the extent that some scholars overlooked the importance of cross-community interactions, of internal divisions of transnational communities, or of cases when these were not meaningful for individuals.⁴⁷ Another problem of the initial application of the term in the 1990s was that it referred to “transnational migrants” as if they were a new kind of migrating population.⁴⁸ The juxtaposition of a static past with homogenous cultures to a fluid present of hybridity and complexity has been criticized in the course of time;⁴⁹ as suggested by Pieterse, “if we accept that cultures have been hybrid *all along*, hybridization is in effect a tautology [and] the hybridization perspective remains meaningful only as a critique of essentialism”.⁵⁰ Having in mind the critique about the historical depth of transnational migration, it is still possible to retain the major contribution of the “transnational” trend of studies, i.e. the attempt to challenge the different forms of nationalistic methodologies regarding migration.

The project of “making Italy Abroad” has been recently examined an example of an “emigrant nation”. It was estimated that more than one-sixth of its population was living out of the Italian state in 1911, “much like the mass migrations of the twenty-first-century world”, as further commented.⁵¹ The Greek case could be considered as comparable to the Italian in many aspects regarding the long 19th century, also because the growing number of migrants, described in 1919 as a “Hellenism dispersed abroad” and constituting about one-fifth of the Greek nation.⁵² The description “Greek” was broadly used from migrants, as individual agents or by their institutions in Egypt, as also by third observers, contributing thus to the delimitation of a Greek national community, increasingly defined in terms of exclusivity and spread in territories beyond the existing or expected borders of

⁴⁶ Basch, Linda + Glick Schiller, Nina + Szanton Blanc, Cristina: Nations Unbound, p. 7; Glick Schiller, Nina + Basch, Linda + Szanton Blanc Cristina, From Immigrant to Transmigrant, p. 48.

⁴⁷ Wimmer, Andreas + Schiller, Nina Glick: Methodological nationalism and beyond, p. 324; Fitzgerald, David: Beyond “transnationalism”, pp. 229-231.

⁴⁸ Glick Schiller, Nina + Basch, Linda + Blanc-Szanton Cristina: Transnationalism, p. 1.

⁴⁹ Wimmer, Andreas + Schiller, Nina Glick: Methodological nationalism and beyond, p. 322.

⁵⁰ Pieterse, Nederveen Jan: Globalization as hybridization, p. 64.

⁵¹ Choate, Mark I.: Emigrant Nation, pp. 3-4.

⁵² Dendias, Michail G.: Ai ellinikai paroikiai, p. 5.

Greece. Ioannis Lampridis, a leading member of the “National Society” at the turn of the 20th century,⁵³ was a typical author among those which would often see what they expected and wished to see when writing about the Greeks in Egypt. After a long visit there, Lampridis commented that “coming from an island or from Asia Minor, Peloponnisos or Thraki, Macedonia or Thessalia, Ipeiros or Albania”, after meeting each other in Egypt, these people would forget their birthplace to the advantage of the “one and common [Greek] homeland”.⁵⁴ If part of this description was perhaps too optimistic in 1904, it indicated nevertheless that people in the long 19th century might have been aware of processes of homogenization in a Greek national community which were taking place also among migrants in different places of the world, including Egypt. It was not just about migrants from Greece, but also about migrants coming from territories contested at the period of the “Eastern Question”, regarding the future, reformed status or expected dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. It was a time when different proclamations referring to a possibility of a “federation” of some kind between Greeks and other “Eastern people”, whoever might be defined as such, were rather common, even if they were often nothing but a pretext for a “Hellenization”.⁵⁵ The experience of migration could serve not only as a test of the terms of conviviality between the expected future citizens of Greece originating from Ottoman provinces, for example, but contributed also to the articulation of a monocultural understanding of “Greekness”, unifying some migrants, but excluding some others due to various antagonisms and hierarchies.

It has been argued that the studies on Greeks in Egypt usually stress their Greek character rather than the tendencies supporting a more integrationist perspective.⁵⁶ Leaving aside questions about the impact and the often limited and superficial integrationist perspective in the period after the independence of Egypt, a hypothesis in the present study is that the main historiographic problem, irrespective of the pompous expressions used for Egypt as for any part of the “Greek diaspora” literature, has not been the stressing of a “Greek character”. As suggested already in a critical text on the literature about Greek merchant communities by the early 1980s, questions about who was actually a Greek were not even posed, since that was

⁵³ Gianouloupoulos, Giannis: “I evgenis mas tyflosis”, pp. 37, 41.

⁵⁴ Lampridis, Ioannis: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 70-71.

⁵⁵ Skopetea, Elli: *Oi Ellines kai oi echthroi tous*, p. 13.

⁵⁶ Gorman, Anthony: *Aigyptiotis Ellin*, p. 18.

considered as a given,⁵⁷ a tendency present to some extent in the scholar and especially the non-scholar “Greek diaspora” literature of the following decades as well. Even authors with a great experience in communal archives might start their studies claiming with an absolute certainty that the ties between Greeks living abroad and Greece are indissoluble.⁵⁸ Aware of the problem and introducing a volume on “Greek diaspora” in 1999, a scholar considered the saying of Eleftherios Venizelos that a Greek is “a person who wants to be Greek, feels he is a Greeks, and says he is a Greek” as a “useful definition”,⁵⁹ but it remains unclear for whom such a definition might be “useful” and if this suffices to conceptualize all the complexities and perspectives. Venizelos, with an important political career in autonomous Crete and later in the Greek state, of which he had served also as prime-minister in different periods of the early 20th century, might well have been supporting such a view because its amplitude and deliberate vagueness facilitated the policies he promoted at a period when the “rights of the nationalities” had been a major principle applied in politics. For historians, however, such a statement, even if useful in showing the limitations of supposedly objective criteria, might let arbitrariness enter from the back door. A continuous critical approach to sources, the examination of different points of view and of the way they change in the course of time are preconditions in order to explore the dynamic process of forming, and constantly reformulating, the meaning and delimitation of national community. Both the “Charybdis of methodological nationalism” and the “Scylla of methodological ‘fluidism’” must be avoided.⁶⁰

A major goal of this study has been to elaborate into the historicity of “Greekness” in the Greek long 19th century. The point is not to provide just a superficial description of an overall “fluidity” or a mere ascertainment that everything is a “construct”, a truism in many studies on modern nation since the 1980s, but not always accompanied with sufficient and convincing evidence and explanatory suggestions about the process of forming a national community. Different aspects of identification of migrants in Egypt with the Greek national community have been examined through a critical approach of various proclamations and descriptions by different agents involved in the process, but also by comparing whether and how such proclamations were applied in social practice among the migrants in Egypt. The

⁵⁷ Hadziiosif, Christos: *Emporikes paroikies*, p. 34.

⁵⁸ Souloyannis, Euthymios: *I thesi*, p. 19.

⁵⁹ Clogg, Richard: *The Greek Diaspora*, p. 16.

⁶⁰ Wimmer, Andreas + Schiller, Nina Glick: *Methodological nationalism and beyond*, p. 326.

homogenization of the migrants in a specific, monocultural meaning of “Greekness” had as a result also the exclusion of some migrants, which were otherwise included in various proclamations and sometimes considered themselves as Greeks. These exclusions could be interpreted also through different hierarchies articulated around specific notions of “Europeanness”. The extent and way of the identification of the migrants with Greece and Egypt, in spite of variations, further indicate about the decisive role of these hierarchies.

1.4 Method and decisions

In order to deal with the questions presented so far the main tools combined, with a different emphasis depending on the priorities at each chapter, have been: a) a critical reading of the written sources that could be detected, with an emphasis to data and estimates related to the questions mentioned, b) the analysis of different Greek and non-Greek points of view in as much as possible, and c) an attempt to contextualize with processes broader than the Egyptian Greek society and provide with useful comparisons that can offer fruitful correlations, without on the other hand exaggerations or risky assumptions. The goal was not to reproduce a static, one-dimensional perspective that simplifies and homogenizes, but to achieve a multidimensional approach acknowledging plurality and considering the entities and objects of research not just in relation to one another “but also *through* one another, in terms of relationships, interactions, and circulation”.⁶¹ The first part of the study forms an attempt to present the way different notions of “Europeanness” had been negotiated, in the attempt of Greeks to organize their presence in a world of human mobility and colonial hierarchies. The second part of the study focuses in the ways a Greek national community was formed also out of the – actual or expected – borders of Greece, setting its limits through a homogenizing and excluding at the same time process, related with goals regarding – as well as with expectations from – the specific state, which claimed to represent Greeks all over the world. It is this readership that was the target group and it is these people that sent letters and influenced what would be written; as for the upper class Greeks in places such as

⁶¹ Werner, Michael + Zimmermann, Bénédicte: Beyond Comparison.

Egypt, they would rather prefer to read French and other non-Greek European newspapers, since they usually underestimated the Greek ones.

More specifically, chapter 2 presents some major later representations of the “successful” Greeks in Egypt, posing thus the questions to be examined in the following chapters. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 are dedicated to the different currents of Greek migration to Egypt in the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, as also to the ways various of their activities were – or were not – perceived as a sign of “Europeanness”, regarded positively or negatively, by different Greek and non-Greek agents. Chapter 6 examines the ways the perception of Greeks as Europeans, even if only in the process of transforming Greece to a “European” state, made a difference regarding the ways Greeks would praise as an example or criticize different aspects of the British rule in Egypt. Chapter 7 questions how Greek migration to Egypt had been both correlated and comparable to the late 19th and early 20th century Greek mass migration, even though colonial hierarchies played a role in both developing different policies regarding migration as also in reproducing a distinction between Greek “diaspora” and “migration”. In the second part of the study, after examining critically, in chapter 8, the role of the Greek state and the civil rights associated with it for the formation of a unified Greek national community in Egypt, chapters 9 and 10 question why different groups of migrants, considered as part of the Greek nation by some, were excluded from it in practice. Chapters 11 and 12 focus to the role of the state as well as of other agents in the process of forming a global Greek national community, relatively homogenized and mobilized regarding the politics of Greece, also when living in Egypt and expressing a critical opinion about Greece; critiques of different kind regarding Greece were both expressed by Greeks in Egypt or by other Greeks, using those in Egypt as a supposedly uniform “voice”, in order to justify different complaints or expectations, depending on the way the relation of a population scattered around the world to the state ascribed with the role of representing it was perceived. Lastly, chapter 13 is dedicated to the ways that, in contrary to the diverse yet meaningful identifications to Greece, those of the Greek migrants to Egypt remained relatively weak in the early 20th century, even if the self-description “Egyptiot” was introduced.

It is common in historical studies to reproduce methodological nationalism, for example by the different variations of “naturalization of the nation-state”, also due to the compartmentalization of the social science project into different “national”

academic fields.⁶² I also share the critical approach to “the establishment, the profile, and the affirmation of the disciplines of history in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries – especially of those that are defined territorially”; the goal and actual challenge should indeed be “the utilization of the resources of the historical toolbox to fit certain puzzle pieces together from the different disciplines, in order to create a complete picture of the history of the Balkans and the Near East”.⁶³ I have tried to profit from all kind of sources that might have been available in order to find material and investigate the abovementioned questions. Archives of various Greek communal institutions in Egypt have been examined as thoroughly as possible for any hint or information related to my major questions, either in Cairo, where a part of the archives of smaller communal institutions are also kept, or in Athens, where part of the Alexandrian archives has been transported. Available at the time of my research archives of state authorities and religious institutions were also included to the research, but unfortunately not many private archives were detected. A relatively great number of books, newspapers and brochures of all kind were published from Greeks in Egypt,⁶⁴ not to mention of editions about them or referring to them issued in Athens and other places and most of the time more or less easily accessible in different libraries and collections, or even in a digital form. Press, especially small stories and short comments, often providing material for challenging hypotheses more than the front-page stories, was also an important source, even though not all Egyptian Greek newspapers of that period survived in complete series. Together with the Greek press of Egypt, attention was given to some Athenian Greek newspapers with a greater impact at that time and also an easiest accessibility in almost complete series today, not only in order to examine a possibly different viewpoint of Greeks in the Greek state from Greeks in Egypt or to fill gaps of other sources missing, but also because some major ones, such as *Empros* and *Akropolis*, often sent their top reporters in Egypt or kept correspondents at the spot. Greek press issued in places other than Egypt or Athens was also occasionally searched so as to enrich research, always having in mind that it addressed a literate, mainly petit-bourgeois readership,

⁶² Wimmer, Andreas + Schiller, Nina Glick: Methodological nationalism and beyond, p. 306.

⁶³ Kaser, Karl: The Balkans and the Near East, pp. 2-3.

⁶⁴ Only in Egypt, Evgenios Michailidis names 93 Greek printing houses during the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century: Michailidis, Evgenios: *Vivliografia*, pp. 344-346.

scattered all over the world but having, more or less, an interest about politics in Greece.⁶⁵

The terminology used in the present study was selected very carefully in order to bypass the traps of methodological nationalism and to avoid common problematic and exclusionary ways of dealing with such topics. At the same time and for the sake of accuracy, rather than fashionable terms that acquired too broad meanings, more accurate descriptions have been preferred as categories of analysis. The scholar term “ethnic”, to start with, is reserved for “when cultural differences regularly make a difference in interaction between members groups”.⁶⁶ It is clear for me that “ethnic” is neither identifiable nor, in an equally problematic version, necessarily antithetic to the current concept of “nation”. The term “nation” and its Greek version “*ethnos*” are used in many sources of the period examined in the present study, loaded with different meanings. By the end of the 19th century, the democratic, nationalistic “nation” prevailed and mostly came to signify the legitimate subject of politics, a community presupposing mutual exclusivity and demanding an absolute priority in political loyalties, with an analogous relation to other national communities, identified or expected to be identified with a state representing the nation and ascribed with a “national” history and culture. As a category of analysis, I preferred to describe as “national ideology” every set of ideas proposing a model of political organization in the name of nation, avoiding the problematic distinctions between “good” patriotism and “bad” nationalism or between a “civic”, liberal, voluntarist, universalist, and inclusive, and an “ethnic”, illiberal, ascriptive, particularist, and exclusive one, two models which have hardly existed in a pure form in national ideologies so far.⁶⁷ The term “nationalism” has a common usage much stronger, where violence and inhuman character are usually implied in a moralistic way and attributed exclusively to it, whereas its direct correlation to democracy is hardly, if at all, mentioned.⁶⁸ In the present study, I have used that term without any moralistic understanding and only to

⁶⁵ In more detail see chapter 11.3.

⁶⁶ Eriksen, Thomas Hylland: *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, p. 13.

⁶⁷ In more detail, see the 1999 critical remarks of Brubaker regarding the deep ambiguity of the terms “civic” and “ethnic”: Brubaker, Rogers: *Ethnicity without Groups*, pp. 132-146. As Eriksen pointed, the majority of nationalisms are ethnic in character: Eriksen, Thomas Hylland: *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, p. 119.

⁶⁸ For some critical voices regarding such tendencies see: Schnapper, Dominique: *Community of Citizens*, especially pp. 2-11; Brubaker, Rogers: *Ethnicity without Groups*, p. 132; Wimmer, Andreas + Schiller, Nina Glick: *Methodological nationalism and beyond*, p. 307; Calhoun, Craig: *Nations Matter*.

describe those people not just having a more or less clear perception of a “national ideology”, but actively urging to the fulfillment of any plans correlated to it.

Descriptions such as “Greek-speaking” people, “Orthodox Christians” or “Greek citizens”, sometimes uncritically identified to ethnic Greeks, to members of the Greek nation, or even worse selected as a “politically correct” alternative to these categories, have been used in the present study only when the specific characteristic of language, religious faith and nationality was decisively important and a unique characteristic of the people described in this way. In Greek language, the description “*Elladitis*” is sometimes used to indicate a direct relation of any kind to the Greek state instead of the more general “*Ellinas*”. The term existed already in 1821, before the creation of an independent Greek state, to distinguish between the inhabitants of a future Greek state and the total of Greeks,⁶⁹ whereas today it is mainly a way to distinguish the inhabitants of Greece from Greeks in Cyprus or elsewhere and / or as an – often contemptuous – way to speak about the Greek state as compared to the “Greeks Abroad” or to an idealized Greek past extending in a broader territory than the current borders of the Greek state. In English texts, it is sometimes preferred to make a distinction by using the adjective “Hellenic” in a similar to the “*Elladitis*” way, since the official name of Greece is “Hellenic Republic”, a term predominantly associated with antiquity. As a historian, I don’t consider any description as more legitimate than any other for “historical” reasons. In the present study, I preferred to avoid, besides direct citations, both of these descriptions (“*Elladitis*” and “Hellenic”), not only because of possible connotations beyond my intentions, but also since, in the period examined, such a distinction was not always clear and accepted by all parts involved and would not reduce much of the complexities in an efficient and productive for the analysis way. The use of the term “*Rum*” also can not correspond to the human mobility of that period as also to the complicated and often disputed issue of legal recognition by each state, since the steadily increasing by the end of the 19th century number of people, also in the Ottoman Empire, defining themselves or defined by their institutions or third observers as “Greeks”, was not always identical to the specific Ottoman administrative category.⁷⁰ When not otherwise hinted, by the use of more precise descriptions such as people “with a Greek nationality”,

⁶⁹ Skopetea, Elli: To “*protypo vasileio*”, p. 33, footnote 22.

⁷⁰ On the historicity of the term and its usages see: Konortas, Paraskevas: Nationalisms vs Milletts, pp. 164-166.

“originating from the Greek state” and so on, a connection of Greeks with the Greek state emerging in 1830 and claiming to represent all Greeks in the course of the 19th century should not be considered as self-evident, whereas the term “Ottoman Greeks” was preferred in order to indicate ethnic Greeks having any relation to the Ottoman Empire, irrespective of their legal status. The use of any description other than the “Greek” for a person, a group of people or an institution, when not differently indicated, is not implying of an exclusive and / or alternative of the “Greek” description. In available Greek sources, the term used most until the turn of the 20th century was that of “Egyptian Hellenism”, of the “*omogeneis*” of Egypt or just of “Greeks”. The term “*Aigyptiotis*” came in broad use only in the first decades of the 20th century, signifying a limited identification of Greeks with Egypt, but also a distance from non-Greek Egyptians.⁷¹ I have chosen to translate “*Aigyptiotes*” as “Egyptians” only in quotation marks, when there has been a direct citation of Greek texts using the term, following a transliteration to the letter that has been used recently in texts written in English.⁷² The variation “*Ellinaigyptios*”, “Greek-Egyptian”, reversing the priority on the model of “Greek-Americans”, has been used – to my knowledge – in just one isolated, recent example and by a non-Egyptian Greek observer.⁷³

I preferred to use the terms “migration” and “migrant” rather than “diaspora” as a general description because the later has been predominantly used, also in Greek literature, to describe a supposedly homogenous group of dispersed wealthy, “patriotic” and extremely influential to Greek affairs people juxtaposed to migrants, the later supposedly being permanently settled in a specific country and often considered as a problem both for the sending as also for the receiving society. It is mainly from this use of “diaspora”⁷⁴ that I wanted to make a differentiation, whereas the choice was also aiming to maintain a standpoint distanced from state-oriented approaches often implying, or actually imposing, the existence of a legitimized “center” of the nation on dispersed members of it, which may or may not maintain or

⁷¹ “*Aigyptiotis*”, in plural “*Aigyptiotes*”, describes people coming from Egypt and makes a slight distinction from “*Aigyptios*”, in plural “*Aigyptioi*”, which is the direct translation of “Egyptian”, usually reserved for “locals” in its Greek usage. See also chapter 13, footnotes 156-161.

⁷² Compare: Tomara-Sideris, Matoula: Egyptian Greek Benefaction, pp. 85-96, as also some texts in the volume 35.2 of the 2009 issue of the *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*.

⁷³ Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*, p. 28.

⁷⁴ About the dispersion of the meaning of the term “essentially to any and every nameable population category that is to some extent dispersed in space” see: Brubaker, Rogers: *The “diaspora” diaspora*.

wish to have such a relation to a specific state. By the end of the 20th century, it was suggested to replace the terms “emigration and immigration by migration”, since “multidirectional moves, migration in stages, and return migration” illustrated “the openness of the migration processes, the fact that men and women on the move had to make choices and that they actively determined or tried to determine their life-courses”.⁷⁵ My use of “migration” derives from such a broad understanding of mobility of people from different social strata and with different capital of all kind and expectations, with relations possibly held with more than one states and a greater variety of choices than those of “repatriation” or “assimilation”.

There had been several migrants in Egypt claiming of having departed from their previous places of settlement due to difficulties and constraints of a political nature; Egypt has been described even as “the great refugee mother”, receiving Greeks suffering from wars or natural catastrophes from the 1820s up to the 1940s.⁷⁶ Many of the Ottoman Greeks that fled from Crete after the 1866 revolt,⁷⁷ others after the 1897 war,⁷⁸ or some experiencing pressures in the 1910s period of wars,⁷⁹ all these constitute a category of people taking refuge to Egypt, whereas Greeks from Bulgaria or Romania also went to Egypt at the turn of the 20th century because of the pressures they experienced.⁸⁰ It makes no doubt a difference “whether one leaves his or her country because militiamen point a gun at oneself, or because one hopes to earn more money abroad, balancing the expected gains from emigration against its costs”.⁸¹ On the other hand, without questioning that obviously many from the abovementioned Greeks going to Egypt were in a bad need anyway, it is also possible that, as in various examples detected,⁸² some of those overstressing their refugee status at applications for a job might have been trying to gain the sympathy and any kind of support from sensible wealthy local Greeks. The question of recognizing people under the legal category of “refugees” in the course of the 20th century often depended on interpretations of different states and their willingness to accept more or less migrants

⁷⁵ Hoerder, Dirk: *From Migrants to Ethnics*, p. 212.

⁷⁶ Tsirkas, Stratis: *Drifting Cities*, p. 605.

⁷⁷ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 254; Tsirkas, Stratis: *O Kavafis kai i epochi tou*, pp. 60-61.

⁷⁸ *Akropolis*, 02.06.1897.

⁷⁹ It is estimated that about 16.000 Ottoman Greeks took refuge in Egypt at that time: Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 180.

⁸⁰ Dendias, Michail G.: *Ai ellinikai paroikia*, p. 57.

⁸¹ Brunnbauer, Ulf: *Labour Emigration*, p. 18.

⁸² For some examples from Bulgaria and Romania: GCC A17/2:2, 1905, letter n. 262; GCC A17/4:4, 1906-1907; *Tachydromos*, 12/26.02.1909; GCC A18/4:9, 1910, letter n. 256.

with no papers.⁸³ Regarding the period examined in this study, before the institutionalization of the “refugee” status through international law, the application of this description as a category of analysis would not make any concept clear and reflects only its use as a category of praxis with a rather loose meaning.

The exact transliteration of a place is often made a matter of political antagonism. Even if no linguistic version is in my understanding more legitimate in any way than other possible ones, practical and aesthetical reasons make it necessary to choose one among different systems of transliterating names of places and persons in a uniform way. Regarding places, I mostly selected a Romanization of the version used in a major language of the state the specific place belonged to during most of the long 19th century, with the exception of some well-known places like Athens or Alexandria, or islands like Cyprus or Corfu, the specific versions having prevailed in this form in English literature. On transliterating names of persons and some non-English terms as well, I have tried to follow a transcription based on actual standard pronunciation, unless if specific versions of names had prevailed in another form or were detected as being used by individuals engaged themselves in international activities of any kind. Believing that social scientists should not live isolated from the rest of the world in their archives and libraries and hoping that studies can be accessible and understandable by a readership as broad as possible, I have tried to produce a readable text, with many small incidents and expressions from the time in focus, so as to give a better and nicer view to the reader, without losing the focus to major questions discussed in the academia, but avoiding a pompous language sometimes preferred as supposedly indicating for the value of a study. I deliberately avoided the historicist tendency of giving a series of facts in full detail, even though I self-evidently tried to give the necessary background to make the arguments of each chapter comprehensible.

A word ought to be written for people and institutions that made the completion of this study possible. Being in a nodal city like the early 21st century Berlin gave me the opportunity not only to make the part of the research demanding libraries much easier and quicker, but also to try to share and discuss my ideas with diverse audiences. A word ought to be said about my supervisor, Ulf Brunnbauer, and the other members of the dissertation committee formed in the Free University of

⁸³ See for example: Schuster, Liza: Turning refugees into “illegal migrants”.

Berlin, for their comments, cooperativeness and suggestions, but also to professors in the University of Crete, since some rough ideas on this project as also basic modes of critical thinking and searching are dated from my earlier student time in Rethymno. Librarians and archivists in Berlin, Athens, Alexandria, Cairo, Nicosia, Rethymno, London and Corfu were in most cases kind and helpful, whereas the existence of the digital libraries of the University of Crete, the Greek Parliament, the National Library of Greece and the University of Patra helped me save much time of research on the spot. Participation in different colloquia, conferences and summer schools gave me the opportunity to organize and discuss different of my hypotheses and the institutions or individuals that made my participation possible or easier in any way deserve also part of my gratitude. The scholarship of *IKY*, the Greek State Scholarships Foundation, made the time of completion of my thesis decisively shorter. I could not omit to thank in particular the hospitality or other assistance of Michalis, Panos, Julia, Kostas and his family, Irini, Bram, Marco, Mrs. Maria, Ilias and especially of Charis, Dimitra and Jacqueline, who had to tolerate my presence for longer periods, with no objection regarding the way I organized my research in order to achieve possibly as much work in as short time of being on the move. Earvin “Magic” Johnson once said that a basket makes one guy happy, whereas an assist makes two guys happy, and I was lucky of knowing many people sharing this principle and providing me with many “assists” during my research, tips, suggestions and aid of all kind, for which I am thankful. Self-evidently, for any possible mistakes and shortages or for any ideas, with which not all of the people that helped in any way necessarily agree, I am the only one responsible. Last but not least my parents, Lefteris and Eva, provided much encouragement and support of all kind during the whole period of my studies, even when experiencing themselves difficult situations. Unfortunately my father, himself an African Greek, died just a few months before the completion of my dissertation. It is to his memory that the present study is dedicated.

First Part: The “westernmost part of the Greek world”

“... the by definition westernmost part of the Greek world, which was the diaspora Greek element”

Skopetea, Elli: Oi Ellines kai oi echthroi tous, p. 32

2. The “story of Ulysses”: the return to “success” stories about the Greeks in Egypt

In 1919, a revolt in Egypt had as a result the death of ten Greeks, in spite of the attempts of the Greek consul to express solidarity to the causes of Egyptian nationalists;¹ it seems that some Greeks fired at Egyptians and the British needed to intervene, asking the Greek consul to stop them and claiming that such activities would create and incite hatred against Greeks and even retaliations, especially those of them living in the province.² In May 1921, as new turbulence caused worries, the committee of the Greek Community of Alexandria passed by unanimous vote a resolution, which was communicated also to the British, expressing a greatest indignation against the “troubles”, worries about safety and the deepest gratitude to the British army for saving, as it was mentioned, thousands of [Greek] lives.³ It was during that same period, which led from the reforms after the 1919 uprising to the 1922 formal independence of Egypt, that a British commission headed by Alfred Milner tried to provide the basis of a settlement recognizing, according to estimations of the representative of the Greek government, the Greek community in Egypt as one of the European communities that ought to participate in the political and administrative organization of the country. The justification given by Milner, always according to the Greek representative's assumptions, was the “valuable contribution of it in the past progress of Egypt and its presumptive undeniable civilizing power in the future”, but also that the local Greeks proved themselves valuable during the “natives’ revolts”.⁴

From this example, one could assume that Greeks in Egypt associated their interests with those of the British. Nevertheless, the former were eager to show themselves closer to the “natives” and differing from the European colonial rule, a phenomenon common among Greek communities in various places of Africa during the 20th century. In a Greek text of 1945 about Ethiopia, for example, the local Greeks were described as the only “foreigners” and “Europeans” not faced with mistrust by the Ethiopian authorities,⁵ just a few pages before the same author would write about

¹ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, pp. 43-44.

² BNA, FO series 141/521.1: Safety of Greek Subjects.

³ Ebenda.

⁴ GAK – Politiko Grafeio Prothypourgou, 450.

⁵ Petridis, Petros: *To mellon tou Ellinismou en Avyssia*, pp. 13-14.

them as partners of the British in trade and politics.⁶ Greeks from Sudan remembered and emphasized the good relations they had with the Sudanese because, unlike the British, they were not “colonialists”, but rather people of a humble background.⁷ This, however, did not prevent them from having racist attitudes towards non-Greek Sudanese, or even people of mixed origin, similar to those other Europeans had.⁸ Egypt did not share the same colonial experience with most other areas in Africa. An Ottoman province until the campaign of Napoleon, it became autonomous under Mehmed Ali, who proclaimed himself a viceroy in 1805, initiated a series of innovations and promoted a policy of state monopolies. The period of Ismail, the grandson of Mehmed Ali, overlapped with the cotton boom that was an outcome of the civil war in the United States of America. Railroads and the opening of the Suez Channel were among the most celebrated achievements financed by the extension of cotton cultivation in many places along the Nile. Nevertheless, a debt crisis in the 1870s resulted the imposition of a Dual Control by the British and the French, and also led to dissent of all kind. In 1881, a movement tried to represent all grievances and to retain the increase of the European power in Egypt, but the British military intervention during the summer of 1882 had as a result that Egypt was controlled by the British.⁹ The growing nationalist movement in Egypt put pressure and led to a revolution in 1919 and to the formal independence of Egypt, in 1922.¹⁰ A new constitution was implemented in 1923, whereas during the interwar period the Capitulations and other remnants of the colonial period were gradually banished. In the next paragraphs, it is attempted to present how the representation of the Greeks in Egypt changed corresponding to various political junctures, and which were the main arguments promoted for this goal. Arguments which will be examined in the following chapters, with the critical method of a historian.

2.1 The most familiar foreigner of Egypt

⁶ Ebenda, pp. 19-21.

⁷ Makris, Gerasimos: *I elliniki paroikia tou Soudan*, p. 389.

⁸ Ebenda, pp. 389-393.

⁹ About the tensions that preceded and the acceleration of the events during the summer of 1882 see chapter 6 of the present study, and in more detail: Cole, Juan R. I.: *Colonialism and Revolution*.

¹⁰ About this evolution see chapter 12.1.

It was during that period that a number of local Greeks started to suggest to “keep up with the times”.¹¹ Different institutions of that period tried to strengthen the ties between Greeks and non-European Egyptians in order to facilitate the continuation of Greek presence in Egypt.¹² The problem was that not everyone referring to a need to “adjust” either meant the same thing or proposed the same method in order to reach this goal.¹³ Some Greek authors of the interwar period hoped that an emphasis to a Greek positive contribution in Egypt would assure a continuation of the Greek presence there. The major Greek narrative of this style came in the late 1920s from Athanasios Politis, a secretary of the Greek embassy at that time, which was also published in a French version, an additional indication that a non-Greek readership was also addressed. The Greeks of Egypt were described by Politis as being “always pioneers of the other Europeans in the new lands”.¹⁴ At a second volume with the subtitle “contribution of Hellenism to the development of modern Egypt”, a similar terminology was used about “the Greek”, usually “the first of all Europeans that settles in countries not civilized yet”, but also “the only civilized person, with whom the native is constantly in contact”, the agent, through which “European civilization” was “slowly diffused” and a model for Egyptians to imitate.¹⁵ At the beginning of the second volume, Politis referred to the disastrous economic consequences of the recent expulsion of population from Turkey,¹⁶ whereas in his concluding remarks, he commented that it was necessary and timely to remind what Greeks had done “at a time a wind of narrow nationalism is blowing everywhere in the world”.¹⁷ Politis was one of the first authors that used the representation of Greeks as “Europeans”, i.e. “civilized”, but at the same time different than the “other Europeans”, in a systematic and extended narration, in an obvious attempt to present “arguments” from the recent past regarding the future presence of Greeks in Egypt.

At about the same period a theologian, Evgenios Michailidis, referred to the “Egyptian natives” who returned from their studies in Europe, America and Syria and knew nothing about the activity of Greeks but the word “*bakal*”, i.e. “grocer”, said

¹¹ Maragkoulis, Manolis: “Kairos na sygchronisthomen”.

¹² Kitroeff, Alexander: The Greeks in Egypt, pp. 172-177; Gorman, Anthony: Historians, State and Politics, pp. 187-188.

¹³ Gorman, Anthony: The Failures of Readjustment; Gorman, Anthony: Repatriation, Migration or Readjustment, pp. 61-72.

¹⁴ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, pp. 345-346.

¹⁵ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 2, pp. 5-6, 26.

¹⁶ Ebenda, pp. 19-22.

¹⁷ Ebenda, p. 493.

with a contempt and sarcasm, actually indicating the trickster and fortune-hunter.¹⁸ Even though some among the non-Greek Egyptians emphasized the positive contribution of the “foreigners” in the interwar period,¹⁹ critical currents from different perspectives were also existing,²⁰ being a motivation for Michailidis to write about the “civilizing role” of modern Greeks in commerce, sciences or medicine in Egypt.²¹ Another author of that period assured that Greeks “always had more contact to Egypt than other Europeans did”.²² A selection of positive “European” aspects and a differentiation from “other Europeans” was not uncommon among Greek authors, but such an argumentation could be applied regarding other migrant communities as well. An Italian author of the interwar period, for example, assured that Italians were “among the Europeans who better contributed in putting the Egyptians in contact with European life”, and also “those who enjoy the most respectful sympathy by the Egyptian people”.²³ Such arguments could also be applied in order to fulfill other aims: the long established Greek-Egyptian contacts and even their common “racial idiosyncrasy”²⁴ were mentioned at the beginning of a 1934 study about Greek economic interests in Egypt, with a letter of the Greek ambassador added at the end and describing the “Greek” as “the most familiar foreigner of Egypt”.²⁵

The interwar period was not the first time that remote past provided Greeks in Egypt with arguments, even though previously the priority was the resistance to British pressures and an emphasis to the Greeks as the “first conquerors” of Egypt.²⁶ A Greek book of 1901 started by mentioning the contact of the “countries” and “people” of Egypt and Greece since the time of Pythagoras and Plato,²⁷ other authors claimed about more ancient relations of Greeks and Egyptians,²⁸ argued that the Greek presence in Egypt was as old as in Greece,²⁹ or even explained that the Greeks did not consider the Nile valley as “foreign” because of relations remaining

¹⁸ Michailidis, Evgenios: *O aigyptiotis ellinismos*, pp. 3-5.

¹⁹ Gorman, Anthony: *Historians, State and Politics*, pp. 177-178.

²⁰ *Ebenda*, pp. 181-186.

²¹ Michailidis, Evgenios: *O aigyptiotis ellinismos*, pp. 8-18.

²² Radopoulos, Rad[os] G.: *Eisagogi*, pp. 9-10.

²³ Sammarco, Angelo: *L' opera degli italiani*, p. 66.

²⁴ Avramidis, Aristarchos A.: *Ellas-Agyptos*, pp. 5-7.

²⁵ *Ebenda*, p. 119.

²⁶ See in particular chapter 6.4.

²⁷ Karatheodoris, K[onstantinos] St.: *I Agyptos*, p. 5.

²⁸ Oikonomopoulos, D[ionyisios] I.: *Alexandrinος Diakosmos*, pp. μ³-μα³.

²⁹ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, p. α³.

continuous since the pharaohs' time.³⁰ In texts of the long 19th century, the medieval period of Egypt was mostly juxtaposed to the ancient and Greco-roman past as a time of “ignorance and barbarism”,³¹ described even as a punishment of Egypt by “divine providence”.³² Some interwar approaches, even if still rare and not always accepted, started to reappraise the medieval past of Egypt, the first sign perhaps being a Russian text about medieval Arab civilization, which was translated from a major Egyptian Greek journal in 1917.³³ In any case, the studies of Christoforos Nomikos in the 1920s constitute a milestone to this tendency, published in and about Egypt and speaking about a superiority of Greeks and Arabs in a period when no “European civilization” existed,³⁴ or about the peaceful relations of Byzantines and Arabs and a great Arab civilization.³⁵ The impact of the work of Nomikos was not immediate and equally great: Michailidis, who mentioned of Greek relations to Egypt already in the Minoan time, wrote about “a civilizing way” of Greeks in Egypt up to the interval, from the Medieval time up to the 19th century.³⁶ In his introduction, Politis reproduced the belief that there were Greeks in Egypt for as many centuries as in Greece, but dedicated relatively little space for the centuries between Byzantine Egypt and the 19th century, mainly in order to explain the harsh situation of Christians and an overall decline.³⁷ The limited reorientation, however, was more evident in cases of less conservative authors, such as a book on the “geography of Egypt and the British-Egyptian Sudan”,³⁸ published in 1925 so as to be instructed in Greek communal schools of Egypt. There, the centuries following the Greco-roman antiquity and preceding the era of the Mamluks and the Ottomans were more positively received.³⁹ Another Greek book for “geography and history of Egypt and Sudan” was issued at that time by one of the demoticist reformist teachers, having a similar purpose, i.e. to provide local Greeks with some knowledge about the country, where they lived and had been living for 4000 years, as stressed. Based in European literature on Egypt, but

³⁰ Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: *Ellines en Aigypto*, p. 12.

³¹ Dimitsas, Margaritis: *Periodeia tis Aigyptou*, pp. 5-6.

³² Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 10-11.

³³ Maragkoulis, Manolis: “Kairos na sygchronisthomen”, p. 63.

³⁴ Nomikos, Ch[ristoforos] A.: *Aravika istorimata*, pp. 5-10.

³⁵ Nomikos, Ch[ristoforos] A.: *Eisagogi*.

³⁶ Michailidis, Evgenios: *O aigyptiotis ellinismos*, pp. 6-8.

³⁷ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, pp. 9-80.

³⁸ Sudan was under Egyptian or British-Egyptian authority at the time the present study focuses and Greek presence there was connected in many ways to that in Egypt. Greeks in Sudan were sometimes included to the “Egyptian Hellenism” by Greek authors of that period, even if that was not always clearly indicated.

³⁹ Glafkopidis, Ioannis K.: *Geografia tis Aigyptou kai tou Aggloaigyptiakou Soudan*, pp. 115-119.

also using the work of Nomikos, this edition described the Caliphate time as a glorious period or even ‘Urabi, the leader of the 1882 revolt, as a brave and proud soldier.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, Greeks were still considered as “the only and major vehicle of civilization” sharing close relations of respect, compassion and trust with Egyptian peasants even in the remotest villages of Egypt.⁴¹ The colonial perceptions did not change dramatically until the coming of the decolonization period, combined with the decrease of the Greek population in Egypt.

2.2 An example of failure

The mid-20th century, a period of anti-colonial movements, was marked with critique for the Greek retailing activity in different places of Africa, even with a minor Greek presence, such as Cameroon.⁴² There were cases, as evident in some examples in Ghana and Zambia, where some Greek businessmen managed to “adjust” to the new political conditions.⁴³ In Egypt, the author of a 1953 book on the Greek presence there argued about the Greek contribution not only through the use of “historical” arguments, but mainly by stressing that the money Greeks earned in Egypt was not sent out of it or wasted, but was always used in investments that benefited Egypt.⁴⁴ A short study of 1957, introduced by the holograph wishes of Nasser to the Greek community, focused in the interior of Egypt with the same logic, emphasizing the Greek positive contribution in economic matters and the conviviality with local population.⁴⁵ The poems of Kostas Simos, published in 1959, praised Nasser and stressed that Greeks had not come to Egypt as conquerors and adventurers.⁴⁶ If texts of this kind tried to assure that Greeks would remain in Egypt for a number of reasons, that included increasing unemployment and a perception of unequal opportunities in professional evolution, an important part of the Greek population in Egypt chose to go to another country already in the 1940s and 1950s.⁴⁷ The exodus of many Greeks was accelerated in the 1960s, and suggested explanations include not

⁴⁰ Compare to previous Greek descriptions of ‘Urabi as presented in chapter 6, footnotes 40-48.

⁴¹ Marselos, A[thanasios] A.: *Geografia kai istoria Aigyptou kai Soudan*.

⁴² Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*, pp. 102, 109.

⁴³ Ebenda, pp. 110-112.

⁴⁴ Palaiologos, Tasos P.: *O Aigyptiotis Ellinismos*, p. 65.

⁴⁵ Tsourkas, Cl[eovoulos]: *Les Hellènes dans l’ intérieur*.

⁴⁶ Simos, Kostas Ks.: *Skliri poreia*.

⁴⁷ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 181; Würth, Anna: *Die Griechen in Ägypten*, p. 40; Ntalachanis, Angelos: *The Emigration*.

only pull factors, such as the opportunities in Australia, but also the fact that Greeks remained more closely integrated with their own ethnic community than with any other section of Egyptian society, the highly parochial social life and the inefficient knowledge of the Arabic language by most. Last but not least, a factor mentioned is that a critical mass of these people had jobs and livelihoods depending on the ruling industrial and business class affected by the Nationalisation Laws of 1961, or based their activities in an ethnic network of production relations and services, losing their traditional Greek clientele when a large number of Greek workers and employees departed.⁴⁸

These evolutions in Egypt were accompanied by defending, but gradually also by different kind of critical texts from Egyptian Greeks. In 1958, an Egypt-born Greek author, Stratis Tsirkas, published a study about Kavafis and “his epoch” that was much discussed in Greece. Tsirkas held a critical stand to specific aspects of the Greek presence in Egypt and, even if he still considered Greeks as closer to Egyptians at the grass roots level,⁴⁹ he borrowed a distinction made by an earlier Egyptian Greek author, Ioannis Gkikas,⁵⁰ about the “first-class” and “second-class” among the Egyptian Greek bourgeoisie. In the understanding of Tsirkas, it was the “second-class” bourgeois, correlated to the British, financial capital instead of the Greek, national capital, that were responsible for not fulfilling the “historic role” ascribed to the Greek bourgeoisie.⁵¹ The arguments of Tsirkas were part of a discussion in the Greek Left dated back to the interwar period, expecting a “progressive” role from the Greek bourgeoisie or criticizing it for not fulfilling it.⁵² In 1964, a Greek doctor originating from Alexandria questioned the “civilizing mission” and the “progressive” character of Greeks in Egypt, besides some exceptional cases, among which he did not even include the part of the Greek bourgeoisie Tsirkas ascribed with a “progressive” role.⁵³ Another author who moved from Egypt to Greece, after some interim years in Czechoslovakia, was Nikos Psyroukis. In the spirit of the anti-colonial movements, he published some texts in the 1960s, where he correlated the Greeks in Egypt and overall in Africa to colonialism as “small whites”, fortune-

⁴⁸ Kazamias, Alexander: The “Purge of the Greeks”. Compare also: Würth, Anna: Die Griechen in Ägypten.

⁴⁹ See for example: Tsirkas, Stratis: *O Kavafis kai i epochi tou*, p. 98.

⁵⁰ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: *Peninta chronia daskalos*, pp. 39-45.

⁵¹ Tsirkas, Stratis: *O Kavafis kai i epochi tou*, especially pp. 186-194.

⁵² For a critical overview of these discussions see: Iliou, Philippos: *I ideologiki chrisi tis istorias*.

⁵³ Panagiotou, Odysseas: *Skepseis gia tin “ekpolitistiki” apostoli*.

seekers who profited by accepting their role in the “colonial international distribution of labor”.⁵⁴ A critical stance that hardly existed before was evident in texts of this kind, correlated both to the solidarity of part of the Left to anti-colonial movements as also to the attempt to explain the decline of the Greek migrant community in Egypt.

The interpretation model of Psyroukis was a variation of a trend shared also by authors not necessarily originating from Egypt, with models explaining most Greek political evolutions of the 1960s and 1970s through the *passé-partout* scheme of the “foreign interventions” to Greece, ascribing a Greek comprador bourgeoisie in the diaspora with a negative role and using expressions such as that of the “dependent Greek ‘small-empire’ of the Mediterranean periphery”.⁵⁵ These perceptions, popular in the 1970s, often suffered from a largely indefinite and generalized thinking and, as a critical overview suggested already in the early 1980s, had appeared rather in relation to political projects of that time.⁵⁶ They were nevertheless indicating of a growing tendency to characterize the Greek “*omogeneia*”,⁵⁷ more specifically those “doing business also with Greece – or, rather, against it”, as a “substitute and disguise” of a Greek political and economic dependency. In this sense, the “*omogeneis*” were described as merciless at their investments in Greece not differing from any “foreigner”.⁵⁸ The current of critique did not refer exclusively to the role of the “*omogeneis*”, or a specific part of them, to the Greek state. From the perspective of their entrepreneurial activity, the model of “middleman economic minorities” was applied for Greeks in Egypt as well as in parts of the Ottoman Empire, described as “more Western than Middle Eastern in their business outlook and eventually unwelcome”.⁵⁹ One way or another, rather than an example of “success”, and often in an equally problematic generalizing way, the critical literature during and after decolonisation of Africa considered the Greeks of Egypt a community of “foreigners” which “failed”, both in Greece and in Egypt.

2.3 The Greek “cosmopolitans”

⁵⁴ Psyroukis, Nikos: *To neoelliniko paroikiako fainomeno*.

⁵⁵ Tsoukalas, Konstantinos: *Exartisi kai anaparagogi*.

⁵⁶ Hadziiosif, Christos: *Emporikes paroikies*.

⁵⁷ “*Omogeneis*”, in singular “*omogenis*”, is a Greek term used for people considered of being of the same descent. The whole group of these people is called “*omogeneia*”.

⁵⁸ Dertilis, Georges: *Koinonikos metaschimatismos*, pp. 59, 72.

⁵⁹ Kourvetaris, Yorgos A.: *The Greeks*, pp. 85-111.

Since the 1990s, the “diaspora Greeks”, especially those in the “Greek East”,⁶⁰ were less correlated with “failures”, considered rather as a model of “success”, in different variations. At a text of 2000, it was explained that the model of Greek migrants since the antiquity had been the story of Ulysses, “demonstrating the endless desire of the Greek for remote countries and new knowledge, but at the same time also his desire for his own homeland [since] he is a cosmopolitan, but at the same time a loyal citizen of his homeland”.⁶¹ Such descriptions increased considerably in texts since the 1990s, at the expense of the critique of previous decades. The specific vocabulary of a “Greek diaspora” which was “cosmopolitan”, and at the same time “patriotic”, formed an ideal, which was supposed to respond especially to the needs of a period of mobility, great fears and expectations. Late 20th century references to a “Greek diaspora” and a “worldwide Hellenism” were often part of a tendency to reinforce a desired emphasis on the “supraterritorial nature of the nation” and make correlations with a previous flourishing “merchant diaspora”, downplaying references to Greek 20th century “proletarian migration”.⁶² The “migrants” were in many cases elevated and included at the promoted “Greek diaspora”. Ioannis Hasiotis, a historian and editor of a volume on “Greeks in Diaspora” published by the parliament of Greece in 2006, criticized the economic-oriented approaches which had enriched the problematic, but had also been one-sided, since “the body of the migrant Hellenism was not consisted by – and only – the powerful and prominent personalities of the often narrow family entrepreneurial networks, *but* by broader groups of people, concerning their geographic and social origin and professional occupations”.⁶³ This legitimate acknowledgement, however, was not accompanying an orientation to different and perhaps less triumphant aspects of the Greek mass migration, but rather included the “broader groups of people” to the existing “diaspora” schemes. A number between 2,7 and 4,5 million people, for example, forming the “Greek diaspora”, was ascribed with a role because of “the economic power and social recognition of the *omogeneis* in their new homelands, in relation to their potential to

⁶⁰ The term “*Elliniki Anatoli*” or, more often, the description “*I kath’ imas Anatoli*”, usually translated as “our East” or “Greek East” as well, has been used in different contexts ranging from the justification of the inclusion of specific territories to a Greek state to idealizing descriptions of a past or present of Greeks in places not identified with the current borders of the Greek state at the specific time. The “East” in such descriptions refers to a variant geographic space, including more or less territories around the eastern Mediterranean.

⁶¹ Konstantinou, Evangelos: “Geleitwort”, p. 12.

⁶² Venturas, Lina: “Deterritorializing” the Nation, pp. 134-135.

⁶³ Hasiotis, Ioannis K.: Eisagogi, p. 19.

influence in a productive way the social and cultural elevation of the country where they live at present, but also of the *homeland* of them or their forefathers”.⁶⁴ From the viewpoint of the Association of Egyptians in Cyprus, it was stressed that as many as possible from the 300.000 Greeks originating from those earlier thriving in Egypt and later dispersed in different places, according estimations and descriptions of the Association, should be engaged in the promotion of the “Cypriot views”, especially since they possessed a great education and experience.⁶⁵

In the 1990s, the description “cosmopolitan” was used extensively, often in relation to the “multicultural” argument or even as antithetic to nationalism. The later, especially after the outbreak of the war in Yugoslavia, was seen without the earlier enthusiasm of part of the European Left regarding the “liberation” wars of the decolonization period, with scepticism and worries about a “return” to an era of aggressiveness associated with nation-states. The idealization of a past of mobility might include an enthusiasm about a “pre-nationalist era” and, referring to a few individual cases of Orthodox men of letters in the Ottoman Empire, an author even found analogies “between the commercial activity of the past with the migration of today as many Albanians, Romanians and Bulgarians flock into Greece, seeking a better future”.⁶⁶ At an issue about “cosmopolitan identities”, Alexandria was one of the examples of urban centres in the eastern Mediterranean where “cosmopolitanism” was considered as the opposite of “national sentiment”,⁶⁷ an idealized view, since the promoted conviviality was based on regulation and hierarchies,⁶⁸ whereas the supposedly “lost paradise” before the “era of nationalism” was inhabited by people not necessarily opposed to nationalistic logic.⁶⁹ As a matter of fact, one could even detect songs reproduced at the most intellectual journals of the Greek in Egypt, with titles such as “Hatred”, referring to an eternal animosity to Bulgarians, on the occasion of Greek-Bulgarian antagonism in the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁰ As a critical study suggested, if nation-states tended to homogenize and proclaim the commonality of

⁶⁴ Ebenda, p. 13.

⁶⁵ Syndesmos Aigyptioton Ellinon, 2o Pagkosmio Synedrio, p. 30. As in most Greek texts, it is implied that the “Cypriot views” are those of the Republic of Cyprus on the “Cyprus problem”, even if this is not always clarified.

⁶⁶ Tziouvas, Dimitris: Introduction, especially pp. 2-6.

⁶⁷ Yannakakis, Ilios: La mort du cosmopolitisme, pp. 220-225.

⁶⁸ Ilbert, Robert: Alexandrie, 1830-1930, p. 731. See also: Ilbert, Robert: Alexandrie, cosmopolite, pp. 171-185.

⁶⁹ Fuhrmann, Malte: Cosmopolitan imperialists; Trimi-Kirou, Katerina: Quel cosmopolitisme.

⁷⁰ For this example, just one among many of the kind: Nea Zoi, March 1905, pp. 125-127.

their people, trying to overcome difference by the appeal of the national idea and the participation in state institutions, or negatively by exclusion, expulsion, and compulsory assimilation, the empires often presumed that different people within them ought to be governed differently and sometimes drew a strict boundary between undifferentiated insiders and “barbarian” outsiders.⁷¹

Recent texts on ethnic communities in Turkey attempted to challenge the assumptions about the “limited and limiting use” of the terms “Greek” and “Turkish” as exclusive categories, arguing about the existence also of “a cosmopolitan notion beyond the nation, which is overshadowed, impoverished and often targeted by nationalist ideology”.⁷² Nevertheless, the “cosmopolitan” description was not exclusively used in versions “beyond the nation”. For the Greek residents of Athens originating from Istanbul, the emphasis to an “idealized image of a cosmopolitan Istanbul” was used for making comparisons to Athens, “considered to be small and lacking in diversity”, or even to other Greeks of refugee origin supposedly not having “the ultimate urban status” reserved by those originating from Istanbul for themselves.⁷³ Greeks of Smyrniot origin also insisted on the “cosmopolitanism” of their place of origin, as evident in a luxurious volume of 2001 emphasizing the “cosmopolitan” aspects of Izmir, the “European face” of Turkey in the past, as compared to the “Asiatic depth” and the “ominous future possibilities” of the present Turkish society,⁷⁴ or in the presentation of a documentary by speakers of Smyrniot origin and the author of a book about the city titled “Lost paradise”, repeatedly emphasizing the “cosmopolitan” aspects of the city in the first two decades of the 20th century.⁷⁵ Greek history out of the borders of the Greek state, and not only in Egypt, was at the same time reevaluated or presented with a greater emphasis to plurality and cross-cultural communication, but also with an underlying or explicit critique to the Greek state. The growing amount of this well consumed literature included a number of films or books exhibiting positively “cosmopolitan” and “Oriental” aspects of Greek life mostly out of the Greek state and especially in the long 19th century “Greek

⁷¹ Burbank, Jane + Cooper, Frederick: Empires in world history.

⁷² Örs Romain, İlay: Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy, p. 81.

⁷³ Ebenda, pp. 87-90. Accounts of this kind rarely make references to the migrant origin of many Greeks of Istanbul. About the mass Greek migration to Istanbul since the mid-19th century see: Anastasiadou, Méropi: Greek Orthodox immigrants.

⁷⁴ See especially: Kentro Mikrasiatikon Spoudon: Smyrni, p. 9.

⁷⁵ Bistika, Eleni: I zoi stin kosmopolitiki Smyrni.

East”, in fact juxtaposed to life in a miserable Greek state.⁷⁶ Even books referring to other issues and written by people of the discipline might compare with an extreme easiness Greece, which remained in the first half of the 20th century “a country of peasants and small-town dwellers”, to “the cosmopolitan and enterprising bourgeoisie of the Greek Diaspora”.⁷⁷

A part of the recent Greek and international “cosmopolitan” literature also consists of idealizing narrations of people recalling their earlier years in Egypt and often combining nostalgic feelings with frustration from their new lives in other places of the world. At a memoir written in Athens, even though the economical inequality among members of the Greek community in Egypt was admitted, it was also recalled that even its poorest members were happy for having everything at a time people in the Greek state were lacking of much. As further explained, Greek life in Egypt “was something completely different from [the life] of Greece and Cyprus. The houses of the Egyptians were full with works of art and fine taste and were maintained in perfect order and cleanliness with the Egyptian servants [whereas] their meals always had an unusual eclecticism”.⁷⁸ Aspects of wealth and “European” customs were part of the picture, similar to the way “authentic” Smyrniot Greeks were described in popular novels,⁷⁹ as also in memories of Smyrniots introducing an exhibition on “cosmopolitan Izmir”, as drinking their tea in china teapots and eating their sweets in silver saucers and dessert-spoons.⁸⁰ An homogenizing and harmonic picture of the “glorious” past of a community could even more easily be juxtaposed to mostly exaggerated news received from Greece among those living elsewhere, or even the few thousand, mainly aged Greeks still in Egypt. The informants of an ethnologic research in 1988 Egypt, for example, gave a positive picture of local Greeks as “patriotic” and cultivated, compared to the inhabitants of Greece, whom they imagined as corrupted and quarrelling about politics.⁸¹

The emphasis of “cosmopolitan” characteristics, besides the nostalgic memories and the comparison to selective, negatively perceived aspects of the

⁷⁶ See for example: Meimaridi, Mara: *Oi magisses tis Smyrnis*, p. 55.

⁷⁷ Stefanidis, Ioannis D.: *Stirring the Greek Nation*, p. 21.

⁷⁸ Komminos, Minos D.: *I Aigyptos pou ezisa*, pp. 13-14.

⁷⁹ Meimaridi, Mara: *Oi magisses tis Smyrnis*, p. 52.

⁸⁰ Bistika, Eleni: *I zoi stin kosmopolitiki Smyrni*.

⁸¹ Würth, Anna: *Die Griechen in Ägypten*, pp. 69-70. This negative stereotype about the inhabitants of the Greek state, a common place already in the late 19th century, might have been emphasized even more in the late 1980s, a period of political instability and many scandals in Greece.

present, could be explained as an attempt to defend Greeks scattered all around the world from discrimination because of their origin, or in any case provide tools for them to negotiate a better place in the labor market. Some Greeks from Egypt had moved to Greece⁸² and, even if the problems they initially faced were considerably differing from the difficulties of the massive wave of the exchanged population of the 1920s,⁸³ for example, they included working competition of the inhabitants of the Greek state. Since some of the Greeks coming from Egypt could speak different languages, such as English and French, they worked mainly in professions demanding the knowledge of languages,⁸⁴ therefore it was useful for the rest to emphasize characteristics as such as advantages of Egyptian Greeks in general. The example of Greeks engaged in merchant networks and settled in the United States of America already in the 19th century, but trying to differentiate themselves from the great wave of Greek migrants there after 1880,⁸⁵ similarly to the attitude by people of higher education and social status leaving Ottoman urban centers in the 1920s for Argentina, doing the same regarding Greek migrants of lower social strata they found there,⁸⁶ suggest of the potential need of migrants to negotiate their past in a new place of settlement by selecting and generalising some aspects that fit to a better image of their community, irrespective of the actual diversity and inequality among the members of it. Many Greeks from Egypt went to countries with a strong presence of Greek migrants, such as Australia, where some had been employed as translators and interpreters for the Australian government or worked in managerial or professional roles.⁸⁷ Therefore, rather than defending their position in Egypt through arguments of the past, a hypothesis would be that some Greeks coming from Egypt needed to stress “cosmopolitan” characteristics, such as their multilingualism, because it was considered useful for their lives and careers in Greece or in other places, where they settled.

⁸² The effective membership of more than 4000 people, according to a 1992 calculation, in their association, is only partly a criterion about their number: *Syndesmos Aigyptioton Ellinon*, 2o Pagkosmio Synedrio, p. 14.

⁸³ For a reference to different problems of prejudice or even racism that the 1923 “refugees” faced after their settlement in Greece see: Mavrogordatos, George Th.: *Stillborn Republic*, pp. 185-225; Hirschon, Renée: *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe*, pp. 4-5, 15-35; Katsapis, Kostas: *Antiparatheseis*, pp. 104-126.

⁸⁴ Trimi, Katerina: *Mia “astiki metanastefsi”*, pp. 212-219; Iakovidis, Ioannis Chr.: *I entaxi stin elladiki koinonia*, pp. 121-122.

⁸⁵ Kalogeras, Giorgos: *Ethnotikes geografies*, p. 40.

⁸⁶ Damilakou, Maria: *Mikrasiates prosfyges stin Argentinini*, p. 200.

⁸⁷ *Museum Victoria: History of immigration from Egypt*.

Positive generalizations about Greeks in Egypt could be used also from Greeks not necessarily having an origin from Egypt, but willing to reproduce them for their own political agenda. Authors of a different ideological background, searching for alternative models to the “western nation state”, perceived as the root of the generally inferior position ascribed to Greece in its relation to the West, have occasionally reproduced older stereotypes or selected aspects of the past cut off from their historical context. Christos Giannaras, a major representative of the “Neo-Orthodox movement” trying to combine elements of Orthodox Christian faith with a critique to the West, often expressed an absolute critique and a permanent dissatisfaction with the present, especially concerning the Greek state. In one such text, Giannaras referred to how the “Egyptiot Greeks” showed no sign of inferiority to the West, since even the “economically modest” among them had an awareness of a “cultural superiority” and “noble origin” and could speak at least two or three European languages, but “without boasting or the affectation of the allegedly significant Franco-levantine person from the province”. The “domestic background of the Egyptiot Greek, his dressing, his code of behavior, his associations and ‘hangouts’, his musical preferences, his modes of entertainment, consistently echoed the character of the life in the European neighborhoods of Alexandria and Cairo [but without threatening] his conscious and manifest, courageously highlighted Greekness [and] Greek particularity”.⁸⁸ As stressed in another text of Giannaras, “the Greek woman of Alexandria, of Izmir, of Odessa, of Trabzon was once dressed in her long dress with the absolute ease of any European woman”. This “Greekness” was identified to a “cosmopolitan nobleness” praised, but it was the Greek state that, especially after 1974, had accepted a position as a “Balkan province of Europe”, imitating “Europe” like an ape instead of perceiving it as an equal partner.⁸⁹

Even if some recent “diaspora” discourses tried to fit “migrants”, part of them at least,⁹⁰ to the generalizing descriptions of “successful”, “patriotic” and cultivated “Greek Abroad”, it was still some “prominent” Greeks that presented the main examples of the “cosmopolitan nobleness” juxtaposed to the Greek state and its overstressed inferiority to the West. Shifting from the earlier critique of “*omogeneis*”

⁸⁸ Giannaras, Christos: *Ellinismos tis Alexandreias kai tou Sikagou*.

⁸⁹ Giannaras, Christos: *Ta tria simadia palingenesias*.

⁹⁰ See footnotes 60-61.

as responsible for a backwardness of the Greek state,⁹¹ the common place in the long 19th century that “Greeks Abroad” were more “European” than other Greeks, with their great activity as “benefactors” put in comparison to a permanently weak and inefficient Greek state, recovered considerably in the 1990s. Hence, one could read that the achievements of benefacting activity still substituted an “ailing Greek public sector”,⁹² whereas the “*omogeneis*” of Egypt were presented as an agent of “intercultural connection and reference within the expanded world context”, in spite of the “limitations, powerlessness, and even pettiness perhaps” of the Greek state.⁹³ A “cosmopolitan culture” as well as “integration in the social and religious environment of Egypt” was ascribed to them by the same scholar. Egyptian Greek “benefactors” were furthermore compared to the current activities of Bill Gates and Warren Buffett or some “eminent Greeks”, businessmen of the 20th century named in her text. All of them, it was argued, were “functioning as organic intellectuals of humanity, that is, as organizers of culture and society on a planetary scale”, since they “recognized their duty toward the suffering and the rest of the society”.⁹⁴ Presenting a recent book of this author, a major Athenian newspaper described “Egyptiot Hellenism” as being constituted by “pioneer and bold businessmen which comprised for more than a century a perennial spring of wealth as also of benefaction and culture”, with their “innovative entrepreneurship” having an impact in the societies of both Egypt and Greece.⁹⁵

Together with their economic activities, another factor of generalized “success” that was sometimes stressed was the cultural activities of Greeks in Egypt. A necrology at a discipline’s journal praised a departed historian, describing her as representing a “collective particularity of Egyptian Hellenism” including qualities such as “multilingualism, intellectual discipline, cosmopolitan horizons, wideness of interests”.⁹⁶ Presenting the exhibition of Dimitris Papadimos, an important Greek photographer of the 20th century, a reporter characterized him as representing a “perfect mingling of West and East” and explained that to understand his work, it would be necessary to approach it from the perspective “of the thriving Egyptiot

⁹¹ See footnotes 53-55.

⁹² Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I Elliniki Koinotita tou Kaïrou*, p. 31.

⁹³ Tomara-Sideris, Matoula: *Evergetismos kai prosopikotita* – vol. 1, pp. 46-48; Tomara-Sideris, Matoula: *Egyptiot Greek Benefaction*, p. 86.

⁹⁴ Tomara-Sideris, Matoula: *The Social and Historical Function of Euergetism*, pp. 105-112.

⁹⁵ Malavakis, Sakis: *Charaksan ton dromo tou vamvakiou*.

⁹⁶ *Ta Istorika: Chroniko: Era Sigala-Vranousi*, p. 218.

Greek diaspora and generally the cosmopolitan Hellenism that flourished and achieved great things” out of the borders of the Greek “*kratidio*”, a term used in a derogatory way to describe a state small and weak.⁹⁷ Writing about Pinelopi Delta, a Greek author with an Egyptian origin, a scholar wrote about “the City of Kavafis” and the wealthy Alexandrians, who had an access to Western culture, possessed more refined manners and were more educated and wealthy even from rich Athenians of the early 20th century. It was a “cosmopolitan Alexandria” where Pinelopi Delta or Konstantinos Kavafis became great Greek authors, a society “speaking English and French in the parties and offices, Greek at home, Italian in the street, and using Arabic, when knowing any, only in order to give orders”.⁹⁸ Such remarks were often reproducing preexisting stereotypes. Pinelopi Delta, for example, had compared the “*omogeneis*” to the Athenians, according to memories from her childhood and especially from the summer of 1882, which she spent by her uncle in Athens. After making comparisons of the streets, the houses and the dresses, young Pinelopi could describe the “*omogeneis*” as possessing “nobility, culture, patriotism, civility”, whereas the “typical” Athenian was envious and miserable and Athenian women were known for their ugliness and bad taste.⁹⁹ Pinelopi Delta, however, spent many years of her later life in Athens and, as she pointed out, already when she was 17 years old and went to Athens, she could hardly recognize what she remembered from her childhood, since Athens had changed extremely much in a few years.¹⁰⁰ Even though Athens indeed changed rapidly at the turn of the century in different aspects of life,¹⁰¹ one can assume that it was also Pinelopi Delta that had changed and that she saw more critically the stereotypes constructed because of a limited experience confirming some preexisting ideas of her, grown up as the daughter of Emmanouil Benakis, one of the wealthiest “*omogeneis*” in Egypt. In any case, it seems that many later texts reproduced such stereotypes with an extreme easiness, either because of uncritically reading of sources of that time or for their own purposes.

An identification of “cosmopolitanism” to “European” is evident in Greek texts, such as one published on the occasion of an exhibition in Athens about the Greeks of Egypt and describing the social life of the later as part of “the cosmopolitan

⁹⁷ Giannaras, Spyros: O “taxidiotis” fotografos.

⁹⁸ Navet-Grémillet, Marie-Cécile: Pinelopi Delta, pp. 317-320.

⁹⁹ Zannas, P. A. (ed.): Delta, P[inelopi] S.: Protes enthymiseis, pp. 68-70.

¹⁰⁰ Ebenda, p. 70.

¹⁰¹ Agriantoni, Christina: Symvoli, pp. 183-191; Hadziiosif, Christos: Eisagogi, pp. 13-14.

climate prevailing among all European communities in Egypt at the beginning of the twentieth century”.¹⁰² Some scholars have stressed, however, that Alexandria was “a city of migrants [but no less] an Egyptian city”,¹⁰³ or that Egyptians should be reintroduced in the history of modern Alexandria, though “without assuming that they should have pride of place simply because they constituted the majority”.¹⁰⁴ As further argued, “Alexandrian cosmopolitanism” ought to be questioned for its limited explanatory power, since usually nothing was meant by that but “the lifestyle of its elite [...] seen as pure uncontaminated European lifestyle”.¹⁰⁵ In the Greek versions of the “cosmopolitan” narration, especially regarding Greek presence in Egypt, this was expressed with statements such as the complaint of a Greek Egyptian author about the loss of “cosmopolitan Alexandria”, after the city had been “Arabized”.¹⁰⁶ The Greek identification of “cosmopolitanism” to “Europe” could be combined with different arguments, emphasizing or downplaying parts of the story in order to satisfy needs of the present.

2.4 The “nice Greek adventure” in Egypt

The narrative of the “Europeanization” of Greece, but also of the diffusion of “European values” in the Balkans and the eastern Mediterranean, was quite popular in the 1990s. In a parliamentary speech of 2002 and in the euphoria of the years preceding the economic crisis Giorgos Papandreou, minister of foreign affairs at that time, stressed the “historical role” Greece had in order to spread the “values” of European Union in the Balkans.¹⁰⁷ At a volume about Greece and the “new Balkans”, Kitromilides argued that Greek culture had been a “conduit of cultural change and intellectual and social mobility for social groups and individuals on the margins of European civilization” at a period of late 18th and early 19th century; as further argued, this formed the “substratum of Greece’s opportunities in the contemporary Balkans”, since Greek culture was expected to function as a “medium of modernization” to the devastated northern neighbors of Greece re-enacting a role played in the late 18th and early 19th century. In practical terms, this would mean “an active Greek contribution

¹⁰² Politismikos Organismos – Dimos Athinaion: Pagkosmios Ellinismos, p. 134.

¹⁰³ Ilbert, Robert: Alexandrie, 1830-1930, p. 209.

¹⁰⁴ Fahmy, Khaled: Towards a social history, pp. 281-304.

¹⁰⁵ Fahmy, Khaled: For Cavafy, pp. 277-278.

¹⁰⁶ Malanos, Timos: Anamniseis enos Alexandrinou, p. 365.

¹⁰⁷ Cited in: Kazamias, Alexander: To fainomeno tou “apoevropaismu”.

to the development of human resources in the Balkans [and] the growth of Greek private investment in assisting the expansion of market economics among Greece's northern neighbors". In this way, and with Greeks leading the process, the "new Balkans" would move away, at least as Kitromilides hoped, from "primitive, ethnic hatreds, prejudices and stereotypes".¹⁰⁸ As more critical texts pointed, however, it was rarely questioned whether the extrovert orientation described with such an enthusiasm constituted a success or rather an indication of weakness for the Greek economy.¹⁰⁹

If Greeks in the late 20th and early 21st century were considered as having a duty to diffuse "European values", it was important to disassociate them from aspects of the European past still evaluated as negative. Critical approaches to specific aspects of the Greek presence in Africa had not totally disappeared in the 1990s: a book of 1998 still made critical comments on how many Greeks in Egypt and all over Africa had a specific role as "middlemen" in the colonial distribution of labor,¹¹⁰ but its author, who had made his main research about the northeastern part of Africa in the 1970s and had been the first professor of African Studies in a Greek university during the 1980s and 1990s, represented a style of critique that lost in popularity in the 1990s. The understanding of Hasiotis is more typical on that matter, as he stressed that most Greeks in Africa were "encouraged by the economic conditions created by western European rulers, moved to those countries [but] did not constitute, as an entirety, at least, an organic part of the colonial system", being "radically different from the processes followed by other western European peoples in modern times". These "radical" differences, according to the same author, were the smaller spread and numerical size of Greeks and the administrative independence from the Greek state.¹¹¹ Even though admitting that the "Greek diaspora in Africa" grew and declined together with "western European (and predominantly British) colonialism" and that the independence "inevitably" had a negative impact on Greeks "together with the western European colonialists",¹¹² this approach stressed the "radical" differences of Greeks compared to other Europeans. Similarly Spyros Kottis, an Egypt-born Greek teacher, explained in a 2004 text that Greeks "did not come to Egypt as colonialists or

¹⁰⁸ Kitromilides, Paschalis M.: *The Greek Cultural Presence*, pp. 193-209.

¹⁰⁹ Hadziiosif, Christos: *Astochies kai genikefseis*.

¹¹⁰ Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*.

¹¹¹ Hasiotis, Ioannis K.: *Modern Greek Diaspora*, p. 89; Hasiotis, Ioannis K.: *Eisagogi*, p. 17.

¹¹² Hasiotis, Ioannis K.: *Eisagogi*, pp. 23-24.

conquerors but in order to work and survive”.¹¹³ As it was added, the economic success of Greeks, such as the well-known merchant Georgios Averoff, was made possible due to “business activity” and the “exploitation of the special conditions dominant then in Egypt”, conditions not further explicated.¹¹⁴ At about the same time, another Greek originating from Egypt, Souloyannis, drew a line between Greeks in Egypt and their “nice Greek adventure in friendly Egypt”, on the one hand, and the “adventurism” of Greeks in other African countries,¹¹⁵ even though the same author explained in a book on the Greeks of South Africa that Greek migrants in general “did not want to provoke a colonialist fear to the local element”, but just to work.¹¹⁶

Being “European” enough, but without the negative connotations of colonial time, passed perfect to late 20th century expectations. Compared to other “cosmopolitan” cases in the “Greek East”, Egypt had the extra “advantage” of being a symbol of an extrovert orientation of Greek business and of a glorious past which could not be easily or directly correlated with expansionary plans of the Greek state mostly negatively evaluated by the turn of the 21st century, but rather to individual success and to a more indefinite Greek patriotism. It was therefore easier to apply to a common past so as to promote any kind of closer ties between Greeks and Egyptians in the present, provided that negative colonial aspects would be downplayed. The “General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad” was already formed by the Greek state in the early 1980s and organized a meeting of African Greek businessmen in Athens in 1986,¹¹⁷ but it was specifically in the 1990s that the references to a “cosmopolitan” past and to contact since many centuries were used as a sign not only of optimism about a friendship of people, but also of prospects of business. On the occasion of the town twinning of Alexandria to Thessaloniki, in 1994, the governor of the former is reported of having welcomed the activity of Greek businessmen, asking them to live there “as they had lived for centuries”.¹¹⁸ In the preface of a 2004 book on Greeks in Egypt Stefanos Tamvakis, president of the Greek Community of Alexandria and alternate president of the World Council of Hellenes Abroad at that time, explained

¹¹³ Kottis, Spyros: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 201.

¹¹⁴ Ebenda, p. 138.

¹¹⁵ Souloyannis, Euthymios: *I thesi*, p. 66.

¹¹⁶ Souloyannis, Euthymios: *Oi Ellines sti Notioafrikaniki Dimokratia*, p. 15.

¹¹⁷ Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*, p. 142. For the institutions set in the late 20th century so as to coordinate the Greek state and Greek migrant communities see: Venturas, Lina: “Deterritorializing” the Nation.

¹¹⁸ Cited in: Charalampidou, Vana: *Ston Ellinon tis koinotites*, p. 112.

that the “Hellenism of Egypt” differed from “the other Westerners” because of “love and cooperation with the Egyptian people [since] the depths of history [and] until today”. Besides the usual rhetoric about the importance of “cosmopolitan Alexandria” to modern Greek history and culture, there was a conclusion of Tamvakis that even if “cosmopolitanism” was lost, through the memories about it Alexandria could open itself “self-confidently to the globalized economy and its multicultural influence”.¹¹⁹ The remote past can be used so as to offer arguments about an everlasting friendship of Greeks and Egyptians as well. At a late 20th century edition of the Association of Egyptians of Cyprus, for example, when the revolts of Egyptians against the Persians in the antiquity were mentioned, it was explained that the former “always assisted the Greeks”.¹²⁰ In 2000, Filippos Kossenias, president of the Association of Egyptian Greeks, stressed the harmonic conviviality of Greeks with Egyptian people for centuries, even since the prehistoric years and the period of some “philhellene” pharaohs, to add the contacts with Minoan Crete and the existence of commercial relations in the antiquity.¹²¹ The Association of Greek-Egyptian Friendship also referred to a longstanding and ever-existing message of Greek-Egyptian friendship.¹²²

Nevertheless, this kind of exaggerating rhetoric is not applied only regarding the friendship of people or the prospect of a profitable involvement in the future. Other possible correlations of such a selective argumentation differentiating Greeks from “other Europeans” may include even the claim that Greeks should not receive or legalize migrants, besides a few that might be useful for economic development; extreme right or other populist authors in Greece have expressed the wish to redirect migration only to states such as Great Britain, Netherlands or France, who had a “colonialist policy” in the past, one which had caused recent migration.¹²³ It is not my intention to confront the absolute disassociation of Greeks from a “colonialist policy”, whatever is meant by that, with equally problematic generalizations and direct correlations of the long 19th century history with the late 20th and early 21st century migration and the attempts of each European state to evade responsibility.¹²⁴ In any case, and having seen the ways the Greeks of Egypt were represented in Greek texts

¹¹⁹ Kottis, Spyros: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 15.

¹²⁰ Petrondas, Christos: *Oi Ellines stin Aigypto*, pp. 11-13.

¹²¹ Politismikos Organismos – Dimos Athinaion: *Pagkosmios Ellinismos*, p. 11.

¹²² *Syndesmos Aigyptioton Ellinon*, 2o Pagkosmio Synedrio, p. 59.

¹²³ For an early example of an argumentation increasing in the last years: Voridis, Makis: *Prepei na synergastoume*.

¹²⁴ Schuster, Liza: *Turning refugees into “illegal migrants”*, p. 1403.

after the independence of Egypt, I suggest that questions about them, their relation to non-European Egyptians as also to the “other Europeans”, have to be examined in a critical way, disassociated from the politics of the present and the prospect of the future each author may wish. This is a major goal of the present study.

2.5 Summary

In the second chapter, different forms of representation of the Greeks in Egypt have been presented, in an attempt to detect some aspects of continuity and change regarding the arguments emphasized or downplayed in each period. The major problem, either regarding the harsh critique of the decolonization era or the older or renewed “cosmopolitan” part of the “Greek diaspora” literature, is the way selected aspects of the past have been used or reproduced in order to produce arguments for the present.

3. Spread “like olive oil”: Greeks dispersed in the African interior

Hasiotis named “the smaller spread and numerical size of Greeks” as one of the radical differences of Greeks from “other West European peoples” in Africa.¹ Nevertheless, in an interesting reverse of the usual Greek differentiation from “other Europeans”, in the complaints Cromer received from Egyptian officials in 1889, Greeks occupied “an entirely different position” from other Europeans, exactly because of being far more numerous and not collected chiefly in the big towns.² Especially in Egyptian rural areas, it was usually the Greeks that had been the newcomers negatively perceived by the locals.³ Already in the 1850s, the Greek consul in Alexandria considered that Greeks and their commercial interests in the towns of Upper Egypt were in danger, giving the explanation that the local authorities were “naturally” influenced by a “general hostility of the natives towards foreigners”.⁴ As will be argued in the present chapter, this hostility was correlated with specific activities associated with Greeks in general from a non-Greek point of view. In fact, different observers pointed out that the popularity of Egyptian revolutionaries such as ‘Urabi⁵ was based, especially in the province, in the mistrust of Muslim debtors to Christian and Jewish landholders, creditors and usurers. Together with Syrians, Greeks were the major group included to these Christians.⁶

In 1899, Joseph Conrad wrote that “every day the coast looked the same, as though we had not moved [...] we penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness [...] cut off from the comprehension of our surroundings”. The hero of Conrad’s famous story described with these words his trip through the Congo River, echoing a turn-of-the-century perception of “white people” entering a “prehistoric world” of “wilderness” in order to make business.⁷ It was especially since the middle of 19th century that the Greek presence alongside another big river of Africa, the Nile, grew much bigger. The question is whether Greeks perceived their presence there with familiarity or rather in a way similar to “other Europeans”, such as the narrator

¹ See chapter 2, footnote 106.

² BNA, FO series 633/5: Cromer Papers, p. 248.

³ ‘Ashmawi, Sayyid: Perceptions of the Greek Money-lender, pp. 244-277.

⁴ HAMFA 36:1, 1859.

⁵ About ‘Urabi and the ideas of the Egyptian National Party see chapter 6.1.

⁶ Villiers, Stuart of Dromana: Egypt after the War, pp. 55, 177; Malmignati, Perollari P.: L’ Egitto senza Egiziani, p. 79; Bemmelen, Pieter: L’ Egypte et l’ Europe – vol. 1, pp. 42-43.

⁷ Conrad, Joseph: Heart of Darkness, pp. 151, 185-186.

of Conrad's story or even Cromer, for whom Egypt was "a foreign country [...] in a semi-civilised condition".⁸ In various later Greek texts, Greeks were regarded as the "European" that could more easily "adjust" to the "locals", especially in the Egyptian interior.⁹ It has been suggested that "the influence of local Arab culture was much more in evidence" for Greeks in the Egyptian interior, compared to the "cosmopolitan influence" of the urban centers with "the high concentration of foreigners in them".¹⁰ Leaving for the time aside the issue of the "cosmopolitan influence",¹¹ the following chapter attempts to recount the story of the Greek presence in the interior of Egypt and Sudan since the mid-19th century and question whether and in which ways the spread of Greeks in the rural areas of Egypt and the African interior signified a decisive difference of Greeks from "other Europeans". Correlated to this is the consideration if the famous ability to "adjust", ascribed to Greeks in the Egyptian interior, was actually, and besides some exceptional individual cases, related with a "proximity" of Greeks to the "local Arab culture" or rather to the necessities of their economic activities.

3.1 The "real migrant hero"

In 1911 *Atlantis*, a Greek newspaper of New York claiming of being "the only global Greek" one, published the story of Pantelas, a Macedonian Greek, who grew up in Athens and later found his way to Sudan "like so many others [...] anxious, dreaming of adventures, with courage and willingness to confront everything". The story of Pantelas, who also provided the British with information about Sudan deriving from his personal experience, was promoted like many other "heroic" deeds of Greeks during the late 19th century wars in Sudan. A usual comment, repeated also in *Atlantis*, was that without Greeks, Sudan would remain "empty of white people, empty of jobs, empty of hopes". The Greek migrant in Africa, went on the story, was "the real migrant hero, the real self-made, the undisputed winner of his fortune", since he was "the one who went beyond Egypt, which he considers as his place, and stepped over the desert areas". He was also differing from "migrants in America and Australia, who step over familiar traces, follow examples of others and know what

⁸ Cromer, the Earl of: *Modern Egypt* – vol. 1, p. 2.

⁹ See chapter 2.

¹⁰ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, pp. 24-25.

¹¹ See my critique in chapter 5.

they have to expect”, since he had to confront “powers of nature, knowing that he is obliged to have the strength to struggle against them, that he is not going to get assistance by anyone, that the unknown, horrifying and mysterious lies in front of him”.¹² Such a description was not considerably differing from that of Conrad regarding the places “beyond Egypt”, i.e. out of Cairo, Alexandria and the towns around the Suez Channel. It seems, then, that Greeks in Africa did not always claim to be different from “other Europeans” and closer to the locals.

A significant number of Greeks decided to go “beyond Egypt”. A Greek presence in Upper Egypt is recorded already in the 1850s,¹³ but it grew particularly in the juncture after the Crimean War, when the great demand on grain led to the settlement of some major Greek merchant houses there, so as to take over a mediating role in the grain commerce.¹⁴ The demand on cotton during the civil war in the United States of America led to the “cotton-boom”, when cotton provided an assured cash income. Therefore, it was made possible to money-lenders, mainly non-Egyptians, to extend their activities throughout rural Egypt.¹⁵ Many Greeks got involved in different ways, for example owning the first and the most ginning machines, not to mention their activity in infrastructure. According to one description about mid-19th century Egypt, small towns were growing like mushrooms, similarly to California and Texas of that time, with “roads, hotels, pharmacies and coffee-shops springing up suddenly”.¹⁶ A migration of grocers and retailers further increased the Greek presence in the Egyptian province.

A Greek statistic of 1889 detected 1109 Greek citizens in different southern Egyptian provinces and another 1899 in towns and villages of the Nile Delta,¹⁷ the Egyptian census of 1907 counted respectively 973 and 4079 people born in Greece,¹⁸ another Egyptian statistic of 1909 proposed a number of 2206 and 9954 Greek citizens in provinces of the Upper and Lower Egypt,¹⁹ whereas in 1913, the Greek consul of Alexandria calculated the former as little more than 3000 and the later as

¹² Atlantis, May 1911, pp. 24-25.

¹³ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, pp. 327-341; Tsourkas, Cl[eouvoulos]: Les Hellènes dans l’ intérieur, p. 12, footnote 1.

¹⁴ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, p. 327.

¹⁵ Owen, E. R. J.: Cotton, p. 355.

¹⁶ Tsirkas, Stratis: O Kavafis kai i epochi tou, p. 55.

¹⁷ Ypourgeion Esoterikon: Statistiki tis Ellados, pp. 13-15.

¹⁸ Lowis, C. C.: The Census of Egypt taken in 1907, pp. 38, 47, 50, 54-55, 59, 66-67, 74-75, 79, 83, 86.

¹⁹ Ministry of Finance: Statistical Yearbook of Egypt for 1909, pp. 28-31.

about 8500,²⁰ commenting that those somehow involved in the trade chain of cotton as also other Greeks of the interior “formed perhaps the backbone of Hellenism in Egypt”.²¹ One should keep in mind that, leaving aside the question of who became a Greek citizen and how, especially in Egypt, or even of how reliable the data about places of birth might have been,²² a considerable number of ethnic Greeks might have been in Egypt without being included to either of these categories. Furthermore, part of the people included in these estimations did not stay long in the specific areas, something that meant that the actual number of Greek migrants living in the Egyptian province was probably much greater than just the average of the available calculations.

A Greek presence in the towns of Lower Egypt, at the Nile Delta, such as Zagazig, is known since the 1850s.²³ There is information about Greeks living in Tanta already in 1842, but their number increased considerably in the 1860s, due to the cotton-boom.²⁴ A calculation of 1863 mentioned the existence of 70 Greek families in Tanta,²⁵ a Greek diplomat referred to a number of 100 to 150 Greeks there in 1868,²⁶ whereas more than 60 Greek families must have lived in Mahallah El-Kubra in 1880.²⁷ Having as criteria the existence of major Greek commercial activities and of a sufficient number of Greek citizens, as in the example of Mansourah, the Greek consul of Cairo suggested, in 1882, the towns of Shibin El-Kawm, Tanta, Mansourah²⁸ and Zagazig as the proper places in Lower Egypt for a Greek diplomatic agency,²⁹ four towns with about 2360 Greek citizens in 1885, according to a calculation based on data provided by the Greek consular authorities.³⁰

Greek merchants could be found as south as in Sudan, involved in activities such as the trade of slaves or ivory, already before the mid-19th century juncture.³¹ It was by the turn of the century, however, that Greeks were spread everywhere in Egypt

²⁰ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, pp. 60-64.

²¹ Ebenda, pp. 170-171.

²² About these issues see also chapter 8.

²³ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, pp. 310-313.

²⁴ Ebenda, p. 306.

²⁵ *Pandora* 14:324, 1863, p. 303.

²⁶ *HAMFA* 36.1, 1868.

²⁷ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 322.

²⁸ In the specific town, the establishment of the Mixed Courts in 1879 also attracted many Greeks: *HAMFA* 36.1, 1879. See also chapter 5, footnotes 27-29.

²⁹ *HAMFA* αακ / γ:5, 1882.

³⁰ *Akropolis*, 28.07.1885.

³¹ Hadziiosif, Christos: *La colonie grecque*, pp. 223-225; Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*, pp. 37-39.

“like olive oil”, according to a description, especially in places of commercial interest.³² Demands for the appointment of Greek diplomatic agents in some southern towns, justified exactly by Greek commercial interests, can be traced already in the late 1850s.³³ The consul in Cairo repeated them in 1862, explaining that even in the innermost parts of Africa it “was impossible not to meet a Greek merchant, money lender or grocer” and adding that, besides those practicing commerce temporarily, about 200 Greeks lived permanently in Upper Egypt.³⁴ By 1869, a Greek diplomatic report mentioned the existence of more than 500 Greeks from Sudan up to the southern Egyptian provinces, a report of the consul of Cairo in 1882 suggested as possible seats of vice-consulates the towns of Fayyum, Minya, Asyut and Khartoum, claiming that a considerable number of Greeks existed there and that they were important for Greek commerce,³⁵ whereas another information based on diplomatic calculations gave a number of 500 Greek citizens in Minya and Asyut during 1885.³⁶ According to an early 20th century book about Egypt in its interior, written by a Greek who had just spent a couple of years as an engineer in Aswan, there was at least one Greek merchant, hotel-keeper or grocer in the “depths” of Sudan and even the outmost places of central Africa.³⁷ Even in “local” bazaars, such as one described in Minya of the 1870s, a European traveler mentioned “the smart Greek stores” where a variety of products was sold.³⁸ Andreadis, an economist and professor at the University of Athens, described his own personal experience when, asking a merchant in Aswan about his origin, he received the response that he was a Greek followed by the remark “what else did you think I would be?” As a French in Luxor told Andreadis, Sudan was a place “under the British as far as administration is concerned, but under the Greeks as far as economic life is taken in consideration”,³⁹ whereas a French traveler in Aswan remarked at about the same time that Greeks were the avant-garde of Europeans.⁴⁰

Leaving aside the exaggerations of such statements, Greeks indeed played an important role in the diffusion of European commerce in the interior of Egypt, but

³² Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 44, 140.

³³ HAMFA 36.1, 1857; HAMFA 36.1, 1859.

³⁴ HAMFA 36.1, 1863.

³⁵ HAMFA *αακ* / γ:5, 1882.

³⁶ Akropolis, 28.07.1885.

³⁷ Karatheodoris, K[onstantinos] St.: *I Aigyptos*, p. 110.

³⁸ Edwards, Amelia B.: *A thousand miles up the Nile*, pp. 126-127.

³⁹ *O Ellinismos*, March 1907, p. 187.

⁴⁰ Bertrand, Louis: *Le mirage Oriental*, p. 53.

also in other parts of Africa.⁴¹ It was mainly for commerce that, as Politis was proud to write, Greeks had been “the first of all Europeans settling in yet uncivilized countries”.⁴² A Greek journalist often sent to Egypt at the turn of the century, Polyvios Dimitrakopoulos, commented that at the villages of the “*fellahs*”, a description of Egyptian peasants with a spice of contempt in Greek texts, one could meet nothing than “natives” hardly differing from the orangutan of the forests, with the exception of one Greek coffee-house keeper, who was usually a grocer and a pharmacist and a retailer at the same time.⁴³ Greeks were living in the “European part” of provincial towns such as Tanta, shining in their wealth and working as retailers, sellers of coffee or wine, manual workers, purchasers of agricultural products, owners of cotton pressing machines, grocers and usurers, even as doctors or lawyers, representing to the enthusiastic Greek observer a “mobile, efficiently working, wealthy Greek world”.⁴⁴ In Mansourah, a passing by Greek archaeologist observed that local Greeks, all of them wealthy, were “a white spot” in the middle of a filthy “*Arapia*”, i.e. the place of “Niggers”.⁴⁵ As Dimitrakopoulos reported a few years later, Greeks could be found mainly at the cafeterias and restaurants across the Nile, since in the “interior” of the town the “Nigger” had set “his dirty nest”;⁴⁶ his conclusion was that without the Greek owners of hotels, coffee-shops and restaurants making the road along the Nile looking like a Greek town, Mansourah would have been an altogether “*fellah*” village.⁴⁷

The existence of many descriptions of this kind put in question the extent of the influence the “local Arab culture” had upon Greeks in the interior of Egypt. On the other hand, if – in Greek descriptions – the Greek presence in rural and sometimes isolated areas of Egypt or Sudan was mostly considered as a “civilizing”, when not a “heroic” act, indicating of “Europeans” entering the “heart of darkness” and in complete opposition to the “Niggers”, this could be perceived differently from a non-Greek European point of view. A German medical doctor travelling in the interior of Egypt in 1878, for example, apparently had a different understanding about the Greeks as the pioneers of Europe when he commented that, even if the local Greeks

⁴¹ Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*.

⁴² Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 2, p. 6.

⁴³ *Empros*, 10.05.1902.

⁴⁴ *Kleio* 5:6, 1889, p. 83.

⁴⁵ Filadelfefs, Alexandros: *Aigyptiaka skarifimata*, p. 64.

⁴⁶ *Empros*, 05.11.1897.

⁴⁷ *Empros*, 07.11.1897.

were wearing a “European suit”, there was still the “prior barbarian” behind it.⁴⁸ As often, it depended from perspective how the same group of people and their activities would be interpreted, and this is the main focus in the following part of this chapter.

3.2 A “link between Europe and Africa”

Non-Greek Europeans, in particular the British, had an experience in different places, where a large number of Greeks lived. One such place was the Ionian Islands, ruled by the British during the first half of the 19th century, where the ancient Greek past and the bourgeois present with the “crimson-cloaked Italianate Ionian aristocrat” did not prohibit a stereotypical perception of Greeks “as swarthy Irishmen or pale-skinned aborigines”.⁴⁹ Cyprus was another place British went to govern a considerable number of Greeks, this time after 1878. As in the Ionian Islands, a major peculiarity in Cyprus was the “highly unsettling fact” that the majority of the “natives” was considered by the British as the “heirs of that same classical tradition which underlay much of British education and defined British notions of ‘civilisation’”.⁵⁰ In spite of the sense of a British “mission” for “restoring” rather than “civilizing” in Cyprus,⁵¹ after several decades there, Cypriots were still labeled as “Orientals” which should be ruled and not just administrated.⁵² Furthermore, and as late as at the initial stages of the Second World War, many Cypriot volunteers, including Greeks, were rejected from the British army because of having dark skin and not being “European in appearance and habits”.⁵³ The British-Greek encounters included many expectations, disappointments, and prejudices, which did not make the Greeks always acceptable as equal Europeans to British eyes.

In turn-of-the-century Egypt, non-Greek Europeans made sarcastic comments on some Anglophile local Greeks⁵⁴ or called Greeks “parasites” and suggested that it would have been good to expulse them, with no distinction.⁵⁵ Some differentiations among the group of Greeks might be made, such as when an author had “a good word

⁴⁸ Klunzinger, C[arl] B[enjamin]: *Bilder aus Oberägypten*, p. 27.

⁴⁹ Gallant, Thomas W.: *Experiencing Dominion*.

⁵⁰ Given, Michael: *Star of the Parthenon*, p. 60.

⁵¹ Herzfeld, Michael: *Anthropology through the looking-glass*, p. 74.

⁵² Rappas, Alexis: *The management of British colonial personnel*.

⁵³ Asmussen, Jan: “Dark-skinned Cypriots will not be accepted!”, pp. 167-185.

⁵⁴ Ninet, John: *Au pays des Khédives*, pp. 8-10.

⁵⁵ Bemmelen, Pieter: *L’ Egypte et l’ Europe – vol. 2*, pp. 164-165.

to say” about the Alexandrian Greeks of the “upper classes” or the Greek merchants, “pioneers of civilisation”, expressing at the same time a very bad opinion for a third category of Greeks, “thieves, smugglers, fancy men, of the worst description”.⁵⁶ Similarly, Cromer commented that “there are Greeks and Greeks” in Egypt⁵⁷ and argued that “Levantine”, a category including Greeks in his conception, had done “a small amount of good by introducing European capital on a limited scale into the country [and] a vast amount of harm by associating the name of European in the minds of the Egyptians with a total absence of scruple in the pursuit of gain”,⁵⁸ in a typical example of how the people described as “Levantine” might have been ascribed with all negative qualities of both “West” and “East”.⁵⁹ Even when writing about the Greek presence in Egypt as “an unmixed benefit for the country”, Cromer considered “Greeks” as “the most characteristically and superlatively Levantine” among all “European inhabitants of the Levant”, only to add that nobody had suffered more than the Greeks because “of condemning a whole class or community because the conduct of certain individuals belonging to it is worthy of condemnation”. Cromer expressed his admiration for the “enterprising commercial spirit” of the “low-class Greek” in Egypt, but concluded that the presence of the later was often hurtful. Paraphrasing a saying of that time about Turks and Europe, Cromer suggested that “it would be an excellent thing for Turkey and its dependencies if some of the low-class Greeks, who inhabit the Ottoman dominions, could be turned bag and baggage out of Turkey”.⁶⁰

People classified in the margins of “Europeanness” were credited with some advantages as well. In Ethiopia, Greeks as also Armenians were described by a Hungarian journalist as being “successful” due to three specific abilities ascribed to them: that they could live with as bad conditions as Ethiopians, if not even worse, that they could adjust to conditions following their “instinct” in commerce, which might reach the limits of unscrupulousness, as also that they could develop close relations to the locals, in spite of sharing European racist ideas.⁶¹ These qualities were often used from non-Greek observers in Egypt in order to describe Greek “success” there.

⁵⁶ de Guerville, A. B.: *New Egypt*, pp. 87-88.

⁵⁷ BNA, FO series 633/5: Cromer Papers, p. 248.

⁵⁸ Cromer, the Earl of: *Modern Egypt* – vol. 2, p. 250.

⁵⁹ Schmitt, Oliver Jens: *Levantine*, pp. 13, 61-86.

⁶⁰ BNA, FO series 633/87: Cromer Papers, p. 828; Cromer, the Earl of: *Modern Egypt* – vol. 2, pp. 245-252.

⁶¹ Cited in: Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*, p. 49.

Simple life was mentioned as a factor for the progress of the “Greek in the interior”; as a correspondent of British press explained, “bread and olives, with a little white cheese, form his only diet; he sleeps under the counter of his little shop; his grimy apron covers his only suit; his exiguous earnings either go back intact, into the shop, for he has no expenses, or are let out at high interest to the improvident fellahin”.⁶² The ability to “stand any climate”, “live in native huts” and “eat native food”,⁶³ to engage in trade despite the “dangers, difficulties, and discomforts”, that just increased their charges,⁶⁴ to “conceive the distances in the inaccessible parts of the Sudan”, in contrary to “the European”,⁶⁵ to risk life even for a “petty gain” in the southernmost parts of Egypt and Sudan,⁶⁶ were all qualities ascribed to Greeks by different non-Greek European observers. A French author, writing about the Greek ability of “acclimatization” even in areas where this was almost impossible for a “European of the North”,⁶⁷ praised Greeks for their “clear and calculating mind”, which allows them to be the “masters of the South”.⁶⁸ Together with such more or less positive qualities, non-Greek European authors also acknowledged some more or less negative ones, such as that “the Greek” was “unscrupulous in his dealings”, a comment accompanied by an additional comparison that “as a vulture scents carrion from afar, so the Greek scents any possible opening for trade with the natives [and that] naturally a gambler, there is no speculation that he will not undertake, no risk he will not run”.⁶⁹ According to Churchill, Greek traders in Sudan were perhaps not “high-souled”, even if being “worthy of respect” for their achievements in commerce.⁷⁰ A combination of critique and admiration for the achievements of Greeks was very common and it is no coincidence that the individual story of a Greek was selected by Sidney Low exactly as exemplary for the “speculative fever which possessed Egypt”.⁷¹

The ability to “adjust” was a major characteristic with both positive and negative connotations, but the question is what exactly Greeks were expected to be

⁶² Harris, Murray: *Egypt under the Egyptians*, p. 173.

⁶³ Peel, Sidney: *The Binding of the Nile*, p. 246.

⁶⁴ Churchill, Winston Spencer: *The River War – vol. 2*, p. 27.

⁶⁵ Harris, Murray: *Egypt under the Egyptians*, p. 172.

⁶⁶ BNA, FO series 633/87: *Cromer Papers*, p. 829; Cromer, the Earl of: *Modern Egypt – vol. 2*, p. 251.

⁶⁷ Bertrand, Louis: *Le mirage Oriental*, p. 50.

⁶⁸ Ebenda, p. 53.

⁶⁹ Peel, Sidney: *The Binding of the Nile*, p. 246.

⁷⁰ Churchill, Winston Spencer: *The River War – vol. 2*, p. 27.

⁷¹ Low, Sidney: *Egypt in Transition*, pp. 192-201.

“adjusted” to. As suggested in different texts, “there is nothing that a native wants, however humble, [that the Greeks] will not sell, exactly in the form required”,⁷² not to mention “the string and simpler wants” of Europeans in Africa, which could also be satisfied by the Greeks.⁷³ A story of a Greek in the interior was supposed to further indicate what “adjustment” could mean: when, at the beginning, his *a priori* conceptions of the taste of the peasants turned out to be very different from reality, he reacted by bringing other commodities and also by cheating the villagers, exploiting their attempts for ostentation to their neighbors and selling them things “partly by fragments of broken Arabic, and partly by a running commentary of cosmopolitan gestures”. When cotton price fell, the same “typical” Greek readjusted to the peasants which, rather than having cash to loose, were looking for money to borrow: he set a mixed establishment, an inn for travelers and grocery for both travelers and “natives”, but invested the greatest part of his capital in loans for short terms at high interest repaid in farm produce, especially cotton.⁷⁴ Another case described as “typical” was that of a Greek who moved to the south with the first British expedition of 1884 and invested his savings “from this not illiberal pay in purchasing the good-will of a small bazaar stall”, where he sold “sham jewellery” to the “natives” and “sham Sudan relics” to tourists. Since he was, according to the same description, “reasonably honest and extremely shrewd”, he enlarged his operations, moved to a bigger shop on the river front and later profited from the British campaigns of 1897-1898 by turning most of his available assets into cash, moving further south with a large miscellaneous consignment of goods and stores. There, since “he knew the natives better than the Intelligence Department”, as emphasized, he was “successful”, moved faster than the army, ready to supply it with all sort of commodities, but also able to “get camels and donkeys somehow while the military authorities were looking for them”.⁷⁵ Churchill wrote about an “astonishing adaptability” of Greeks “catering with business instinct for every want” of the British army,⁷⁶ to add that they were “even more adaptable and energetic than the Parsee in India and on the frontier”.⁷⁷ Adjustment, therefore, was not just to the local culture, but mainly to the paths that would allow Greeks to make profit.

⁷² Peel, Sidney: *The Binding of the Nile*, p. 246.

⁷³ Harris, Murray: *Egypt under the Egyptians*, p. 172.

⁷⁴ Wallace, Mackenzie D.: *Egypt and the Egyptian Question*, pp. 286-288.

⁷⁵ Low, Sidney: *Egypt in Transition*, pp. 193-195.

⁷⁶ Churchill, Winston Spencer: *The River War – vol. 1*, p. 453.

⁷⁷ Churchill, Winston Spencer: *The River War – vol. 2*, p. 27.

A liberal British author wrote about the abuses “the worst sort of Europeans and quasi-European Levantines” made for the sake of profit,⁷⁸ describing Greeks as notorious throughout Egypt “for truculent defiance of authority, for violence, and for lawlessness”.⁷⁹ For people like him, Egyptians were “childlike and dependent”, whereas “foreign residents”, and especially the numerous Greeks, were “obstreperous and exacting”,⁸⁰ something that could justify a paternalistic role by the British. Nevertheless, qualities such as those described in the preceding paragraphs could not only be helpful for the profits of Greeks, at least of the most successful among them, but also for the British. Cromer claimed that, as his experience in India and Egypt had shown him, it was a mistake to employ “second or third rate Europeans on low salaries [since] they often do more harm than good”; the best solution would be, according to him, “to employ a very small body of well-selected Europeans” in colonial administration.⁸¹ For other British authors Greeks and Syrians, even if considered corrupt, were still more useful than “well intentioned British officers and Egyptian or Sudan officials, who were always at sea”, being the “natural ally” of the British colonial rule that ought not be measured by insisting on “home standards”.⁸² As further commented, Greeks were devoted and loyal to “the cause of England in Egypt”.⁸³

Being in the desert during the campaign of Kitchener, some Scottish soldiers found a shanty with a British and Greek flag and the promising “whisky and soda” written in large letters or descriptions.⁸⁴ There are many stories of this kind and Cromer, even if expressing the worst sentiments about the majority of Greeks in Egypt, recognized the “extraordinary talent” of the Greek to be “wherever, in fact, there is the smallest prospect of buying in a cheap and selling in a dear market”. He had his own experience on that, as he visited, in 1889, the “further outpost of the Egyptian army in the midst of a howling wilderness” in Sudan, only to find out that before the post was even probably settled, there was already a Greek “general dealer” selling sardines, pickles or biscuits to a few persons who wished to buy them “out of a

⁷⁸ Milner, Alfred: *England in Egypt*, pp. 15-18.

⁷⁹ *Ebenda*, p. 41.

⁸⁰ *Ebenda*, p. 318.

⁸¹ BNA, FO series 633/87: *Cromer Papers*, p. 876.

⁸² Harris, Murray: *Egypt under the Egyptians*, p. 170.

⁸³ *Ebenda*, p. 174.

⁸⁴ *Empros*, 29.10.1899' Lampridis, I[Ioannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 22-25, 143-145.

hole in a rock in which he had set up a temporary shop”.⁸⁵ Another famous story of the time was that of a Greek who arrived in Omdurman just one day after the 1898 victory of the British military force under the leadership of Kitchener, opening a store with all kind of goods “somehow” brought from Suakin, to become later “a prosperous and wealthy merchant, with large shops in Khartoum and Halfa, and a finger in every sort of commercial undertaking”. His case was mentioned as a classical example indicating that “whether it be true or not that trade follows the flag, undoubtedly the Greek trader follows the British flag”,⁸⁶ but Cromer declared at an interview to a Greek newspaper that “before we have gone there, 20 Greek merchants had occupied Omdurman”.⁸⁷ Before or after the British flag, the Greek involvement in the British wars of 1885 and 1898 in Sudan, mainly that of Greeks accompanying the British army as interpreters or suppliers and sometimes making a fortune on such occasions, can be found in different kind of stories.⁸⁸ Churchill referred to Greeks, the “enterprising creatures”, who built a village close to the British army in 1898, providing soldiers with “all kinds of comforts and conveniences [...] all conceivable commodities – from fishing-tackle to tinned asparagus”,⁸⁹ whereas Low described Greeks as those, who could offer the “exhausted warriors” with “a variety of very welcome commodities – at a price”.⁹⁰ Together with commerce, there were also cases of Greeks assisting the British army by transmitting valuable information about the place, as they had the advantage to move more easily around.⁹¹ Profit was mostly the motivation for the aid of Greeks to British, but it seems that it could be a motivation strong enough to make some daring Greeks risk a few things and proceed in the interior, even under harsh conditions.

Whether a problem or a useful ally, Greeks were collectively labeled by many British as “Orientals”. A US-American journalist commented that even those described as “intelligent, educated and charming” among the former would “speak of

⁸⁵ BNA, FO series 633/87: Cromer Papers, p. 829; Cromer, the Earl of: *Modern Egypt* – vol. 2, p. 251.

⁸⁶ Peel, Sidney: *The Binding of the Nile*, pp. 245-246.

⁸⁷ *Empros*, 14.12.1899.

⁸⁸ Akropolis, 01.12.1885; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, pp. 345-346; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 2, pp. 178-183; Koudounaris, Aristeidis L.: *Viografikon Lexikon Kyprion*, p. 27; Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias*, p. 331; Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*, pp. 51-54.

⁸⁹ Churchill, Winston Spencer: *The River War* – vol. 1, p. 453.

⁹⁰ Low, Sidney: *Egypt in Transition*, pp. 192-194.

⁹¹ See for example the case of a “Greek from Massawah”, reporting news from Sudan during the campaign of Gordon: BNA, FO series 78/3702.

a Greek, as ‘that black man’, or ‘that nigger’”.⁹² The boundary of “Europeanness” was not clear or fixed in the case of Greeks from a British perspective, but Greeks were also not identified with the “local Arab culture”. As an early 20th century British author observed, even if “the Greek” in Cairo formed “a link between Europe and Africa”, the line was not clearly defined since “when a European dons a *tarbush*, he is not always distinguishable from the *effendi* [...] an ‘educated’ man – a man who can read and write”.⁹³ From a British point of view, Greeks were considered as “a link between Europe and Africa”.

3.3 The “art of speculation” in “semi-savage countries”

From a Greek enthusiastic perspective, activities such as those described in the previous paragraphs are indicators that the Greeks were the people with a courage “elevating the art of speculation in true heroism in the semi-savage countries”.⁹⁴ The following paragraphs elaborate on this “art of speculation”, trying to show the impact of the new forms of economic relations in the Egyptian province, but also to see the actual ways the same economic activities might be justified from a Greek point of view.

Visiting mid-19th century Egypt, Typaldos pointed out that, besides Alexandria, it was at places along the railway that “Europeanness” was present.⁹⁵ By the end of the century, when the British army and the railway reached Sudan as south as in Atbara, “in the deserts of Africa, on a spot occupied a year before only by a dozen miserable Arabs and goats”, as Churchill commented, Greeks opened about 30 shops and stores between the railway and the river, so that soon it was possible “to purchase groceries of all kinds, cigarettes, writing-paper and fountain pens, and settle the bill by a cheque on any London bank”.⁹⁶ It could be assumed that the extension of the railway played a decisive role in the geographic expansion of Greeks because of the dispersion not just of grocers, but also of people involved in administrative or other positions or even in the constructing of the railway network in the south.⁹⁷

⁹² de Guervill, A. B.: *New Egypt*, p. 37.

⁹³ Briggs, Martin S.: *Through Egypt in War-time*, p. 38.

⁹⁴ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 22-23.

⁹⁵ Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, p. 40.

⁹⁶ Churchill, Winston Spencer: *The River War – vol. 2*, pp. 26-27.

⁹⁷ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 2*, pp. 418-425; Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, pp. 430-431.

Greek workers could be found wherever constructs took place, such as a group of eight Greek masons working in repairs and buildings as far south as in Darfur,⁹⁸ with the possibility of staying there afterwards as owners of a shop, a common pattern of Greeks in different places of Africa.⁹⁹

Some authors would stress that Greeks were spread in Egypt not following, but actually preceding the emergence of European commerce and railway connections.¹⁰⁰ Even if various factors, such as the extension of railway and the Sudanese wars, played a role in the dispersion of Greeks in the Egyptian province and Sudan during the second half of the 19th century, it was the “cotton-boom” of the early 1860s that directly or indirectly helped in making the presence of Greeks more massive, in the southern parts of the country, but especially in the Nile Delta. Greeks were involved in every stage of the production and export of cotton, “from the small middlemen in the provinces to the important exporters in Alexandria”, with the exception of manual labor, reserved to Egyptians.¹⁰¹ Greeks owned big ginning machines and the fate of many families of “*omogeneis*” as well as of the “natives” of Greek sources was connected to their success, as suggested at a story in Greek press about a village near Zagazig.¹⁰² There, by the turn of the century, a couple of thousand Greeks owned coffee-shops, bars, tobacco-shops or groceries, but were also engaged in the four export companies of cotton, staffed almost entirely by Greek employees.¹⁰³ At a village near Tanta, a reporter found about 10 Greek employees at each one of the steam-driven cotton industries, having a relatively comfortable life, even though not comparable to that of the owners and the directors of them, which were also Greeks.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, “natives” were described by a Greek visitor as working “tireless” in the middle of “the clouds” in Samannoud, a place with three huge cotton mills belonging to Greeks.¹⁰⁵ Kafr El-Zayyat, the so-called “new Manchester of Egypt”,¹⁰⁶ was another important place for cotton, with many ginning machines owned by Greeks,¹⁰⁷ in which hundreds of “native half-naked men, women, children

⁹⁸ BNA, FO series 371/664: Number 41586.

⁹⁹ Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*, pp. 24-25, 44-46.

¹⁰⁰ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, p. 140.

¹⁰¹ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 76.

¹⁰² *Empros*, 28.11.1897.

¹⁰³ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 86.

¹⁰⁴ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, pp. 429-434.

¹⁰⁵ *Akropolis Filologiki* 7, 13.03.1888, p. 99.

¹⁰⁶ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigypou*, p. 61.

¹⁰⁷ Diakofotakis, Ioannis: *Istoria tis ellinikis paroikias Kafr El-Zayyat*, pp. 10-13.

and young girls” of low wages were working for that “gold-bearing product”, according to a description in Greek press.¹⁰⁸

The Greek consul reported in 1913 that, whereas all employees were Greeks, workers were “natives” working for a daily wage of 1 to 5 francs.¹⁰⁹ Greeks were engaged in the cultivation of cotton as proprietors, tenant farmers, agriculturalists or directors of land and not as manual workers, since the later were exclusively “natives”, “naturally”, as Saktouris commented.¹¹⁰ This hierarchy of working relations was not a novelty of the early 20th century, including perhaps even violence. Already in 1863, a Greek visitor in Egypt remarked that “all Europeans in Egypt, English and French and Italians and Greeks” considered the beating of “*fellahs*” unavoidable,¹¹¹ perhaps also because of a stereotypic perception about Egyptian workers being lazy and lacking a sense of discipline.¹¹² Violence was considered as part of working discipline since, as the daughter of Emmanouil Benakis, Pinelopi Delta, pointed out in the memories from her childhood in Egypt, it was not just permitted, but actually expected to beat a “Nigger”, who accepted all humiliations because of being “a beast” feeling the “superiority of the white race”.¹¹³ According to her during the “Urabi massacre”,¹¹⁴ the more compassionate among the Greek employees in warehouses and cotton-presses were protected by the “Niggers”, with whom they worked with, while those who had been giving “whacks and smacks on the napes” were trying to hide so as to save their lives.¹¹⁵ A popular poet even recommended other Greeks that “if you really want to make a Nigger your friend, first you should threaten him and then beat him”.¹¹⁶

Violence was not the only black spot of working conditions for the locals. Responding at accusations made by *Daily News* regarding child labour at the – mainly Greek and English-owned – cotton ginning mills of the Delta in 1908,¹¹⁷ Eldon Gorst, the British consul in Egypt, mentioned a research made by the general director of

¹⁰⁸ Empros, 20.10.1897.

¹⁰⁹ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, p. 465.

¹¹⁰ Ebenda, pp. 169-170.

¹¹¹ Pandora 14:327, 1863, p. 401.

¹¹² Beinlin, Joel + Lockman, Zachary: *Workers on the Nile*, pp. 42-43.

¹¹³ Zannas, P. A. (ed.): *Delta, P[inelopi] S.: Protes enthymiseis*, p. 78. Compare also the similar comment made by a Greek character of Tsirkas to another Greek with less experience in Egypt, the former arguing that in Egypt “these local boys need the whip. They’ve got to fear you, or else you’re sunk”: Tsirkas, Stratis: *Drifting Cities*, p. 271.

¹¹⁴ About the “Urabi massacre” see chapter 6.1.

¹¹⁵ Zannas, P. A. (ed.): *Delta, P[inelopi] S.: Protes enthymiseis*, pp. 117-118.

¹¹⁶ Stoupis, Christos K.: *Icho ex Ipeirou*, pp. 65, 68-71.

¹¹⁷ BNA, FO series 371/450, number 13819: Child labour in Egypt.

finance regarding children employment in cotton-ginning factories. The conclusion was that whatever “abuses” might have existed, they probably took place at the smaller factories, mostly owned by “natives” and “Syrians”. Even if some exaggerations might exist, also a result of the prejudice towards groups classified as “Levantine”, working conditions for Egyptians engaged in the cotton production were harsh and made relations between Greeks and Egyptians in the province less ideal than usual Greek narratives would present them. For children in particular Emmanouil Benakis, the famous and wealthy Greek merchant who even had a reputation of describing himself as a “socialist”,¹¹⁸ explained to those making the research that the working hours at his ginning factories were 14 for day work and 9 for night work, the later conducted only by men and a few “grown-up children”, with several intervals of rest during the day. According to Benakis, the work reserved for children at the age of 9 to 15 and sometimes 18 years old was not hard, since they were replaced several times during the day.¹¹⁹ One can assume that child labour in Greek-owned factories, even if not considered extremely hard for the standards of that time, did not lead to a strengthening of the ties with the local culture.

Besides those with a direct occupation with cotton, Greek grocers scattered in small towns and villages of Egypt constituted another form of the Greek presence there. Klunzinger wrote that they could be found everywhere selling olives, olive oil, cheese, preserved fruits etc., but also transforming their shops to taverns and offering the locals alcoholic drinks with mastic and anise, Greek wines, cognac or even champagne and beer.¹²⁰ Syngros, the prominent Greek banker from Istanbul, referred to usury taking place in Egypt especially since the 1860s by Greeks, who mostly went with a minimal capital, or got one in Alexandria, before moving to the interior to loan with a rate of 30% or 36% and receive agricultural products marked down at 20% or 30%.¹²¹ According to Ninet, the Greek and Syrian money-lenders were to be found in every village, opening credits with the distressed peasantry and threatening them with the whip to pay more, demanding 30, 40, 100 or even 200 per cent.¹²² The result was that in a small village, a Greek might possess 200 acres, whereas even the *sheik* had

¹¹⁸ Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 291.

¹¹⁹ BNA, FO series 371/450, number 16798: Child labour in ginning factories.

¹²⁰ Klunzinger, C[arl] B[enjamin]: *Bilder aus Oberägypten*, pp. 26-28.

¹²¹ Syngros, Andreas: *Apomnimonevmata*, pp. 102-103.

¹²² Ninet, John: *Origin*, p. 124.

only 12 and the rest of the community was reduced to poverty,¹²³ or that provincial towns on market days were full of women selling their clothes and their silver ornaments to Greek usurers in order to pay tax collectors arriving “whip in hand”.¹²⁴ By the turn of the century, Cromer would write about Greeks tempting Egyptian peasants to borrow at some exorbitant rates of interest and then, by a sharp turn of the legal screw, reducing them from proprietors to serfs.¹²⁵ According to the testimony of an envoy of the British government in Egypt, just outside of many villages at the Nile Delta there was a “superior” house built “in European style”, always belonging to Greek, Syrian, Armenian or Jewish money-lender. An exemplary house of that type “was fitted up with European furniture and French mirrors”, “the upper storey was reached by a stone staircase outside the building”, it was surrounded by vineyards and gardens, farm yards and stables, “everything around betokened prosperity and abundance” and there was even a steam-pump “of the best and newest construction”. As further commented, “there could scarcely be a more striking contrast than the conditions presented by the neighboring village”; the villagers explained to Villiers that all farm lands attached to the mansion belonged to them, before been absorbed by means of usurious mortgages and foreclosures in the International Tribunals, “where ignorance and want of friends rendered the poor victims helpless [so that] while the foreign usurer had become a wealthy landed proprietor, not one of the natives had more than about a dozen acres left”.¹²⁶ Villiers received complaints about Greeks and Syrians lending money to villagers in the Nile Delta area so as to pay their taxes with 8 to 10 per cent rate of interest per month, sometimes altering the amount due to the ignorance of villagers, taking money on account without giving receipts and denying later of having received anything, making their debtor get sureties and at the end selling both their lands and that of their sureties, often in nominal price, to the usurers.¹²⁷ The opinion of many non-Greek European officials was that the formation of the Mixed Tribunals in 1871, supposedly having as one among other goals that of solving differences on land ownership, favored those having a protection by a European consulate and a better access to French language and European laws.¹²⁸ A US-American correspondent even wrote that the new way of life that came together

¹²³ Villiers, Stuart of Dromana: Egypt after the War, p. 157.

¹²⁴ Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen: Secret History, p. 11.

¹²⁵ Cromer, the Earl of: Modern Egypt – vol. 2, pp. 251-252.

¹²⁶ Villiers, Stuart of Dromana: Egypt after the War, pp. 54-55.

¹²⁷ Ebenda, pp. 18-20, 39-40.

¹²⁸ Ebenda, pp. 156-157. See also: Bemmelen, Pieter: L' Egypte et l' Europe – vol. 1, pp. 340-342.

with the monetization of society and the rise of the money-lender was “another plague of Egypt”.¹²⁹

As for a Greek point of view, and probably reproducing what they were told by Greeks in the Delta villages, Greek journalists might cynically describe money-lending activities as a “more safe and profitable” activity than cotton.¹³⁰ Exceptional were those descriptions, mainly of later Greek authors, which compared Greek grocers, retailers and other shop-owners to the plague of locust.¹³¹ Most Greek references to money-lending activities in the interior included arguments, which attempted to redirect responsibility. A journalist argued that both the creditor and the debtor should be blamed: the former might be exceeding the limit of legal and fair in order to fulfil his justified expectation of making more profit, but it was the latter that, “besides being extremely ignorant and having no idea of arithmetic” was also “irrepressible at his desires”. Reproducing the Orientalistic stereotype of waste, lust and inability to govern and control, the same author went on arguing that the debtor, “while living in the middle of filthiness and disgust an unliveable life, when he finds money, he does not use them to improve his house and his field, but simply provided himself with a new wife”.¹³² Furthermore, it was not only Greeks that were usurers, as the same journalist claimed,¹³³ whereas a colleague of him compared money-lending in Upper Egypt to the same phenomenon in villages of the Peloponnisos, posing the question of why usury should be considered as more inhuman in Egypt.¹³⁴

The establishment of the Agricultural Bank of Egypt in 1902 was supposed to provide loans to Egyptian peasants under better conditions, but it was not welcomed with enthusiasm by all Greeks. In 1913, the Greek consul commented the failed, to his opinion at least, British measures, which had been taken in order to protect the owners of small land from usury, by forbidding the mortgage or compulsory expropriation of land property not exceeding five *feddans*, a unit of area a little greater than a thousand acres. The reason, as Saktouris claimed, was that the peasants could not learn saving before much time would pass, as also that they had found different ways to circumvent the law, something that actually aggravated the position of the creditor.¹³⁵

¹²⁹ de Guervill, A. B.: *New Egypt*, p. 197.

¹³⁰ *Empros*, 28.11.1897; Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, pp. 430-431.

¹³¹ Dendias, Michail G.: *Ai ellinikai paroikiai*, p. 63.

¹³² *Akropolis*, 07.08.1885.

¹³³ *Ebenda*.

¹³⁴ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, p. 451.

¹³⁵ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, pp. 126, 144-145.

According to a lawyer, the position of the peasants was worsening after the reforms since, by that time, the creditor, “exactly because profit was illegal”, proved “more tolerant, favourable, patient” and, even if he received some more rate, he would not deprive the villager from his property.¹³⁶ The British attempts to protect the Egyptian peasants failed, according to Politis, because of the imprudence and waste of the villager, something that justified the previous system based on personal acquaintance, whereas it was also stressed that usury was not a specific activity of Greeks, even though “it happened” that some of them were involved in it;¹³⁷ Vlasis Gavriilidis even argued that the foundation of the Agricultural Bank not only did not waver, but actually consolidated the position of Greek money-lenders, who had been previously “benefiting [the Egyptian farmer] and profiting [from him]” as his “exclusive financiers”.¹³⁸ With one or another argumentation, Greeks reacted to the attempt to create alternative sources of credit for the Egyptian peasants, since money-lending activity was a major foundation for Greek commercial activities.

An English writer with an experience of some years in southern Egypt referred to the power practiced by a Greek at a case of a “poor devil”, accused of stealing a letter with money that was addressed to a Greek money-lender, an accusation that led to his punishment by the local *nazir*.¹³⁹ As a correspondent of the *London Times* mentioned, Greek usurers might cooperate with local authorities as well, such as in cases of *mudirs* pressing the villagers to pay their taxes and advising them to borrow money from the “Greek or Levantine” that “was always available”, in return to a share of profits. The way a Greek had “taken the precaution to discover beforehand what lands are mortgaged” was presented as one such example.¹⁴⁰ A Greek share to the transformation of rural areas of Egypt is beyond doubt, with risks and dangers, but also aspects of exploitation by Greeks, even if sometimes this activity might include a mutually profitable cooperation with people of power at the local level, at the expense of the rest. The same activities might be perceived in different ways from Greeks, Egyptians or other Europeans, the Greeks were nevertheless not necessarily preferable compared to the “other Europeans”. In fact, being a group of newcomers, rarely¹⁴¹ adjusting to the local culture besides the superficial needs of business, and

¹³⁶ Tachydromos, 08/21.04.1917.

¹³⁷ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 2, pp. 31-43.

¹³⁸ Gavriilidis, Vlasis: *Taxidia*, pp. 98-99.

¹³⁹ Gordon, Duff [Lucie]: *Letters from Egypt*, p. 289.

¹⁴⁰ Wallace, Mackenzie D.: *Egypt and the Egyptian Question*, pp. 283-284.

¹⁴¹ For some exceptional cases detected in sources see chapter 7, footnotes 100-101.

collectively correlated with activities, which in the long run had a negative impact to the lives of many locals, was as usual a combination undermining any future in the long term. What remains to be answered is why Greeks in particular, or at least some of them, were “successful” in specific activities in the interior of Africa and whether they, being better “adjusted” than “other Europeans”, would make long-term plans there, or were just trying to accumulate a capital they would need, before moving to an urban center to enjoy the fruits of their profitable activities.

3.4 A “necessary period of exile”

In Greek texts, “aptitude” was one of the virtues explaining the “success” of Greeks.¹⁴² Even when a cynical comment in Greek press accepted that the “*omogeneis*” involved in cotton production and commerce had been favored both by the “blindness” both of “Luck” and of the “*fellahs*”, their own intelligence was also mentioned as a factor.¹⁴³ A Greek diplomat, Skotidis, considered that endurance to hardships made it possible for Greeks to manage it even in distant places, to adjust and be easily “familiarized” to the “habits” of the Egyptians,¹⁴⁴ whereas Lampridis was – as often – exaggerating in his enthusiasm when he emphasized how even Greeks without any capital besides their hardly-to-collect fare managed to adjust to the “still primitive manners” and the “frugal life”, being able to communicate more or less with the “natives” in six months.¹⁴⁵ The ability of Greeks in the interior to adjust and very soon to communicate to the “natives” was praised also by later authors, such as Politis in the interwar period¹⁴⁶ or Tsourkas in the 1950s, the later adding the usual explanations about the Greeks as being “closer” to Egyptians due to “permanent contacts since the antiquity”, or because of being “more Oriental than European”.¹⁴⁷ Nevertheless, as already suggested, the ability to “adjust” was rather a necessity for those really wishing to maintain profitable activities and less a sign of “proximity” to the “local” population. This is further confirmed by the emphasis in “frugality” of Greek texts regarding the Egyptian interior and Sudan.

¹⁴² Karatheodoris, K[onstantinos] St.: I Aigyptos, p. 111.

¹⁴³ Empros, 16.10.1897.

¹⁴⁴ Empros, 06.01.1900.

¹⁴⁵ Lampridis, Ioannis: Ai ellinikai apoikia, pp. 23-26.

¹⁴⁶ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 2, p. 23.

¹⁴⁷ Tsourkas, Cl[eovoulos]: Les Hellènes dans l’ intérieur, p. 12.

“Patience” and “self-sacrifice” were also stressed as factors for the individual “success” of Greeks in their private enterprises in Egypt,¹⁴⁸ whereas “thrift” and “frugality” were mentioned as additional qualities enabling their achievements, in the interior in particular, especially when compared to other “Europeans”.¹⁴⁹ Gavriilidis mentioned the example of a Swiss export house having much better results when employing Greeks rather than Germans or Swiss for its branches in the Egyptian interior, something he explained by the ability of the Greeks not just to adjust to their setting, but also to live without luxuries.¹⁵⁰ Later texts about Greeks in the interior also described them as having no expectations of comfort, rarely spending their money at taverns and preferring a “family life”, in contrary to the “natives”, who were supposed of spending most of their time out of their “miserable” houses.¹⁵¹ The “frugal and sparing” Greeks were also juxtaposed to the British in Egypt, described as the “thousands of ravenous wolves of London and Manchester and Edinburgh” who “remained always lavish, beefsteak-eaters and whisky-drinkers”.¹⁵² Even if part of such descriptions was correlated to mutual stereotypes of “Europeans” and “Orientals”, Greeks in the province were also considered as “very sparing” in comparison to Greeks in the Egyptian cities,¹⁵³ perhaps an indication that the former had no intention of spending a long time in the province, in spite of references about Greek mansions in the province.¹⁵⁴ The relative rarity of an attachment to land,¹⁵⁵ in opposition to the attitude of Greeks with similar, money-lending activities in various parts of the Ottoman Empire,¹⁵⁶ might be a further indication about the temporal character of most Greeks in the Egyptian province.

Greeks were described as remaining “closed at their houses, not visible in the streets and maintaining relations only among themselves” during their “winter isolation and exile”, before making their summer visits in Alexandria or Europe “full with gold”.¹⁵⁷ Leaving aside some isolated cases of Greeks, who remained in the

¹⁴⁸ Akropolis, 28.03.1911.

¹⁴⁹ Kaïron, 17.12.1873; Karatheodoris, K[onstantinos] St.: I Aigyptos, p. 111.

¹⁵⁰ Gavriilidis, Vlasis: Taxidia, pp. 99-100.

¹⁵¹ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 2, pp. 23-24; Tsourkas, Cl[eovoulos]: Les Hellènes dans l’ intérieur, p. 12.

¹⁵² Nea Zoi, March 1908, p. 792.

¹⁵³ Syngros, Andreas: Apomnimonevmata, pp. 103-104.

¹⁵⁴ See footnote 125.

¹⁵⁵ About that see also chapter 7, footnotes 100-101.

¹⁵⁶ Anagnostopoulou, Sia: Mikra Asia, pp. 351-352.

¹⁵⁷ Empros, 20.10.1897.

province and were described as “Arabized” Greeks,¹⁵⁸ many descriptions about Greeks in the province give the impression of limited social relations to non-Greeks in the interior, besides those necessary for a quick profit. An author described his childhood in the Egyptian province as a difficult period, when the only interesting thing was the arrival of the post and the looking of the express train passing by – but not stopping at – the place every night, on its way to Cairo.¹⁵⁹ Different turn-of-the-century accounts might describe the early years of “the Greek” in the Egyptian province as “a necessary period of exile” before, “in due course, with few exceptions, [he] filters down to Alexandria”. A “little land speculation and cotton buying follow, and in a few years’ time, as likely as not, he will grace the drawing-rooms of Alexandria”, as was further explained, apparently regarding some more visible cases.¹⁶⁰ The protagonist of one such “success story” became a merchant and financier in Alexandria and antagonized different Greek families already established there.¹⁶¹ Another one, after establishing many branches in Sudan and sending agents in Congo and British East Africa, selected Cairo as his seat. There and for the first time in his life, the story went on, he also spent money besides making it, he developed “social ambitions”, “changed his collar every other day [...] went to an Italian café, drank coffee and a little absinthe, played a game of billiards, and sometimes visited a reeking native music-hall, where half-naked women controlled themselves for his edification”.¹⁶² This person returned to his old habits only after love stories and speculations shook, but not destroyed his business,¹⁶³ something that might well have been the moral of mentioning such a story as part of a “European” critique of “Levantine” attitudes, used in a selective way in as much as Greek stories would mention stereotypes on “Egyptian” or “European” waste for their goals. Besides the “Levantine” stereotype, such stories confirm that many Greeks might have stayed, or at least intended to stay, for a temporary period in the Egyptian interior.

In 1893, the touring reporter of an Alexandrian Greek newspaper described Upper Egypt as being “all the same with its poor stations, with its miserable villages, with the same *fellah*’ characters, with the same nature and in general with similar

¹⁵⁸ See chapter 7, footnotes 171-175.

¹⁵⁹ Malanos, Timos: *Anamniseis enos Alexandrinou*, pp. 24-27.

¹⁶⁰ Harris, Murray: *Egypt under the Egyptians*, p. 173.

¹⁶¹ Wallace, Mackenzie D.: *Egypt and the Egyptian Question*, pp. 288-289.

¹⁶² Low, Sidney: *Egypt in Transition*, pp. 195-196.

¹⁶³ Ebenda, pp. 197-201.

people and animals”; the only differences he noted was the extent of heat and dust and the ways children practiced begging to the “foreigner”.¹⁶⁴ Such a description reminds of the distinction already mentioned between the Greek migrant in Egypt, “which he considers as his place”, and the “heroic migrant” in Africa.¹⁶⁵ If the activities and experiences of Greeks in the province are concerned, in spite of being credited with “adjustability”, they hardly had a greater “proximity” to locals as compared to “other Europeans”. What they needed to adjust to was to the local conditions that would make it possible for them to make a rapid profit, before – ideally – settling in urban centers closer to the Mediterranean. Even if an important number of Greeks spent some time in the Egyptian province, it is in the big cities and the towns around the Suez Channel that most of the Greeks, who had gone to Egypt, did stay for a longer period.

3.5 Summary

In chapter 3, it has been argued that being dispersed out of the big urban centers of Egypt, as a considerable number of Greeks was for some period, did not necessarily assure closer or better relations with the local population. The descriptions of this kind are usually based either on non-Greek stereotypes about the ability of the “Levantines” to “adjust” to local conditions, or on Greek defending arguments about Greeks as being “closer” to Egyptians and dissasossiated from “other Europeans” as far as racist, exploitative and other negative aspects of colonization are concerned. The available evidence about many Greeks in the African interior suggest, however, not of a “proximity”, but rather of a wish to “adjust” in order to have a temporary, profitable residence in the interior.

¹⁶⁴ Omonoia, 22/03.08.1893.

¹⁶⁵ See footnote 11.

4. The Greeks which “have not really been civilized yet”: the increase of Greek urban migrants in Egypt

The recent migration current towards Greece usually appeared in Greek public discourse after news presenting criminal activities committed by migrants and often emphasized as such. Even cases of crimes where the origin of the protagonist was not known, such as a robbery and a chasing including shooting close to a place a right-wing populist politician, Giorgos Karatzaferis, had by coincidence visited, gave him the opportunity to state that “these things”, i.e. the easiness of using a gun, “did not exist before 20 years”.¹ This was not a statement made just due to the usual idealization of the past through selective memory and silence, but was implying of a correlation of criminality with the growing number of migrants to Greece since the 1990s in a usual, even though not always justified,² tendency to correlate various negative phenomena with migration. Recent migrants to Greece were often compared to earlier migrants from Greece by people demanding a sympathy to the former, but a growing number of arguments against migrants tended to stress that Greek migrants to other places of the world, usually to America, Australia or western Europe, had always been not only “successful” but also “legal”, that they respected the local laws and that they were not engaged in criminal activities. And all these qualities were attributed to Greek migrants in opposition to recent migrants towards Greece in general, something often explained by a cultural, when not racial, difference.

The case of Greeks in Egypt was hardly put in such a comparison at all. Nevertheless, recent scholarship insisted, among others, that the internal differences of each colonial community and the different ways they were related to colonialism and colonial practice should not be underestimated, in spite of the importance of the sharp distinctions dividing those who were ruled from those that were ruling.³ The existence of many “white vagabonds, imposters, stragglers, burglars, beggars, frauds, planters, imposters, loafers, escaped convicts, seamen, and soldiers who menaced the Town of Calcutta and wandered wildly about the Indian interior” in late 18th and early

¹ http://news247.gr/ellada/eglima/sfares_kata_ths_synodeias_karatzaferh.1275733.html. Interestingly, a few months after that incident Karatzaferis suggested, among others, that the use of guns should be made legal for all citizens: <http://www.tovima.gr/politics/article/?aid=447640>.

² As suggested, not all of the negative effects usually associated with the 1990s wave of migration to Greece really had migration, not even the important proportion of undocumented migrants, among their main causes: Fakiolas, Rossetos: Socio-economic effects.

³ Stoler, Ann Laura: Rethinking Colonial Categories.

19th century not only contradicted to the rhetorical claims of imperial law and order, but also posed moral, legal and political challenges by indicating the existence of a third group, besides the colonial dividing line of “rulers” and “ruled”, a “third face” of colonialism.⁴ As for the Greek case, a scholar pointed out that “the history of the Greek diaspora is often told as a celebratory tale [...] replete with stories of poor but industrious emigrants who left their homeland to find a better life in a foreign land [where] through hard work and frugal living, the migrant and his family made it [or with stories about] the merchant families, who in times past left Greece or the Ottoman Empire and established trading networks that spanned the globe”.⁵ These aspects were just part of the story, as evident in various examples the same author drew from the “dark side” of it.⁶ References to aspects not fitting to the “European” and “cosmopolitan”, colonial yet close to the Egyptians picture of Greeks in Egypt rarely find a little place among the, usually celebratory, Greek studies about or other references to them. One such exception is the brief reference to the issues of usury, hashish dealing, begging and prostitution by Souloyannis.⁷ Even when Gialourakis referred to Greek drug and antiquity dealers in Egypt, they were treated as an exceptional phenomenon compared to the “huge civilizing power” of the Greeks in general. Furthermore, the same author added that Greek policemen were also engaged against drug dealers, and that the later were not exclusively Greeks.⁸ The goal of the following paragraphs, focusing in the growing Greek migration to Egypt, especially to its urban centers, is not to reverse the “cosmopolitan” descriptions and the “success” stories of Greeks in Egypt to equally problematic and misleading negative generalizations about them, but to indicate of the existence also of less “successful” migrants, or of Greeks “successful” in activities not considered glorious or legal by the standards of that time, or “appropriate” for Europeans.

4.1 A growing Greek population in Egypt

⁴ Kolsky, Elizabeth: Colonial Justice, p. 68.

⁵ Gallant, Thomas W.: Tales from the Dark Side, p. 27.

⁶ Ebenda, pp. 17-29.

⁷ Souloyannis, Euthymios: I thesi, pp. 191-198; Politismikos Organismos – Dimos Athinaion: Pagkosmios Ellinismos, pp. 166-168.

⁸ Gialourakis, Manolis: I Aigyptos ton Ellinon, pp. 192-196, 371.

The population of Egyptian cities increased considerably during the 19th century, mainly due to the migration from the Egyptian province and Sudan.⁹ Nevertheless, migrants arrived also from other places, including many Greeks of the “working classes” and the “poor”, two categories often found at Greek sources of that time. A diamond-shaped figure has been proposed as best applicable to describe the social composition of the “foreign population” in Egypt, the bulk of the diamond being the middle strata.¹⁰ Greeks staying in or passing by Egypt at the turn of the 20th century and being at the base of this diamond included impoverished Greek workers, such as carpenters and builders in the interior of Egypt, an issue occasionally discussed in press.¹¹ Most of the Greeks at the base of the diamond, however, with the considerable exception of the towns around the Suez Channel, were living in big Egyptian urban centers, i.e. in Cairo and Alexandria. Just in early 20th century Cairo, for example, it was estimated that there were 2500 Greek workers at the tobacco industry,¹² mainly tobacco cutters with their specific skills, since unskilled tobacco workers were mostly Arab Egyptians.¹³

Calculations in the early 1870s suggested of a number of 21.000 Greeks in Alexandria¹⁴ and 7000 Greek subjects in Cairo,¹⁵ while estimations of the mid-1880s gave a declared number of at least 5000 and of more than 2500 Greek citizens respectively.¹⁶ The Greek census-takers of 1889 detected 8848 or 9606 Greek citizens in Alexandria and 3528 in Cairo,¹⁷ other Greek calculations of the 1890s proposed a number of 16.000¹⁸ or 20.000¹⁹ Greeks in Alexandria and 7000²⁰ or 8000²¹ in Cairo. Egyptian statistics of the early 20th century gave the numbers of 16.721 and 14.605 inhabitants of Alexandria and Cairo born in Greece²² and of 24.602 and 19.419 Greek citizens respectively,²³ whereas rough estimates by Greek diplomats regarding Cairo

⁹ Baer, Gabriel: *Urbanization in Egypt*, pp. 155-169; Toledano, Ehud R.: *State and Society*, pp. 196-220; Chalcraft, John T.: *The Striking Cabbies*, pp. 61, 87-89 and p. 228, footnote 107.

¹⁰ Kourvetaris, Yorgos A.: *The Greeks*, p. 105; Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 31.

¹¹ See for example: Tachydromos, 06/19.03.1902; Empros, 01.05.1907.

¹² Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, p. 469.

¹³ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, pp. 105-107.

¹⁴ de Regny, E.: *Statistique de l' Égypte – 1871*, p. 14.

¹⁵ de Regny, E.: *Statistique de l' Égypte – 1872*, p. 131.

¹⁶ Akropolis, 28.07.1885.

¹⁷ Ypourgeion Esoterikon: *Statistiki tis Ellados*, pp. 13-15.

¹⁸ Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: *Ellines en Aigypto*, p. 74.

¹⁹ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: *Aigyptiakai anamniseis*, p. 42.

²⁰ Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: *Ellines en Aigypto*, p. 74.

²¹ Metarrythmisis, 16/28.02.1893.

²² Lowis, C. C.: *The Census of Egypt taken in 1907*, p. 38.

²³ Ministry of Finance: *Statistical Yearbook of Egypt for 1909*, pp. 28-31.

in the 1910s mentioned of 30.000 to 35.000²⁴ or 25.000²⁵ Greeks, including Ottoman Greeks. It was not unusual to read statements, such as that Alexandria was “clearly Greek” from a “social point of view”,²⁶ an exaggeration if one considers that a total number of 332.246 people was estimated as living in the city in 1909,²⁷ but indicating in any case of the existence of a growing and visible number of Greek urban population in Egypt. Nevertheless, in spite of statements such as the one just mentioned, the Greek urban population in Egypt was not necessarily “dominant” in social life, part of the cosmopolitan bourgeoisie and the powerful Greek merchant networks.

Andreas Syngros was just one of many authors describing Cairo as divided in two parts, one “having a European form and decoration”, inhabited by “Europeans”, and a part with “the appearance of all the Turkish cities with the narrow and filthy streets”.²⁸ Another Greek visitor even compared an “Arab” and a “European” part of Cairo as a place of “stagnation” and of “progress” respectively, the first with “narrow and filthy” and the later with “broad, clean, full of trees” streets.²⁹ A third Greek visitor described Alexandria as divided in a “dirty” and a “less dirty” part, inhabited in the former by “Arabs” and in the later by “Europeans”, Greeks in the majority, the former having narrow and dirty and the later having broad and paved streets and squares.³⁰ As explicated at a novel about Alexandria in the 1920s based on personal experiences of the author, there was the “paradise” of “foreigners and wealth”, with branches of the biggest European stores, next to the “hell”, the “Niggers’ neighborhoods”.³¹ This division into a “European” and an “Arab” part of the major Egyptian cities, loaded with all the connotations of the colonial time, was clear in the minds of mid-19th or even early 20th century Greek authors, it has been suggested, however, that the quarters of Cairo should be examined not only in terms of ethnic cultural composition, since there were very few parts of the city where the European population was in the majority.³² Wealthy Greeks living in specific parts of Egyptian cities were certainly more visible, but they only formed part of the picture. As the

²⁴ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, p. 59.

²⁵ Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): *Dragoumis, Filippou Stef.: Imerologio*, p. 127.

²⁶ Karatheodoris, K[onstantinos] St.: *I Aigyptos*, p. 110.

²⁷ Ministry of Finance: *Statistical Yearbook of Egypt for 1909*, pp. 28-31.

²⁸ Syngros, Andreas: *Apomnimonevmata*, p. 105.

²⁹ Vaxevanoglou, Kal.: *To Kaïron*, pp. 9-11.

³⁰ *Kleio* 5:6, 1889, p. 82.

³¹ Iordanidou, Maria: *San ta trela poulia*, pp. 25-27.

³² Hanna, Nelly: *The Urban History of Cairo*, pp. 189-201.

Greek census-takers sent to Egypt in 1889 remarked, commenting their difficulties to find accurate numbers of Greek citizens, the anomalous planning of Alexandria, especially of the “Arabian districts”, possibly led to the oversight of many streets with Greek inhabitants, obviously not of the wealthiest families. In addition to that, it was added that dozens of families of different nationalities might live together in big houses, or that many Greek subjects might be living in foreign families and establishments, where they had been working as servants and nurses or as employees, something making their detection even more difficult.³³ Tassos Neroutsos, a Greek doctor working for the Egyptian medical board, pointed out that the number of victims of cholera during the 1865 and 1866 epidemic in various parts of Egypt was related to social differentiations rather than origin and mentioned a considerable number of Greeks among the victims.³⁴ A comparison of mortality in Alexandria during a 1919 epidemic of tuberculosis further indicates that many Greeks were living in the poorest neighbourhoods, much more compared to other Europeans.³⁵ There are also direct references to these Greeks of the urban neighbourhoods, facing problems related to conditions of hygiene.³⁶ Indicating is a 1902 story of a tobacconist in “one Arabian neighbourhood” of Cairo, who died in the same day with his father, his wife and his 14 year old niece during an epidemic of cholera.³⁷ To sum up, there are many indications that the growing Greek urban population in Egypt was not composed only by the famous “cosmopolitan” bourgeoisie, and this was also clear regarding not just Cairo and Alexandria, but also minor cities.

Port Said, next to the Suez Channel, was a place where many workers went and was structured so as to keep Greeks and other “Europeans” separated from the Egyptian population which was attracted there, similarly to Europeans, due to the construction of the Suez Channel.³⁸ Already in 1859, the Greek consul of Alexandria demanded the creation of a new consulate in Suez or the transfer of the one already existing in Damietta, a port that used to serve Greek commerce before and where only a dozen of Greeks still remained.³⁹ Most of the Greeks in the towns around Suez,

³³ Ypourgeion Esoterikon: Statistiki tis Ellados, p. 107.

³⁴ Neroutsos, Tassos: I cholera en Aigipto.

³⁵ Ilbert, Robert: Alexandrie, 1830-1930, p. 381.

³⁶ Empros, 20.05.1899; Omonoia, 30/12.06.1901.

³⁷ Empros, 03.08.1902.

³⁸ Chaldoupis, Dimitrios K.: Anamniseis kai chronika Port-Said, p. 22; Soultanakis, Ioan[nis] P.: To lefkoma, pp. 104-105.

³⁹ HAMFA 36.1, 1859.

mainly islanders, gathered there during the construction works in the 1850s and Greek diplomatic reports in the 1860s referred to a number of 3000 to 4000, of 6000 or of 8000 Greeks in Port Said.⁴⁰ The surrounding towns also profited from the prospect of the new channel and the reorientation of the centres of commercial, storing or transit activities and in 1864, an application for the creation of a Greek consular agency in Ismailia was submitted on the argument that many Greeks had gone there to search for a job.⁴¹ Politis estimates that during the construction of the Suez Channel, there were about 3000 Kasians among a total of 5000 Greek workers,⁴² whereas according to Soultanakis the number of Kasians alone was bigger than 5000.⁴³ Other islands also had their share at the construction of the channel, such as Samos, with about a thousand people going to Egypt in the 1860s; many of the Samians stayed there also after the completion of the construction of the channel in 1869,⁴⁴ something common among the Greeks who worked in the construction of the channel, since many remained in duties not only directly connected to the channel, but including retailing activity or the opening of different small shops.⁴⁵ Greek calculations after 1869 mentioned the existence of 1700 Greek citizens in Port Said and Suez⁴⁶ or 2667 of them in the same cities and Ismailia,⁴⁷ while Egyptian statistics a couple of decades later detected 5851 inhabitants of those three towns born in Greece⁴⁸ and 6743 Greek citizens living there.⁴⁹ In 1913, the Greek consul in Alexandria was aware of the existence of 8000 Greek citizens in Port Said⁵⁰ and the Greek consul in Port Said referred to 8300 Greeks in Port Said and Ismailia.⁵¹ Leaving aside the question of who was recognized as a Greek citizen,⁵² it is clear that many ethnic Greeks, including an important number of Greek citizens, formed part of a growing urban population of

⁴⁰ See respectively: HAMFA 36.1, 1863; HAMFA 36.1, 1866; Panas, Miltiadis I.: *Peri tou isthmou*, p. 14.

⁴¹ HAMFA 36.1, 1864.

⁴² Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 2, pp. 76-77.

⁴³ Soultanakis, Ioan[nis] P.: *To lefkoma*, p. 100.

⁴⁴ Moutafis, Giorgos: *I parousia Samion*, p. 121.

⁴⁵ HAMFA 36.1, 1873; Repoulis, Emm[anouil]: *Meleti peri metanastefseos*, p. 6. About the Greeks in the Suez Channel see among others: Soultanakis, Ioan[nis] P.: *To lefkoma*, pp. 98-105; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 2, pp. 67-78; Fragkoulis, K[ostas] N.: *I symvoli ton Ellinon*, pp. 33-34; *Politismikos Organismos – Dimos Athinaion: Pagkosmios Ellinismos*, pp. 179-202.

⁴⁶ Akropolis, 28.07.1885.

⁴⁷ *Ypourgeion Esoterikon: Statistiki tis Ellados*, pp. 13-15.

⁴⁸ Lewis, C. C.: *The Census of Egypt taken in 1907*, pp. 38-39.

⁴⁹ Ministry of Finance: *Statistical Yearbook of Egypt for 1909*, pp. 28-31.

⁵⁰ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, p. 51.

⁵¹ HAMFA 57.8, 1913.

⁵² About the disagreements between Greek and Egyptian authorities for that matter see chapter 8.

Egypt. It remains to examine to what extent this population formed part of the “success story” of the “Greek diaspora”.

4.2 Beyond the “success” stories

The pattern, as also the limitations, of a Greek “success” in economic terms during the years in the Egyptian and Sudanese interior have already been presented.⁵³ Nevertheless, at a reverse of the stereotype “wealthy migrant communities and poor Greek state”, it should be mentioned that it was savings at the Greek state that supported many turn-of-the-century commercial activities in migrant communities, with Egypt absorbing about 40% of the total credit of banks in Greece.⁵⁴ Some of the Greeks that made fortunes in early and especially mid-19th century Egypt did not start from zero, since many originated either from places with a handicraft production, such as Pilion or Metsovo, or came from islands like Chios or Syros, renowned for some families engaged in powerful and extended merchants’ networks.⁵⁵ Emmanouil Benakis was one of the Chian merchants that gathered in Syros during the early- and mid-19th century, studied in England, and then took the decision to start a career in the “broader horizons” of Egypt. In spite of mentioning this background as also his marriage with the daughter of the Chian merchant and partner of Benakis, Ioannis Choremis, a biographer of Benakis described his beginning in Egypt as one of “scanty financial means”.⁵⁶ An exemplary case of the emphasis given to the self-made “success” of the “Greeks Abroad” and especially of those in Egypt is Georgios Averoff. In a biography of him, where his origin from Metsovo was hardly correlated at all to his later success, it was just mentioned that he went to Egypt at the age of 22 and made up everything, starting from small enterprises. Even though much was written about his donations, not so many details were given about the way he became rich – or actually richer – in Egypt.⁵⁷ A major Greek journal of the turn of the 20th century presented the individual story of a Cretan, who arrived in Egypt at the age of

⁵³ See chapter 3.

⁵⁴ Hadziiosif, Christos: *I giraia selini*, pp. 53-64.

⁵⁵ Hadziiosif, Christos: *La colonie grecque*, p. 241; Hadziiosif, Christos: *Banques grecques*, pp. 158-159; Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 80.

⁵⁶ Stylianidis, Stylianos St.: *O ethnikos evergetis*, pp. 10-12, 24-25.

⁵⁷ Konstantinidis, Theodoulos F.: *Georgios Averoff*. In spite of his admiration of Averoff, Tsirkas is an exception for mentioning that Averoff profited during an epidemic of cholera in 1865, buying land and commodities in depreciated prices: Tsirkas, Stratis: *O Kavafis kai i epochi tou*, p. 60.

12 and went through all stages of commercial activity, before being able to expand his establishments in Alexandria, Upper Egypt and Sudan with 120, mainly Greek, employees.⁵⁸ A Cypriot merchant was described as having a story that was “same as that of almost all Cypriots living here [in Egypt], who started from zero and, through their industry, their thrift, their honesty and smartness, managed to make themselves to important merchants and landowners”.⁵⁹ Stories about a “success” from point zero were not missing also regarding Greeks involved in tobacco production and trade,⁶⁰ even if their protagonists often came from Greek or Ottoman provinces with a tradition in the specific field of activity.⁶¹ In 1911, Vlasis Gavriilidis mentioned the example of a person from Thessalia, by that time a big landowner in Zagazig, as one of a totally self-made millionaire; his case was further emphasized by Gavriilidis, a fervent critique of the educational system in Greece, so as to confirm his opinion that most Greeks that managed to become rich abroad had not attended Greek high schools.⁶² Together with critiques of this kind, which authors like Gavriilidis were always ready to make, such stories emphasized the “success” of the “Greeks Abroad” in general without questioning much, not only regarding the specific conditions of their “success”, but also reproducing a generalized understanding of Greeks who self-evidently have “success” when living out of Greece.

This was an understanding not only regarding wealthy merchants and industrialists, but also broader, middle-class Greeks. A journalist of *Akropolis* visiting Egypt in 1895 was proud to meet Greeks, all of which being “*oikokyraioi*”, a common characterization of the petit bourgeois, “well-to-do” and “proprietors”, coming from many different parts of the “free and enslaved Greece”, according to the usual description of that time regarding the present and the expected future inhabitants of the Greek state.⁶³ Four years later, another Greek visitor of Egypt, this time from Crete, explained that Greeks in Egypt were identified to the professions of the “banker, landowner, industrialist, merchant, doctor, lawyer, teacher, engineer,

⁵⁸ Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou 1902, pp. 236-237.

⁵⁹ Aigyptiakon Imerologion Drakopoulou 1901, p. 348. For a similar description about a Cypriot Greek see: Koudounaris, Aristeidis L.: *Viografikon Lexikon Kyprion*, p. 16, footnote 72.

⁶⁰ See the example cited in: Charitatos, Manos + Giakoumaki, Pinelopi: *I istoria tou ellinikou tsigarou*, p. 155.

⁶¹ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 2, p. 290; Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, pp. 96-111; Charitatos, Manos + Giakoumaki, Pinelopi: *I istoria tou ellinikou tsigarou*, pp. 128-167.

⁶² Gavriilidis, Vlasis: *Taxidia*, p. 110.

⁶³ *Akropolis*, 30.04.1895.

contractor, employee, journalist”.⁶⁴ Lampridis commented that, compared to other people with many migrants, Greeks did not send, to Egypt or elsewhere, the “useless and weak elements”, but the “most thriving ones”.⁶⁵ The comparison often came to the “other Europeans”, such as at an 1883 Greek text. The author of it, even though admitting the existence of some miserable amongst the Greeks in Egypt, added that “most of them are not inferior from Europeans in arts and sciences”, giving the example of a person from Andros, who had set a blacksmith shop in Tanta that was better than any other in Piraeus and Syros of that time.⁶⁶ During his 1911 visit to Egypt, Vlasis Gavriilidis met a person from Tripolis in Zagazig owning a grocery which, according to Gavriilidis, was much better than any Athenian of that time in elegance and progressiveness.⁶⁷ At an autobiographic story, a person from a village near Ioannina describing himself as a child of poor parents explained that he went to Crete when he was 11 and then, in 1887, he moved to Egypt in order to work as a baker. There, he tried to become a grocer, even though he did not have much money. Later, he had different adventures, worked by different Ipeiros Greek bakers of Alexandria, at a grocery in Port Said, he became a baker again by Greeks as usual, even if he changed many jobs. As the protagonist would recall, he was initially spending much of the money he earned in good life, luxuries and parties, but later he started to save money, that being apparently the moral of his story. At the end, he managed to fulfill his initial goal, which was to make his own grocery.⁶⁸

Besides such “success” stories and assurances about the “thriving” Greek migrants, however, there are also references about another kind of Greek migration, especially at the turn of the 20th century.⁶⁹ A Greek journalist would comment that most Greeks in Egypt belonged “neither to the most developed nor to the wealthier classes of society”, going there “desperate” so as “to find a job”,⁷⁰ whereas a diplomat pointed that many Greeks arrived to Egypt without [much] money and [the knowing of] languages and that they would not manage to become rich so easily.⁷¹ At a 1904 case known through a claim for economic aid by the Greek Community of Minya the

⁶⁴ Anagennisis, 20.02.1899.

⁶⁵ Lampridis, Ioannis: *Ai ellinikai apoikiai*, pp. 12, 45.

⁶⁶ *Mi Chanesai* 585, 1883, p. 2.

⁶⁷ Gavriilidis, Vlasis: *Taxidia*, p. 114.

⁶⁸ Stoupis, Christos K.: *Icho ex Ipeirou*, pp. 39-61.

⁶⁹ Nevertheless, a Greek diplomat already in the mid-19th century reported about people, often with no money to go away from Egypt, expecting financial aid from the consulate: *HAMFA* 36.1, 1869.

⁷⁰ *Empros*, 04.01.1900.

⁷¹ *Metarrythmisis*, 16/28.02.1893.

protagonist, after completing his military service and due to the need to find a way to make his living for him and his children, went to Egypt, expecting to meet his compatriots and find a job through their recommendation. These expectations, however, did not come true, whereas he did not even have the chance, according to his narration, to lose his money in the temptations of Alexandria before going to Minya, since he spent even the money he would need in order to return to Greece, if that would be necessary, for his recovery at a local hotel, as he had been affected from strong fever already by his arrival.⁷² Even if there were suspicions about some of these stories, considered as a trick to earn easy money,⁷³ their existence further suggests of Greeks in Egypt which did not always manage to be so “successful” because of their “hard work”, “frugality”, ability to “adjust” and other qualities emphasized by celebratory texts.⁷⁴

Some of these Greeks even left Egypt soon, without the money they had dreamed of at the beginning of their travel. Savvas Tserkezis was a villager from Cyprus who spent part of his adventurous life in Egypt. There, after two months of searching and borrowing money from a person from his village, he found a job at a small tavern owned by a person from Corfu. He worked at that tavern for four months, before being drafted as volunteer to the Greek army during the 1897 war and therefore departing from Egypt.⁷⁵ Another similar story is that of a high school graduate, who could speak no foreign languages but a few words in French and had three pounds and two letters of recommendation with him when he departed for Alexandria, with the dream of going back home as an extremely rich person. As he later recalled, he was initially impressed by the big streets, the shops with the “wonders of the century” and the stock market of Alexandria, he spent his money in the temptations of the city already during his first night there. However, soon he found out that both of his recommendations had no job to offer him, not only because he did not have enough qualifications, but also since they told him that they were about to dismiss even one or two of their existing employees. After six months full of disappointments, the protagonist of the story departed thinking that, whereas when entering the port of Alexandria, he was dreaming that one day he might leave the

⁷² GCM 6, 1892-1928.

⁷³ For suspicions in the cases of some Christian Greeks threatening to shift to Islam, if they did not get financial aid, compare chapter 9, footnote 215.

⁷⁴ About such descriptions see chapter 3.

⁷⁵ Stavridis, Foivos (ed.): Tserkezis, Savvas: Imerologion, pp. 48-51.

place rich and triumphant, after all the adventures he experienced, he would regard himself happy if only he departed in the condition he arrived.⁷⁶ Stories such as this, even if probably reproduced in order to discourage potential migrants from departing from their places of origin,⁷⁷ indicate that not all “Greeks Abroad” managed to make the fortune they might have dreamed of when going to Egypt, inspired by stories about Greeks that had been “successful”, if anywhere out of Greece. A Cypriot author remembered her childhood in Egypt, when her pharmacist grandfather was trying to aid poor Greeks that gathered in Egypt due to the relative easiness of going there until the turn of the 20th century, a period when not many formalities were needed and when there had been a rumor that one could “collect pounds from the ground” in Egypt.⁷⁸ A 1908 comment by a journalist was that, after the antiquity, “the Greeks decided again to invade the country of the pharaohs, not with spears and shields, but with a few coins in their pocket”, so as to make money either in Egypt or move further from there towards other places of Africa or Asia; nevertheless, it was added that most of these people departed after a couple of months without having found a job.⁷⁹ The references to mass migration of Greeks to Egypt which did not manage to fulfill their dreams about “success” are not missing, especially at the turn of the 20th century.

Many of the abovementioned Greek “invaders” lacked of sufficient “capital” in more than just material terms: only in the Greek state, it was estimated that 71,38% of the male and 93,7% of the female population was illiterate in 1870, a percentage that declined to 50,2% and 82,55% respectively by 1907.⁸⁰ The Greek census-takers of 1889 detected 12.355 men and 8051 women of Greek citizenship in Egypt, among whom 16.309 classified as literate and 3217 as illiterate.⁸¹ Nevertheless, one can assume that the illiterate Greeks in Egypt must have been more, if one takes into account that it was mostly poor people that, for different reasons, were not detected by census-takers,⁸² not to mention that many of the Greek poor originated from places

⁷⁶ Kosmos, 24/09.03.1902, pp. 265-268.

⁷⁷ About such tendencies see in particular chapter 7.2.

⁷⁸ Palaiologou-Petronda, Evgenia: *Ston kairo tou Pappou mou*, pp. 23, 26. About the belief, at the turn of the 20th century, that people would get rich easily in Egypt, see references also in: Tsaravopoulos, N.: *I egkatastasi*, p. 16; Tsirkas, Stratis: *Nourentin Bompa*, p. 12; Malanos, Timos: *Anamniseis enos Alexandrinou*, p. 24; Iordanidou, Maria: *San ta trela poulia*, pp. 23-24.

⁷⁹ *Empros*, 07.01.1908.

⁸⁰ Cited in: Tsoukalas, Konstantinos: *Exartisi kai anaparagogi*, p. 393.

⁸¹ *Ypourgeion Esoterikon: Statistiki tis Ellados*, p. 72.

⁸² See chapter 1, footnote 11.

out of the Greek state and were not included in the counting, as they did not always manage to get the Greek nationality.⁸³ Gkikas gave a rough personal estimation about the Greeks migrating to Alexandria at about the same period, arguing that about 90% of them were poor and illiterate, having no relation to art other than a “pagan mysticism” for the saint protecting their island or the “merciful Mary” of their village.⁸⁴ It is not possible to check the exact percentages and the – perhaps exaggerated – descriptions of Gkikas but, according to another description of that period, many Greeks migrated to Egypt in the late 19th century because of excessive hopes of success. Even if most of them initially worked as hotel-keepers, bakers, retailers, wine-merchants, tobacconists and so on, soon there were too many people of such occupations and many of these people had to leave Egypt, spreading the opinion that there was no future there in terms of labor. According to the same observer, others were “saved” by the colossal irrigation works, the construction of railways, channels and buildings, the draining of marshes and the opening of new possibilities for commerce in the south. As further commented, the decisive change in that period was the ease of settlement in Egypt of people “with no knowledge, no languages, no special experience, no support and no capital”.⁸⁵ In spite of the multitude of stories about the “successful” Greeks abroad, this mass of people could not easily manage to achieve the goal of getting wealthy, whereas many among them were classified in various categories of the “unseemly” whites.

4.3 The “unseemly” whites

At the turn of the 20th century, the number of Greeks in big Egyptian cities and in the channel towns remained relatively high, even though it was not the same people constantly settled there. For example, seasonal activities attracted short-term migrants, especially from southeastern Mediterranean islands such as Cyprus, where forms of what has been described as “circular” migration⁸⁶ accentuated in the periods the economic condition of Cyprus worsened.⁸⁷ In 1888, it was estimated that about 40 villagers departed every month from Cyprus to Izmir or Egypt because of having

⁸³ About the mistrust of Greek diplomats to people of lower social strata claiming of being Greek citizens see chapter 8, footnotes 48-52.

⁸⁴ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: *Peninta chronia daskalos*, pp. 49-50.

⁸⁵ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, p. 127.

⁸⁶ Tilly, Charles: *Migration*, p. 52.

⁸⁷ BNA, FO series 141/467.

neither a job nor the means to seed a field.⁸⁸ It was often Greeks from Cyprus that, doing whatever job possible or even begging for their fare, sometimes passing from town to town in Syria, arrived in Egypt “totally destitute, miserable and lacking even of their fare”.⁸⁹ It is not always clear if all of these people returned to their places of origin, the port of Port Said serving, for example, as a major passing for transit migrants to Australia and other destinations.⁹⁰ It is also questionable if all people passing by managed immediately, or managed at all, to get the papers needed and proceed further in a legal way. A Cypriot Greek newspaper wrote about destitute Cypriots, who thought they would find a job even if lacking of basic qualifications, or hoped they would be supported by the famous brotherhood of the Cypriots as soon as they would arrive in Alexandria.⁹¹ A story in Egyptian Greek press was that of a group of Cypriot men, women and children in extreme poverty, which have fallen victim of fraud. As they did not manage to find a job in Alexandria, they wanted to return to Cyprus but, having no money to pay for a steamship, they took a sailing-boat instead. The boat brought them to Port Said, where it had to spend some days to deliver cargo, during which days the Cypriots had to go around with no money and beg, in order to survive.⁹²

News about Greek “success stories” were not always reproduced without being accompanied by some criticism. *Tachydromos*, a Greek newspaper of Egypt, reprinted information from Cypriot press about Cypriots in every place of Egypt which made a fortune “through long and honest working”, but added that there was an even greater number of Cypriots, which had been “unlucky” or “unable” to find a job and were begging in the streets of Egyptian towns. As further explained, it was mostly “inexperienced and ignorant” young people, who thought “they would just have to spread their arms to make gold”.⁹³ The “Cypriot poor” was a common topic in Greek press in or about Egypt, especially the beggars, the Greek consul complaining in 1907 that almost half of them in Alexandria were Cypriots.⁹⁴ A Cypriot visited Egypt in

⁸⁸ Kypros, 08/20.10.1888.

⁸⁹ Enosis, 11/23.11.1888. Tserkezis, whose case is the best known example of Cypriot migration at that time, also passed through Syria to manage to go to Egypt. See: Stavridis, Foivos (ed.): Tserkezis, Savvas: Imerologion, pp. 37-48.

⁹⁰ In more detail about transit migrants through Egypt see chapter 7, footnotes 95-103.

⁹¹ Foni tis Kyprou, 10/22.02.1890. About the Brotherhood see chapter 10, footnotes 243-248.

⁹² Tachydromos, 07/20.05.1902. Compare to stories about the supposedly generally “successful” Cypriot Greeks in Egypt such as the case described in chapter 4, footnote 59.

⁹³ Tachydromos, 23/05.02.1907.

⁹⁴ Ebenda.

1914 and cross-checked information from local Cypriots, since he had the purpose of making a research about begging, which he described as the “disgrace of Cyprus”. As he concluded, most of the beggars originated from poor villages of the Cypriot province of Pafos and he was even told by the secretary of the Greek Charity Society of Alexandria, 90% of those asking there for financial aid came from Cyprus.⁹⁵ Greek press often referred to Greeks regularly going to Egypt and selling lottery tickets, working as shoe-shiners and roll-sellers or practicing begging professionally in the streets of Egyptian towns.⁹⁶ In a sarcastic text, “lottery ticket sellers” and the “convoys of beggars” were described as part of the nightlife of Alexandria, together with wandering musicians and “native” sellers of Chinese items.⁹⁷ Some of the “foreign nationals” mentioned in mid-19th century sources as being arrested by government officials in Cairo for begging and vagrancy and delivered to their consulates⁹⁸ might have been Greeks, whereas by the end of the century there were estimations even about a number of 30.000 “destitute” Greeks in Egypt.⁹⁹

There was also a considerable female portion of “destitute” Greek migration in Egypt. An author from Cyprus recalled that her grandfather, a late 19th century pharmacist in Alexandria, had brought a young girl from Limnos to work as a housemaid.¹⁰⁰ At that time, that was a common practice not exclusively,¹⁰¹ but also for many poor Greek girls, mainly originating from the Aegean islands and wishing to collect money for their dowry; these girls were usually employed in Athens or various big Egyptian and Ottoman urban centers.¹⁰² According to what was written in the local press of that time, about 5000 girls went to Egypt only from the small Ottoman island of Limnos at the turn of the 20th century, with experiences including attempts to escape or to commit suicide because of a tough boss, or violent methods of discipline exercised by their employers.¹⁰³ Such incidents are not uncommon in Egyptian or Athenian Greek press, such as a case of a housemaid from the island of Andros who

⁹⁵ Foni tis Kyprou, 26/09.05.1914.

⁹⁶ See for example: Empros, 16.10.1897; Tachydromos, 23/05.02.1907; Tachydromos, 26/08.02.1907; Empros, 07.01.1908; Alitheia, 11.06.1910; Foni tis Kyprou, 26/09.05.1914.

⁹⁷ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: Eikonografimenon Aigyptiakon Imerologion tou 1895, pp. 221-222.

⁹⁸ Ener, Mine: The Charity of the Khedive, p. 191.

⁹⁹ Karatheodoris, K[onstantinos] St.: I Agyptos, pp. 111-112.

¹⁰⁰ Palaiologou-Petronda, Evgenia: Ston kairo tou Pappou mou, p. 22.

¹⁰¹ Compare, for example, the case of Primorje: Drnovšek, Marjan: Fragments from Slovenian Migration History, pp. 64-65.

¹⁰² Anastassiadou, Méropi: Greek Orthodox immigrants, p. 157; Exertzoglou, Haris: Oi “chamenes patrides”, p. 177.

¹⁰³ Wikipedia, Aigyptiotes Limnioi.

was serving at a wealthy Greek couple in Cairo and died after having been whipped and after hot eggs were put under her arms. All this happened because her boss suspected her for stealing some money and jewels.¹⁰⁴

Maltreatment of this kind was not the only cause of protest related to the network of young, poor girls, since housemaid networks were sometimes the pretext for human trafficking. Egypt was a major part of a dense network of brothels that spanned the Mediterranean in the turn of the 20th century, in which thousands of Greek women were regularly and routinely involved;¹⁰⁵ as Fragoudis commented by his 1895 visit in Alexandria, the Alexandrian night life was full of “altars of Aphrodite” with fallen prostitutes of Athens or Paris.¹⁰⁶ According to what was written in or reproduced by Cypriot Greek press, part of the poor Cypriots going to Egypt was young girls sold to private houses or brothels and sometimes their parents exploited them “in every way so as to get money”, letting girls of 14-15 years old “behave inappropriately” in the streets of Egyptian towns or even selling them in order to avoid starvation.¹⁰⁷ Only in 1908, the Egyptian police caught 759 “young girls” which disembarked in Alexandria to find a job and 90% of these “young girls” were Greeks. The statistic accompanied the story of a girl from the island of Naxos, which was convinced to go to Egypt and work as a housemaid but she was sold there since, as further explained, anyone could buy a girl of 15 to 18 years old with just four pounds.¹⁰⁸ Many stories of young Greek girls transported to Egypt, mostly from Aegean islands and via Athens, were included in reportages whenever the Greek police, the Greek consular authorities in Egypt or even priests or people from the same island managed to detect such a case, to prevent it in Piraeus or to send the girls to their parents or other families considered as trustworthy; they included individual stories of agents promising a job in Egypt to young girls and later selling them to brothels, or regularly transporting dozens of them, supposedly so as to work as

¹⁰⁴ Omonoia, 16/29.06.1906; Akropolis, 20.06.1906; Akropolis, 28.06.1906.

¹⁰⁵ Drikos, Thomas: *I porneia stin Ermoupoli*, pp. 41-49; Gallant, Thomas W.: *Tales from the Dark Side*, pp. 23-27.

¹⁰⁶ Akropolis, 17.05.1895.

¹⁰⁷ For such incidents see: Tachydromos, 23/05.02.1907; Tachydromos, 26/08.02.1907; Eleftheria, 23/05.02.1910; Foni tis Kyprou, 08/21.05.1910; Foni tis Kyprou, 18/31.12.1910; Foni tis Kyprou, 03/16.09.1911; Foni tis Kyprou, 26/09.05.1914.

¹⁰⁸ Empros, 07.02.1909.

housemaids in Egypt, but even stories about the selling of girls by their parents for 300 drachmas or by their partners for five of fifteen pounds.¹⁰⁹

Different examples in colonial Asia indicate the existence of a great number of “unseemly” whites, sometimes considered as possibly bringing a loss of “racial” prestige and authority. A “solution” was to try and keep them “invisible” or to ship some of the “nonproductive” men back to their places of origin.¹¹⁰ In the Ottoman Empire, attempts of the long 19th century aimed at controlling the “poor” and different of their leisure activities,¹¹¹ or to regulate migration of economically and politically undesired people in urban centers, by trying to prevent or to integrate them.¹¹² The “moralization” of the Greek poor was a goal set not only in the Greek state, but also from Ottoman institutions: the spread of education in order to incorporate the poor into a national community was also an aim in some cases, even if there were also arguments in favor of marginalization, whereas begging was sometimes interpreted as a social provocation by people that could work.¹¹³ The presence of beggars and vagrants in urban areas caused different sort of worries by European travelers and residents in Egypt as also by non-European Egyptians, with arguments about the laziness of the peasants or about the inappropriate behavior, which by the end of the 19th century was increasingly correlated to criminal activity.¹¹⁴ In the case of Greeks in Egypt, the patriarch led an initiative already in 1874, forming a charity organization with the goal of providing support to destitute “*omogeneis*” who had an illness, to poor pupils, but also to stamp out “laziness” and any “nastiness” of “professional” beggars.¹¹⁵ Another charity society was proclaimed in 1879, presided this time by the Greek consul, with a goal to offer hospital treatment to every destitute Greek and provide the means to return to their places of origin.¹¹⁶ A charity institution formed in 1896 under the protection of the Greek government had a fund for the supply of

¹⁰⁹ Akropolis, 12.02.1902; Empros, 14.09.1902; Empros, 15.12.1902; Empros, 15.01.1903; Empros, 02.05.1903; Empros, 03.05.1903; Empros, 02.10.1903; Omonoia, 14/27.11.1903; Empros, 26.09.1904; Empros, 27.11.1904; Empros, 28.10.1906; Empros, 07.09.1907; Pantainos 1908-1909, pp. 130-133; Empros, 13.02.1909; Tachydromos, 14/27.04.1909; Tachydromos, 18/31.07.1909; Omonoia, 14/27.09.1909; Empros, 07.08.1911.

¹¹⁰ Stoler, Ann Laura: Rethinking Colonial Categories, pp. 150-151.

¹¹¹ Ergut, Ferdan: Policing the Poor.

¹¹² Herzog, Christoph: Migration and the state, pp. 117-134.

¹¹³ Compare: Theodorou, Vaso: *Epaiteia kai aliteia*; Exertzoglou, Haris: *Reconstructing Community*, pp. 144-148; Kokkinakis, Giannis: *Pronoia kai filantropia*, pp. 193-266; Exertzoglou, Haris: *Oi “chamenes patrides”*, pp. 39-48, 67-79, 87, 105-107.

¹¹⁴ Ener, Mine: *Prohibitions on Begging and Loitering*, pp. 319-339.

¹¹⁵ *Elliniki Filoptochos Adelfotita en Alexandria: Kanonismos*.

¹¹⁶ *Imerisia Nea*, 21/03.05.1879.

medical care, but also for the provision of evening lessons.¹¹⁷ If teaching the poor was included to the goals of many Greek institutions in Egypt, sending them away was also a common practice. Young Greeks were sent away even because of not having a job, or of having a “vagrant life”.¹¹⁸ A Charity Society of Ladies in Alexandria assisted 27 different cases of families not able to work with the payment of their rents during 1895, but also sent 110 destitute Greeks mainly to Piraeus but also to other ports, in Greece or the Ottoman Empire.¹¹⁹ In 1908, the Greek Community of Cairo made an agreement with a shipping company so as to let the poor return to their places of origin with two steamships passing from Piraeus, Crete, Izmir, Chios, Rhodes, Leros, Limnos and Istanbul.¹²⁰ At one case, the Greek Community of Cairo agreed to provide a destitute described as “incurable” with five British pounds so as to go to Piraeus together with his wife.¹²¹ Institutions against women slavery were also formed, such as the Home for the Protection of Greek Women, trying to support about 1000 Greek women estimated of coming to Egypt every year, more than half of which was, according to calculations by the institution, “unprotected” and exposed to “many dangers”.¹²² The British authorities were also trying to act against white slave trade in Egypt where, according to the high commissioner and regarding 1914, 931 young girls were met on disembarkation, either sent to their consular or religious authorities or “otherwise dealt”, something that might include the “imprisonment for instigating or facilitating the debauching of minors”.¹²³

Further to such measures in Egypt, appeals were made to ecclesiastical authorities in the Ottoman Empire,¹²⁴ whereas the Church of Cyprus also issued a circular against the slave trade of women.¹²⁵ The Cypriot Brotherhood published announcements, where the usual complaints about the bad situation in Cyprus due to British maladministration were accompanied by the need to prevent people from Cyprus from going to Egypt. Cypriots were advised to ignore rumours about Egypt as a place where everyone easily became rich and to think seriously about a possible

¹¹⁷ I allilovoitheia: Ellinikos en Alexandriaia Syndesmos I Allilovoitheia. More about the attempts to “moralize” and “nationalize” Greeks of lower social strata in Egypt see in chapter 11, footnotes 49-56.

¹¹⁸ HAMFA 98.2γ, 1871; Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: Ellinikos diakosmos, p. 46.

¹¹⁹ Elliniki Filoptochos Etaireia ton Kyrion en Alexandriaia: Ekthesis, pp. 14-15.

¹²⁰ GCC A44/1:4, 1907-1908, letter n. 240.

¹²¹ GCC A43/3:3, 1906-1907, letter n. 76.

¹²² Tachydromos, 20/02.06.1909; Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, p. 452; Lachanokardis, Iraklis: Palaia kai nea Alexandriaia, pp. 103-104.

¹²³ BNA, FO series 141/466.

¹²⁴ Ekklesiastikos Faros, 1908, pp. 285-286; Pantainos, 1908-1909, p. 393.

¹²⁵ Salpigx, 10.06.1910.

travel to Egypt, whereas the Cypriot Brotherhood made it clear that no extra aid would be provided to poor Cypriots than the one definitely provided by its regulation. The goal, as the Brotherhood further explicated, was not to give the money gathered by the work of “honest people” to “professional beggars” who, “avoiding the honest work in their homeland, prefer to go around Egyptian streets selling innocent girls or begging”.¹²⁶ If Greek institutions tried to help and control the “destitute” category of migrants, the British authorities in Cyprus were also aware of the constant arrival of “destitute Cypriote youths and girls” in Egypt which, as the British active consul in Alexandria commented, “unable to obtain work [...] either take to evil courses or become a burden upon the community”.¹²⁷ In 1920, the department of public security in London suggested a classification of Cypriots applying to enter Egypt in three categories. The first one included the “fairly well-to-do” persons with a definite work in Egypt, who would be accepted. A second group was that of “indigent” persons that had come “to search a livelihood”, who ought to be clearly rejected. The last category was the people that were given promises of being employed as barmen, grocer’s assistants and so on by their relatives in Egypt, for which the high commissioner in Egypt proposed that the Cypriot authorities ought to issue passports only if no known objections to their entry into Egypt existed and only if they had definite employment.¹²⁸

Tamvakopoulos, a leading figure of the struggle against slave trade and also a consultant of the Greek Community of Alexandria, stressed the need for strict controls to be made also regarding the employees of lower rank in the Greek consulate, since some of them were accused for complicity in the Greek “racket of procurers”.¹²⁹ Also in 1908 in *Akropolis* it was commented that other states, such as Italy and Romania, already had taken stricter measures on the issue compared to the Greek state.¹³⁰ In the next few years, the Greek government attempted to control the migration of women in particular, or the departure for Egypt of “jobless or suspect rascals”, as described in Greek press, by the issuing of passports with a stick picture, a receipt that the traveler

¹²⁶ Foni tis Kyprou, 10/22.02.1890; Foni tis Kyprou, 25/07.06.1902; Foni tis Kyprou, 19/01.11.1902; Foni tis Kyprou, 15/28.05.1904; Tachydromos, 23/05.02.1907; Tachydromos, 26/08.02.1907; Alitheia, 11.06.1910; Foni tis Kyprou, 26/09.05.1914.

¹²⁷ SAC SA1/3028, 1900.

¹²⁸ BNA, FO series 141/467.

¹²⁹ *Empros*, 28.10.1908. The report provoked a further discussion and part of it was disclaimed by Greek diplomats, but did not convince the reporters of *Empros*: *Empros*, 10.11.1908.

¹³⁰ *Akropolis*, 24.04.1908.

had the necessary means of living or a specific working purpose, or a permit from local town mayors.¹³¹ In spite of the emancipatory aspects of different kind of identity documentation, the intention to introduce a system of bureaucratic identification making people “legible” and to impose a “monopoly of the legitimate means of movement” was also supposed to make supervision and control of human mobility easier, of beggars and vagabonds, but also of political opponents.¹³² The large number of Greeks migrating to Egypt included many categories of people, the presence of which was not always considered as part of a “success story” and was not necessarily welcomed by Greek institutions and authorities, people that might be included to a description about “unseemly” whites. In spite of attempts to increase the control of the movement of people and of activities considered illegal, it is questionable whether a complete control had been reached – or could have been reached – in practice.

4.4 Different forms of “disgrace” for the Greek prestige in Egypt

A stealing in Larnaca, described by a Cypriot Greek newspaper as being committed “with audacity and mastery altogether Port-Saidian”, made a Greek newspaper of Port Said protest in 1903.¹³³ That exaggerated description reproduced a widespread prejudice regarding not only Greek, but generally the European workers gathered in the towns around the Suez Channel, as being rowdy and engaging in theft and rape.¹³⁴ A local Greek author tried to cut down to size the negative name of Port Said for gambling, prostitution, corruption and crime by blaming an insufficient police and by comparing it to other, even less “secure” and “moral”, big Mediterranean ports.¹³⁵ Even if Greek drug and antiquity dealers existed also in small communities of the Upper Egypt,¹³⁶ it was mainly in big urban centers or in the towns of the channel, such as Suez or Port Said, that the rapid concentration of people was accompanied with the appearance of phenomena beyond what was considered to be legal. Ill-famed Greek places existed in big Egyptian cities, such as a coffeehouse in Alexandria, mentioned as a place in which fighting often occurred,¹³⁷ or bars in slum

¹³¹ Empros, 07.08.1915; Bristow, Edward J.: Prostitution and Prejudice, p. 193.

¹³² Fahrmeir, Andreas: Citizens and Aliens; Torpey, John: The invention of the passport; Caplan, Jane + Torpey, John: Introduction, pp. 1-12.

¹³³ Mentioned in: Tilegrafos, 29/11.04.1903.

¹³⁴ Cole, Juan R. I.: Colonialism and Revolution, pp. 200-201.

¹³⁵ Chaldoupis, Dimitrios K.: Anamniseis kai chronika Port-Said, p. 44.

¹³⁶ Gialourakis, Manolis: I Aigyptos ton Ellinon, p. 371.

¹³⁷ de Kusel, Baron: An Englishman’s recollections, p. 63.

neighborhoods of Cairo, where coffee and hashish was provided.¹³⁸ An early 20th century author wrote about the “third category of Greeks”, after the “upper classes” and “admirable men of business”, consisting of “thieves, smugglers, fancy men, of the worst description, who are masters of the lowest depths of Cairo”.¹³⁹ Hundreds of Greeks with no job were reported at about that time as frequenting Greek-owned gambling houses and dens in Cairo, places where dozens of murders and injuries took place every year, according to the same reporter.¹⁴⁰ In the years following the end of the construction of the Suez Channel, when many workers stayed there without having a job, Greek consuls mentioned of poor people hiding and avoiding to pay (Greek) grocers, of violent robberies committed after the end of works, of criminals remaining unpunished and disturbing the inhabitants of the channel towns, of “*favlovioi*”, i.e. “profligate” Greeks going there and cheating Greek workers with gambling, of “disorders” caused by “people with no job” or of crimes committed “in the middle of the day”, so many “atrocious crimes”, that rendered the Greeks hated.¹⁴¹ Some reports of this kind referred to the inability of diplomats to practice any control to networks beyond legality and corruption was an interpretation for some of the cases known; as the Greek consul in Alexandria would remark, the income of Greek vice-consuls in Ismailia derived exclusively from contraband, the only “truly Greek interest” there.¹⁴² According to a report of a Greek doctor with a leading role in the workers organization in the channel towns, various gambling houses, coffee-shops and bars of the area made fortunes at the expense of Greek workers, who might spend there the four or five pounds they earned working day and night for a month.¹⁴³

The issue of hashish in Egypt was an issue discussed mainly for its illegal import, often by Greeks, and for its consumption, mostly by Egyptian peasants. De Guervill reported of how he was told, while in southern parts of Egypt, about hashish, “extracted from a plant grown in Greece [and] smuggled into the country”, where “it kills, or makes mad, thousands of human beings”, so that Greeks could “make their thousands”.¹⁴⁴ This was written in 1905, a time the issue of hashish was once more

¹³⁸ Malmignati, Perollari P.: *L' Egitto senza Egiziani*, p. 43.

¹³⁹ de Guervill, A. B.: *New Egypt*, pp. 87-88.

¹⁴⁰ *Empros*, 15.09.1912.

¹⁴¹ HAMFA 36.1, 1865; HAMFA 36.1, 1867; HAMFA 36.1, 1868; HAMFA 36.1, 1869; HAMFA 36.1, 1871.

¹⁴² HAMFA 36.1, 1881.

¹⁴³ Fragkoulis, K[ostas] N.: *I symvoli ton Ellinon*, p. 43.

¹⁴⁴ de Guervill, A. B.: *New Egypt*, pp. 187-188.

negotiated between Egyptian and Greek authorities, but not for the first time. In 1884, a commercial treaty not only facilitated the import of Greek tobacco to Egypt, but also allowed Egyptian authorities to prohibit the import of hashish and to investigate Greek stores and houses suspected for illegal commerce of it as well as of tobacco having crippled taxation, in an attempt to overcome the problems caused by the Capitulations.¹⁴⁵

Egyptian Greek press often protested when research for hashish took place without providing any evidence and in spite of police information about it, either in ships coming from Piraeus or in Greek shops in Egypt. The same press wrote about gangs of “traitors” repeatedly entering Greek houses to check if there was hashish, or even mentioned attempts of people collaborating with the police to throw a small bag with hashish at a Greek grocers’ store, in order to receive the reward of the police.¹⁴⁶ Even though such incidents might also exist and in spite of the actual prejudice towards Greeks, there were Greek gangs involved in the import of hashish to Egypt in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Hashish quantities might be seized from ships, unknown receivers or just poor persons,¹⁴⁷ but a US-American diplomat pointed out that the excessive value was enough to compensate those concerned in the trade for an occasional confiscation of a shipment.¹⁴⁸ A British colonial administrator remarked that even commercial houses “of good name” smuggled tobacco and that they, “encouraged by their support and by the great profits, did not shrink from open battle, if necessary, with the coastguard”.¹⁴⁹ A person working in the customs during the 1870s recalled of the Greek smugglers of hashish, gunpowder, tobacco and other contraband articles “generally being brought direct from Greece in small coasting vessels” and the “continual” and often “sanguinary” fights with the coastguard, since most vessels arrived nightfall creeping in as close to the shore as possible and discharging their cargo into small rowing-boats manned by Greeks, who then landed the stuff somewhere in the coast and brought it to town on the back of camels.¹⁵⁰ A German officer who had served in late 19th century Egypt described the difficulties in

¹⁴⁵ Souloyannis, Euthymios: I thesi, p. 175; Shechter, Relli: Selling Luxury, p. 55. About the Capitulations see chapter 6, footnotes 9-12.

¹⁴⁶ Metarrythmis, 28/10.07.1886; Metarrythmis, 31/12.11.1886; Omonoia, 10/22.01.1892; Tilegrafos, 02/14.07.1893; Tachydromos, 06/19.09.1900.

¹⁴⁷ Alitheia, 13/25.10.1895; Tilegrafos, 12/25.06.1900; Empros, 06.09.1903; Empros, 29.09.1904; Empros, 30.08.1905.

¹⁴⁸ Penfield, Frederic Courtland: Present-day Egypt, p. 102.

¹⁴⁹ Aucklant, Colvin: The making of modern Egypt, p. 93.

¹⁵⁰ de Kusel, Baron: An Englishman’s recollections, pp. 108-109.

his attempt to find sufficient evidence for Greek criminals he had been stalking in Port Said, people armed with guns and knives and involved in contraband of tobacco in a very organized, fast and profitable way.¹⁵¹

If Greeks participated in illegal activities such as these just described, sarcastic Greek texts implied that the corruption of civil servants had not diminished after the British came to Egypt, but actually became a source of profit for those working in the customs, who either received “*baksheesh*”, i.e. were bribed, or sold the quantities of hashish seized.¹⁵² If such texts might have an intention of redistributing responsibility, there were also Greek texts admitting a role of Greeks in illegal activities. A correspondent of *Akropolis* was full of irony when writing about the “class of Greek businessmen” that had perfected all methods of illegally importing hashish and cheating the customs. As he further explained, a “businessman” of the kind would depart from Alexandria “skinny” to return from Piraeus “fat and robust”, a result not of the Egyptian humidity and the drawing of strength after his sojourn in Greece, but of bringing back about 10 okkas (= about 12 kilos) of hashish in bandages over his body.¹⁵³ As commented in a memorandum submitted to the British administration in 1913, “the Greek”, accused for being “practically always the principal” in such activities, was “admittedly in any commercial capacity more than averagely intelligent [and] as a smuggler, his capacity rises to a talent”. The talent and creativity of people stereotypically included to the “Levantine” referred once again to less glorious and even illegal activities.¹⁵⁴ Greek creativity included the dropping of hashish overboard from merchant steamers, in order to be picked up by shore boats, whereas others passed it through the customs disguised in boxes with false bottoms, in machinery, inside legs of pianos, baulks of timber, inside wooden planes, in bottles, as chestnuts etc.¹⁵⁵

In spite of the signing of an agreement between Greece and Egypt, including a prohibition of hashish, in May 1906, incidents of hashish smuggling with a Greek involvement in Egypt or in Piraeus, before being sent to Egypt, continued to be

¹⁵¹ Müller, Max: In ägyptischen Dienst, pp. 55-58.

¹⁵² *Akropolis Filologiki* 5, 28.02.1888, p. 66; *Omonoia*, 14/26.07.1892.

¹⁵³ *Akropolis*, 04.08.1904.

¹⁵⁴ See chapter 3.2.

¹⁵⁵ BNA, FO series 141/470. On such methods compare also: Penfield, Frederic Courtland: Present-day Egypt, pp. 102-103.

reported in press also in the following years.¹⁵⁶ Tricks, such as the mixing of hashish with legally exported products, were reported by the Greek Chamber of Commerce in 1915, accompanying a complain that this was a reason making some merchants hesitant about transporting their products to Egypt with Greek ships.¹⁵⁷ Greek protests against hashish trade correlated it with a damage of their material interests and by 1919, the cultivation of hashish was prohibited in Greece, due to attempts of Saktouris.¹⁵⁸ Saktouris had served for many years before 1919 as a diplomat in Egypt and in 1913, when still serving there, it was he who had reported that hashish smuggling was not just a disgrace for Greek prestige, but provoked also a great damage to Greek interests.¹⁵⁹

Greek prestige in Egypt was damaged, to use the phraseology of the time, not only by more or less organized networks of prostitution, begging and hashish trade, but also from other activities. There were many incidents of Greeks in Egypt committing different kind of crimes and offences on variant motivation. Plenty of cases in the Egyptian police records of mid-19th century Alexandria referred to Greeks involved in quarrels against Turks or Egyptians after the consumption of alcohol.¹⁶⁰ Even if many such cases were mentioned and criticized in Greek texts, on the other side it was attempted to defend against non-Greek European accusations implying or clearly blaming Greeks for all crimes in Egypt.¹⁶¹ To give an example, a whole issue arose in Port Said after the murder of the English harbor-master, as a local Italian newspaper wrote that the murderer was a Greek, something that was perceived as insulting all Greeks.¹⁶² According to descriptions of a Greek diplomat there were indeed “many Greeks with no job” in the Egyptian towns “holding guns at hand and committing crimes during the whole night” in gangs, as in some examples he mentioned. “Europeans and locals” were often telling the same diplomat that Greeks committed all crimes or complained that people of Greek nationality committing a

¹⁵⁶ Empros, 30.08.1906; Empros, 01.09.1906; Empros, 09.09.1906. Compare also the figures of hashish seized in Egypt, ranging from around 15.000 to around 25.000 kilos, in the first years of the 20th century, as cited in: BNA, FO series 141/470; Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 103.

¹⁵⁷ HAMFA B/10/2, 1915.

¹⁵⁸ Tsihlakis, T[ilemachos] M.: *O en Aigypto Ellinismos*, p. 41.

¹⁵⁹ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, pp. 337-338.

¹⁶⁰ Fahmy, Khaled: *Towards a social history*, pp. 292-293.

¹⁶¹ Omonoia, 25/06.09.1892. On the earlier mistrust of Egyptian authorities to Greeks for any crime in Egypt and the easiness of the deportation of Greeks not able to prove their Greek nationality see also: Hadziiosif, Christos: *Pascha stin Alexandria*, p. 134.

¹⁶² Chaldoupis, Dimitrios K.: *Anamniseis kai chronika Port-Said*, pp. 61-62.

crime in Egypt were not punished by Greek judges.¹⁶³ In 1889, Cromer mentioned of the grievances he received from the Egyptian authorities because the proceedings of the Consular Courts in Egypt were not made in public. According to the complaints, all serious cases were sent to Greece for trial, where the Greeks accused for serious crimes, even if there was strong evidence against them, frequently escaped unpunished and returned to Egypt.¹⁶⁴ Milner also referred to instances when “Greek criminals – thieves, forgers, even murderers – have been handed over to their consul and have either been allowed to escape before trial, or have been acquitted in the teeth of the evidence, or, if condemned in Egypt, have appealed with success to a lenient court at Athens”. As he recalled, “ruffians of the worst description, whom it had been difficult to arrest, and even more difficult to get convicted, have thus returned to Egypt after an incredibly short sentence to resume their old career of crime”.¹⁶⁵ In some cases, suspects were not even arrested and corruption was implied, such as in a comment referring to a “Greek Brotherhood of vice and crime [that] seems to have spies even within the walls of their Consulates [and] in a mysterious and inexplicable fashion, they continually get wind of a police raid, officially accompanied, long before it takes place”.¹⁶⁶ The perplexities regarding the issue of the recognition of Greek nationality¹⁶⁷ made things even more complicate and provided many opportunities of tension.

A Greek diplomat admitted publicly that people, for which Greek courts were later found incompetent, were often provided Greek protection and returned to Egypt unpunished,¹⁶⁸ as also that the time Egyptian police had to wait for a guard of the Greek consular authorities, before entering the house of a suspect of Greek nationality, gave the opportunity to the “profligate” to escape.¹⁶⁹ Besides such statements, Greek press in Egypt would usually respond to generalizations about Greeks committing crimes in Egypt in a defensive argument, such as when questioning whether “such rascals did not exist at every nation”.¹⁷⁰ Some Greeks tried to find other interpretations as well, especially corruption, fitting well to various

¹⁶³ HAMFA 98.2γ, 1871.

¹⁶⁴ BNA, FO series 633/5: Cromer Papers, p. 249.

¹⁶⁵ Milner, Alfred: England in Egypt, p. 41.

¹⁶⁶ de Guervill, A. B.: New Egypt, p. 88.

¹⁶⁷ See chapter 8.

¹⁶⁸ Metarrythmisis, 16/28.02.1893.

¹⁶⁹ Akropolis, 07.08.1885.

¹⁷⁰ Metarrythmisis, 03/15.07.1891.

political arguments of that time. Visiting Egypt in 1895, Fragoudis praised the consul of that period for being “merciless” towards Greek robbers and smugglers, those who “disgraced the Greek name” and allowed Egyptians to have mistrust and throw Greek subjects “in the worst prisons” as soon as they arrested them. As the same author explained, that diplomat managed to reduce the crimes committed by Greeks by 80% and to handle with people that threatened Greek merchants if not paying for protection, something that was supposed to be a proof of exceptions existing despite the “Greek maladministration”.

It was lower consular employees that were considered responsible for many illegal activities, offering the opportunity for the usual at that time Greek complaints about the “political system” in Greece sending the “most corrupted” to work in consulates, where the “miserable” salary made abuses even easier.¹⁷¹ After spending some time in early 20th century Egypt, Lampridis praised the local Greek justice for showing a strictness that “cleaned up the whole Greek society of Egypt from the luckily limited criminal spots”,¹⁷² but it is questionable if this was based in actual data from the specific period or if it was just an expression of the overall enthusiasm of Lampridis. Less than a decade later, it was reported from Egypt that Greeks held the “records” as “slave traders and gamblers and procurers and smugglers”, a “disgrace for the Greek name” that needed, as concluded, better diplomatic representation.¹⁷³ It is indicating that, in such texts, the legacy of the “Greeks Abroad” was hardly damaged, since the responsibility was shared either to the Greek state and its representatives or to non-Greeks.

Existing evidence suggests of a human mobility including “illegals” of all kind. A 1909 reporter of *Empros* in Egypt commented that “every criminal, either common or political, resorts mainly to two places, Egypt and America”,¹⁷⁴ whereas a hero of a 1929 novel mentioned that “bad people often come and go between Alexandria and Piraeus”.¹⁷⁵ At one occasion, the Greek police looked for an embezzler due to a telegraph from the consul in Alexandria, but in the ships searched at the quarantine of Piraeus six other famous “international pilferers”, including one

¹⁷¹ Akropolis, 27.05.1895.

¹⁷² Lampridis, I[Ioannis]: *O en Aigipto sychronos Ellinismos*, pp. 69-70.

¹⁷³ Akropolis, 24.01.1913.

¹⁷⁴ *Empros*, 24.10.1909.

¹⁷⁵ Arvanitakis, G[eorgios] L.: *Mia tragodia eis to Kaïron*, p. 72.

Greek, were detected instead.¹⁷⁶ Greeks accused and wanted in the Ottoman Empire or in the Greek state for murders and robberies might also go to Egypt,¹⁷⁷ whereas brigands from Greece might be arrested in Cairo.¹⁷⁸ At one case, however, a brigand who left Izmir for Egypt with four of his followers showed a Greek diplomat his wounds, claiming that they were the result of his activity while fighting in Crete and demanding diplomatic protection as well as economic assistance, something another brigand from Ipeiros also did convincingly,¹⁷⁹ at a time when the limits between banditry and irredentist activity were blur.¹⁸⁰ Besides brigands arrested and leaving aside those claiming a “patriotic past”, mobility of crime also included different kind of tricksters and criminals who had been arrested in Egypt and transported to serve their sentence in Greece.¹⁸¹ A Greek diplomat boasted of having deported different kind of tricksters, smugglers and blackmailers during his service in Mansourah.¹⁸² After the bilateral agreements of Greece and Egypt in 1906, some Greek owners of gambling houses in Egypt were also deported by Greek diplomats.¹⁸³ People included by Greek press to a general description as “anarchists,¹⁸⁴ criminals, pilferers” were occasionally sent to Greece from Egypt.¹⁸⁵

At the turn of the 20th century, Athenian press was full of front-pages and stories not only about brigands in the Greek state, but also about different kind of violence, such as incidents between antagonistic groups of Greek migrants from different places living in Athens and Piraeus; ascertainments of an increasing criminality in Piraeus correlated to the consumption of alcohol and the attendance of infamous coffee-shops were juxtaposed to the model family life by local press.¹⁸⁶ Some violent reactions regarded issues of honor, even though the knife duel as a means of defending one’s honor was gradually replaced by taking the antagonist to court, at a time when “their political leaders told the people that violence was ‘non-Western’ and uncivilized; their priests told them that it was immoral and unchristian;

¹⁷⁶ Empros, 14.10.1907; Empros, 15.10.1907.

¹⁷⁷ Empros, 10.03.1907; Omonoia, 08/21.08.1908.

¹⁷⁸ Empros, 20.11.1905.

¹⁷⁹ HAMFA 4.1,2, 1869.

¹⁸⁰ Koliopoulos, John S.: Brigands with a Cause.

¹⁸¹ See for example: Tachydromos 07/19.11.1894; Empros, 08.12.1903; Empros, 15.05.1905; Tachydromos, 23/05.09.1905; Tachydromos, 29/12.10.1905; Empros, 09.10.1905; Empros, 14.10.1905; Empros, 23.12.1906; Empros, 25.02.1907.

¹⁸² Saktouris, Antonios A.: Anamniseis, pp. 106-107.

¹⁸³ Empros, 03.07.1906; Empros, 15.09.1912.

¹⁸⁴ People described as “anarchists” were often included to criminals without any differentiation.

¹⁸⁵ Empros, 15.03.1908.

¹⁸⁶ Giannitsiotis, Giannis: I koinoniki istoria tou Peiraia, pp. 255-261.

their radical nationalist leaders told them it was anti-Greek and hindered the struggle for national union”.¹⁸⁷ Having in mind the existence of different forms of violence in the Greek state, but also the gradual retreat of them by the turn of the 20th century, one would wonder whether there was a difference in Egypt, where Greeks both from the Greek state and elsewhere settled and are often represented as a “Western” part of the “Greek world”. It seems however that, besides organized criminal activities considered as a “disgrace” for local Greeks, also other forms of individual violence, usually – but not exclusively¹⁸⁸ – because of love stories, existed and caused similar comments by Greek columnists. In a poor suburb of Cairo, for example, a Cypriot Greek shoe-maker stabbed a colleague and compatriot of him, apparently because of a difference related to an Italian woman.¹⁸⁹ A love affair of a person from Volos with a Greek woman already married to a bank employee ended with a murder, making a reporter of an Athenian newspaper comment that in the “great international community” of Cairo, it was “almost exclusively Greeks” that “killed each other for the sake of women”, something indicating for him that Greeks “have not really been civilized yet”.¹⁹⁰

If Greeks in Egypt were trying to convince non-Greeks that not all crimes were related to the local Greeks and even though Greeks were in many occasions trying to live in a way distinguishing themselves from the “natives”,¹⁹¹ or reproduced stereotypes about the “successful” and “European” Greek of the “Greek East”, it was possible to see comments about Greeks, especially of the lower social strata, which had not “been civilized”, at least not yet. The addition of a “not yet” clarification suggests that, even when reproducing non-Greek European stereotypes about the Greeks as not being “civilized”, i.e. as not being “Europeans”, or if just repeating the common self-critical comments about Greeks as “insufficiently” being “Europeans”, a “Europeanization” was considered possible and, in most cases, desirable. The present chapter was dedicated to a part of the Greek migration to Egypt usually neglected in relevant literature, to the people which had not always been “successful” in their

¹⁸⁷ Ritualized forms of violence by the use of knife, either by knife duelling with the intention to scar the face of the opponent or by vendetta killing, existed among Greeks, also those of lower social strata: Gallant, Thomas W.: *Honor, Masculinity*, pp. 359-382.

¹⁸⁸ Compare also to the example mentioned in chapter 1, footnote 3.

¹⁸⁹ *Foni tis Kyprou*, 23/04.01.1895.

¹⁹⁰ *Empros*, 09.07.1911.

¹⁹¹ This could be the case both in places in the province, as also in towns like Port Said. See respectively chapter 3, footnotes 41-45, as also chapter 4, footnote 38.

activities there or had been involved in activities considered as the “disgrace” part of the Greek migration. In spite of the common assumption that Europeans brought “order” in the colonial world, this was not always the case. Control of human mobility and deportation were some of the methods applied, with more or less success, by authorities and institutions in order to remove the destitute Europeans and those beyond the law and therefore maintain the colonial hierarchies. But the quality of being a “European” was correlated also with other aspects of the life of migrants in Egypt, with criteria still not necessarily fulfilled by all Greek migrants there and with issues even considered as a threat for the coherence of the migrant national community, which will be examined in the following chapter.

4.5 Summary

Chapter 4 was dedicated to a part of the Greek migration to Egypt usually neglected in relevant literature, i.e. to people which had not always been “successful” in their activities there or had been involved in activities considered as the “disgrace” part of the Greek migration. In spite of the common assumption that Europeans brought “order” in the colonial world, this was not always the case. Control of human mobility and deportation were some of the methods applied, with more or less success, by authorities and institutions in order to remove the destitute Europeans and those beyond the law and therefore maintain the colonial hierarchies.

5. A “monster” named “cosmopolitanism”: “cosmopolitan” Greeks and the West

At a “historical dictionary” of Egypt, the local Greeks were described as people who saw themselves “as an extension of European culture into an African land”.¹ As suggested in the previous chapters, however, being a “European” could be perceived differently from various Greeks – let alone non-Greeks, not always including Greeks to their perceptions of “Europeans”. Some Greeks might even take distance from “other Europeans”, or question whether all among the Greeks in Egypt were yet “civilized”, i.e. “Europeans” in the understanding of the long 19th century. In the Greek vocabulary of that period, the description “European” combined most aspects of the “modern world”, especially in politics and the economy, including “the spread of rationalism and secularization, the intensification of commercial activities and industrialization, the formation of a bourgeoisie and other new social groups in the economic and social sphere, and above all, the triumph of the bureaucratic nation-state”.² Nevertheless, there had been also various trends in Balkan societies holding not only a pro-Western, but sometimes also an anti-Western stance to various “Western” models. Individualism, the Enlightenment, secularization, justice, capitalism, hedonism or the loss of traditional values were some of the “Western” ideas that might have been criticized as such, depending on perspective and orientation.³

Alexandros Pallis stayed some years in India, where he read some English and other Western ethnographers and historians. This was considered to be a decisive factor for his life and, as a scholar commented, Pallis made some points that “only he with his knowledge and experience as a diaspora Greek could make”, something assumed also for Petros Vlastos, another Greek with an experience in British India.⁴ The experience of living in India or Egypt could indeed be a factor for the impact of specific European ideas, but it should be added that there were Greeks having contacts with European ideas also through other paths, for example due to their studies in European countries, or even by potential readings and contacts without being necessary to go away from their places of origin, in Greece or elsewhere. Having

¹ Goldschmidt, Arthur Jr.: *Historical Dictionary of Egypt*, p. 125.

² Todorova, Maria: *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 13. Compare also: Skopetea, Elli: *I Dysi tis Anatonis*, p. 13.

³ Schubert, Gabriella + Sundhaussen Holm (eds.): *Prowestliche und antiwestliche Diskurse*, pp. 7-8.

⁴ Tziovas, Dimitris: *Indigenous Foreigners*, p. 167.

these in mind and leaving aside the existence of many people without any meaningful contact with “European” ideas, it must be added that not all of the people that might be included to a “Greek diaspora” description were necessarily influenced in the same way. In fact, many of the critics of “European” ideas were people with studies in European universities and experiences in Europe, or places ruled by Europeans. Even Skopetea, however, a careful and sensitive historian with exemplary studies about the way perceptions of the “West” and the “East” were reproduced through “Western” lenses among the people in the “East”,⁵ wrote about the “diaspora” Greeks, to which she included those of Alexandria, as being “by definition the westernmost part of the Greek world”, a comment made in this generalizing way, even if she referred to just a specific, small part of the total of Greeks dispersed in different places of the world, or even of those in Egypt.⁶ After presenting the arrival of some groups of skilled Greek migrants in Egypt which did not belong to the categories of migration examined in the preceding two chapters, the following paragraphs challenge the “cosmopolitan”, i.e. “European” part of the story of the Greeks in Egypt. It is questioned whether the aspects under the description “cosmopolitan” were characteristics of Greeks in the urban centres of the “Greek East” in particular, like Alexandria, or rather of migrant and non-migrant Greeks with comparable background. Furthermore, it is examined if there was a unique perception and acceptance of Western ideas by all Greeks in Egypt or if some of them would consider these ideas even as a threat.

5.1 Instruments “of enrichment or domination”

Greeks who could not leave Egypt during summer, and not because of economic hardship, would make sure that they would increase their supplies in Viennese beer, so as to make their “beer springs”.⁷ Some others could afford vacation in resorts of Egypt,⁸ or also to the neighboring Cyprus, especially after the transportation improved and became frequent.⁹ Yet a proportion of local Greeks normally managed to enter the steamships departing every day to Piraeus, Istanbul or Marseille full with passengers, mostly with a final destination of different resorts in

⁵ See especially: Skopetea, Elli: *I Dysi tis Anatonis*.

⁶ Skopetea, Elli: *Oi Ellines kai oi echthroi tous*, p. 32.

⁷ *Akropolis Filologiki* 9, 27.03.1888, p. 131.

⁸ *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1893, pp. 110-111; *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1897, p. 288.

⁹ *Foni tis Kyprou*, 30/13.07.1907.

Greece or other places in Europe.¹⁰ Wealthy merchants of cotton, owners of tobacco industries and other “successful” among the Greeks of Alexandria would go for vacation in Europe as soon as the summer was presaged by the *khamsin* winds, the pilgrims and the preventive measures against cholera;¹¹ the family of Emmanouil Benakis, for example, used to make visits in resorts such as Aix-les-Bains or Gratz every summer.¹² Some visited their second houses in Athens or at their places of origin, where they might be perceived as agents of “Europe”, or at least that was their goal. Georgios Filaretos, a deputy representing Pilion in the Greek parliament, mentioned of thousands of Piliots working in Egypt and visiting Pilion during summer or sending their gold there in order to make the mountainous area the “Switzerland of Greece”.¹³ Even if Filaretos might be exaggerating when speaking about “thousands” of rich Piliots, there were examples such as the one of Tsopotos. This was a person that became rich from the commerce of cotton in Egypt and returned to Portaria, his village in Pilion, with a wish to build the biggest house in the region; always according to a recent edition about mansions in Greece, and similarly to many other cases of Piliots, he built a monumental house that, “influenced from Egypt”, adopted “European, renaissance and baroque elements”.¹⁴ In this case, demonstrating “Europe” was a way to show off increased wealth and social status, but this was not the only usefulness of being a European for Greek merchants in Egypt. The owner of a Greek cigarette industry in Alexandria was advertised at a major Athenian Greek journal of 1907 as being “*Ellinikotatos*”, i.e. extremely Greek, concerning the soul, but “English” in the perception of his business and “*Amerikanotatos*”, i.e. extremely American, as far as the practical and multifarious details were concerned.¹⁵ This example of associating the “Greeks Abroad” with qualities considered as Western, important regarding their economic activities, was especially promoted when a Greek clientele was addressed.

Another part of these useful qualities that were often ascribed collectively to the “Greeks Abroad” was the knowledge of many languages, an advantage stressed also in later references to the “multilingualism” of Greeks in Egypt, used as a proof of

¹⁰ *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1897, pp. 287-288.

¹¹ *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1897, pp. 287-288; *Alitheia*, 12.01.1907.

¹² Zannas, P. A. (ed.): *Delta, P[inelopi] S.: Protes enthymiseis*, pp. 57-59.

¹³ Filaretos, Georgios N.: *To Aigyptiakon Zitima*, p. 4.

¹⁴ Ntrenogiannis, Giannis (ed.): *Oi thisavroi tis Elladas* – vol. 16, p. 137.

¹⁵ *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1907, p. 226.

their “cosmopolitanism” and as a factor increasing the chances in the labor market.¹⁶ Politis cited the remark of a French journalist about a humble Chian doorman at a hotel in Upper Egypt who, permanently over books, was self-instructed in French and had studied the English grammar; this example was supposed to prove that multilingualism assured Greeks the obvious practical superiority in the “Orient” where, as further commented, speaking many languages had always been an “instrument of enrichment or domination”.¹⁷ According to one description, the “Egyptiot Greeks”, especially those in the “truly Kosmopolis in the past and the present”, Alexandria, could speak “six or seven languages fluently like their mother tongue”.¹⁸ Even in such an exaggerated form, “multilingualism” was more or less a point, about which many Greek observers at the turn of the century insisted. An 1899 visitor from Crete praised Greeks for being successful in Egypt not only because of being “frugal, enterprising, intelligent”, but also since they became multilingual “due to necessity and circumstances”.¹⁹ Paraskevopoulos commented that “due to necessity, compulsory, even if you don’t want it”, a Greek in Egypt would learn “at least four languages, Arabic, Greek, French, Italic [and occasionally] English, since the arrival of the English”, something compared to Greece where, according to the same, stereotypical critique, even university doctors could hardly mumble a “bonjour”.²⁰

All these languages, or some of them and to some point, were not expected to be learned exclusively in Egypt. Even if many of the Greek migrants there could hardly speak any foreign languages or had even been illiterate,²¹ others had a background of studies and education before going to Egypt. Graduates of the University of Athens at the turn of the 20th century often preferred to practice their profession in Egypt, before a reverse current that emerged after the Second World War.²² Especially many of the lawyers, doctors and teachers, who had difficulties in finding a job in Greece, were employed in Greek communities out of the Greek state.²³ They included some Ottoman Greeks with studies, as evident by the example

¹⁶ See chapter 2, footnotes 80, 83.

¹⁷ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 2, p. 27.

¹⁸ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, pp. 75-76.

¹⁹ *Anagenisis*, 20.02.1899.

²⁰ *Akropolis*, 25.04.1895.

²¹ See chapter 4, footnotes 81-85.

²² Trimi, Katerina: *Mia “astiki metanastefsi”*, p. 202.

²³ Lappas, Kostas: *Panepistimio kai foitites*, p. 446.

of the island of Samos from which many migrated and worked in Egypt at the end of the 19th century, including persons with studies as lawyers, doctors or teachers or with some knowledge of languages.²⁴ Greeks from Romania and Bulgaria also applied for a job in Egypt, for example as teachers in Greek communal schools, with more or less success.²⁵ The increase of Greek population and of the resources that could be invested in Greek networks and institutions in Egypt made it a major choice in the labour market for people with specific studies and skills.

In 1907, professor Andreadis held a speech in Athens, addressed to Greek students and assuming that some of them were thinking of making a career in Egypt. Having himself visited Egypt, the professor could make some suggestions and one of the preconditions which would increase the possibility of success the knowledge of languages, of French rather than English, but also of Italian or German. Andreadis referred to careers that could be made in courts and also to opportunities, even if reduced compared to the recent past due to a growing antagonism, of doctors and pharmacists. Some more limited positions of teachers and greater chances for mechanics and agriculturalists were also mentioned in the same speech.²⁶ It is true that the complicate set of institutions in the colonial legal system of Egypt offered opportunities to young Greeks with studies in law: about 35 of them were working in late 19th century Egypt, gaining much more than they would in Greece, mostly in the Mixed Courts,²⁷ where French was “almost understood by everyone”²⁸ and at which, from the 745 members of the bar in 1916, 141 were of Greek nationality.²⁹ Dozens of Greek doctors were scattered in cities and villages of Egypt, in governor positions or in the private sector.³⁰ Many Greeks participated also in the great construction works, especially after 1882, including contractors and supervisors, besides the – mainly skilled – workmen;³¹ perhaps the most famous among the Greeks working in the construction works in Egypt was the Berlin-born mathematician Konstantinos

²⁴ Moutafis, Giorgos: *I parousia Samion*, pp. 113-114.

²⁵ See two such examples addressed to the Greek Community of Cairo in: GCC A17/2:2, 1905, letter n. 262; GCC A18/4:9, 1910, letter 256.

²⁶ *O Ellinismos*, March 1907, pp. 185-193.

²⁷ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, pp. 411-412.

²⁸ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, p. 68.

²⁹ Brinton, Jasper Yeates: *The Mixed Courts of Egypt*, p. 257.

³⁰ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, p. 445; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 2, pp. 369-412.

³¹ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 2, pp. 51-62.

Karatheodoris, who spent two years in late 19th century British construction works in Aswan, before publishing a study about Egypt.³²

In spite of the existence of these group of Greeks in Egypt, it should be pointed that not all Greeks there could speak the languages necessary for their activities, at least not in a sufficient level. An indication on that issue is the advertisement of an institute of foreign languages, trying to attract the readers of an Alexandrian Greek newspaper by explaining that those departing from Egypt going to Europe, “and there are many of them”, as stressed, faced difficulties and dangers in Italy, Austria, Germany or England because of their ignorance of the languages of those countries.³³ By 1913, a correspondent of *Akropolis* from Alexandria trying to understand why only few Greeks were working in the Egyptian government suggested that the problem was that they did not orient “to the spirit of English occupation” and did not learn enough Arabic and English, since speaking “sort of French” was considered enough to get some money.³⁴ Such comments suggest that linguistic and other abilities might not be shared by all Greeks in Egypt at a level assuring their domination, as Politis hoped, let alone of the abilities in languages most of the migrants described in chapter 4 might have had. In any case, the data presented in the previous paragraphs indicates of a process taking place also, but not exclusively, in Egypt, that of the broadening of the access to specific knowledge and capabilities by a greater number of Greeks in the Greek state as also dispersed, among other places, also in Egypt, due to specific opportunities offered in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

5.2 A “Cosmopolis” of the long 19th century

During a visit at the island of Poros in the late 1820s Nikolaos Dragoumis, a Greek originating from Istanbul, was considered by an Albanian speaking local woman as a “Frank”³⁵ because of his “Western” clothes; the woman was surprised to learn that Dragoumis was actually an Orthodox Christian.³⁶ Especially since the mid-

³² Karatheodoris, K[onstantinos] St.: *I Aigyptos*.

³³ *Tachydromos*, 13/26.11.1903.

³⁴ *Akropolis*, 14.02.1913.

³⁵ People originating from western Europe and especially those of Catholic Christian faith were sometimes called “Franks” in the eastern Mediterranean during the long 19th century. See: Schmitt, Oliver Jens: *Levantiner*, pp. 53-61.

³⁶ Cited in: Skopetea, Elli: *To “protypo vaseleio”*, p. 120.

19th century, “Western” ways, even the clothes, acquired a steadily broader influence, first of all in urban centers, so that gradually less people would be surprised in a similar way that a Greek was dressed in “Western” clothes. Parisian fashion was followed by part of the youth of Istanbul during the 1850s, according to a French visitor.³⁷ Another French, the journalist Gaston Deschamp, mentioned a couple of decades later Greek, Armenian and Jewish girls of the same suburb which were wearing clothes making one think that they might be coming from Paris, if they were not so dark-skinned, whereas it was added that French was spoken by everyone in the “Orient”.³⁸ The last remark might be perceived at first sight as an exaggerated impression caused by selective attention, similar to most texts about the Greek or Italian language written by Greek- or Italian-speaking travelers of that time, paying extra attention when listening their own language, yet the comment went on with details about people in the “Orient” reading French novels, even if not “good” ones, or holding theater performances in French, even though with a pronunciation similar to that of southern French.³⁹ Similar phenomena were also observed in Egypt, but were not always welcomed. During his visit to Egypt in the late 1880s, Alexandros Ragkavis found a Greek bookshop where mainly French novels were sold; the owner responded to the remarks of Ragkavis that he had to sell them because that was what most of his readers demanded, even though he would himself not allow his children read most of them.⁴⁰ At the turn of the century, Georgios Tsokopoulos described his experience with Egyptian Greek women influenced by the “improperly perceived culture”, i.e. the scholastic rules of discretion, multilingualism and piano.⁴¹ French novels were considered as a danger especially for women, described even as “poisons of the soul” and blamed for the destruction of “family harmony”;⁴² a doctor making a speech on the “mission” of the Greek woman in 1911 similarly criticized the learning of French and piano by women, causing according to his calculations an increase in divorces, crimes, or people ashamed of speaking Greek.⁴³

³⁷ Cited in: Exertzoglou, Haris: *Oi “chamenes patrides”*, p. 117.

³⁸ Estia Eikonografimeni, 19.03.1889, p. 279.

³⁹ Ebenda, pp. 278-279.

⁴⁰ Estia Eikonografimeni, 31.07.1888, p. 483.

⁴¹ *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1897, pp. 288-289.

⁴² See a discussion about these novels and their moral influence in: *Tachydromos* 24/07.07.1910; *Tachydromos* 26/09.07.1910; *Tachydromos* 29/12.07.1910; *Tachydromos* 03/16.07.1910.

⁴³ Nikolaou, G[eorgios]: *I apostoli*, pp. 18-19. For more details about the “mission” ascribed to Greek women in Egypt see chapter 11, footnotes 36-46.

The “ostentatious education” of girls in French, English, dance and piano or the reading of romantic French novels by a broader female readership accompanied rapid social change and received a similar critique for alienating Greek women from their “real destination” and the ideals of motherhood also in Ottoman big urban centers: even though what exactly constituted “Western” cultural values was not always evident and evaluated in the same way, this sort of critique was a common place in Greek press of Izmir and Istanbul in the second half of the 19th century, regarding either wealthy families with a private teacher at home for the French and piano lessons or referring to children sent to “foreign” schools, where it was feared that they would be proselytized, since most of them belonged to non-Orthodox Christian religious institutions.⁴⁴ Krumbacher, a German scholar traveling around the eastern Mediterranean, made similar observations and what he perceived as a “French mentality”, extremely and often superficially spread at the expense of “national education” among Greeks of high social strata in Athens, Izmir and Istanbul, reminded him the same “bad mistake” made among the Germans of the 18th century.⁴⁵ A critique to specific ways of consuming the West did not just refer to people in the “westernmost part of the Greek world”, as one might expect. French, according to Deschamp, was spoken by everyone also in Athens,⁴⁶ an exaggerated comment, suggesting though of the existence of such tendencies also in Athens. The broadening of a female readership of French novels was considered as threatening the “traditions” also in the Greek state, where a need for Greek novels with a “national plot”, following however the “good” European examples, was stressed by different scholars in the second half of the 19th century.⁴⁷ It was women in Athens that were criticized for speaking French and behaving as if they were a “French countess” in a 1905 text by a major theologian, Diomidis-Kyriakos.⁴⁸ A journalist of an Athenian newspaper visiting Egypt informed the Athenian girls that their “Egyptian compatriots” were great competitors “at charm, the – exclusively Paris-made – dressing and beauty”.⁴⁹ By his 1888 visit in Alexandria, Alexandros Ragkavis listened many young Greeks, especially girls, speaking to each other in French, something that annoyed him at the

⁴⁴ Exertzoglou, Haris: *The Cultural Uses*, pp. 77-101; Exertzoglou, Haris: *Oi “chamenes patrides”*, especially pp. 232-238.

⁴⁵ Cited in: Enepekidis, Polychronis K.: *I Ellada, ta nisia kai i Mikra Asia*, p. 36.

⁴⁶ *Estia Eikonografimeni*, 19.03.1889, p. 279.

⁴⁷ Rizaki, Eirini: *Oi “grafouses” Ellinides*, pp. 27-54.

⁴⁸ Gazi, Efi: *“Patris, thriskeia, oikogeneia”*, pp. 89-90.

⁴⁹ *Empros*, 02.11.1904.

beginning; he would have been annoyed, as he further commented, even had they spoken it perfectly, something that was far from being the case. Discussing this with his host, however, Ragkavis received the response that Greeks in Egypt often had to deal with foreigners and had some excuses, in contrary to those behaving in this way in Athenian balls.⁵⁰ In a reverse of the stereotype, a story of 1929 written by a Greek scholar originating from Jerusalem, but having spent most of his adult life in Egypt, even referred to people of Athens as being snob and speaking with “*gallismous*”, i.e. using French expressions.⁵¹

The Greek director of a school in Cairo made a speech about the love of Greeks to their homeland since the time of Ulysses, in the antiquity, extending until the time the “industrious bees” went to Egypt “from the ends of Hellenism” to become “cosmopolitan”, but only in body and rarely in soul; as the speaker explained, there was an antithesis between the “idea of Hellenism” and the “base and wild material passions” of its opponents,⁵² an expression of wishes at a time of rapid social change, when many Greeks were seeking for rapid profit in Egypt. Furthermore, such an adjustment of the “cosmopolitan” idea, with an absolute rejection of what was considered as “European”, in this case of “material passions”, was not always the case. The “French manners”, for example, were criticized for causing “loose morals, waste and vanity”, with advices given to Greek “aristocratic youth” of Egypt to prefer the “manly”, close to their traditions, English or German versions instead;⁵³ it is probably no coincidence that such an advice was given in the years after the 1871 French defeat, when such an interpretation of the outcome of the war was popular, also among Greeks.⁵⁴ An article in early 1914 *Tachydromos* proposed reforms in the education to a more “practical” orientation appealing to the German example of 1870, since the French defeat was considered as a result of teachers preparing not “arrogant and wiseacre youngsters, but healthy characters and spirits with proud moral and indomitable courage”;⁵⁵ the need for an “English education” was stressed, as explained, not because of a spirit of “*xenomania*”, i.e. of imitation of the “foreign”, but as “inevitably” imposed, since Egypt was “substantially an English country”.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Estia Eikonografimeni, 31.07.1888, pp. 482-483.

⁵¹ Arvanitakis, G[eorgios] L.: Mia tragodia eis to Kaïron, pp. 77-78.

⁵² Boukouvalas, Georgios A.: Logos Panigyrikos.

⁵³ Akropolis, 07.08.1885.

⁵⁴ Koulouri, Christina: Athlitismos, p. 57.

⁵⁵ Tachydromos, 01/14.03.1914.

⁵⁶ Tachydromos, 03/16.03.1914.

Oddis described Alexandria as “the Cosmopolis of the past and present”, where religions co-existed and Europeans, especially Greeks, Italians and French, celebrated together in view of the future “United World States”; colonial institutions, the “phenomena of modern cosmopolitanism”, were considered as models for this future state.⁵⁷ The “Cosmopolis” of Oddis, in which British, not to mention non-European Egyptians, would hardly find a place, was an example of a federalist project based on ideas about a “Greco-Latin race” or a “Greco-Latin civilization”, which were occasionally present in different phases, from Mazzinian projects and ideas of “Greco-latin” solidarity in the beginning to Italian volunteers at the end of the 19th century.⁵⁸ If Oddis, himself of Italian origin,⁵⁹ was dreaming of a Greco-Latin “Cosmopolis” in Egypt, the author of another text at an Athenian newspaper propagated the cooperation of the Greeks and British in Egypt due to their mutual interests, criticizing therefore the Greek “high society” of Alexandria and other Egyptian cities for not having enough relations to British as well as for being, “unfortunately”, as commented, still under the influence of “French upbringing and French culture”, often ignorant of the English language.⁶⁰

If specific “European” cultural elements were accepted or criticized by different agents, symbols of what was identified as “non-European”, such as the fez, intended to become a symbol of homogenization and uniformity since the early 19th century Ottoman reforms,⁶¹ was often rejected by Greeks, considering it rather as an “Oriental” symbol of despotism. In 1913, for example, when the Greek army entered Ioannina and Thessaloniki, thousands of people were reported of tearing their fez, something indicating, according to an article of that time, that after serving as a sign of liberty in the period of the Ottoman reforms, in the meantime it had been transformed to a sign of slavery.⁶² The “accusations” of a Greek young boy in Egypt, who wanted to become a Muslim, included that he even wore the clothes of “natives” and a fez,⁶³ while a reason explaining, according to a Syrian lawyer, the troubles Syrians faced from “the lower class of Hellenism in Egypt”, was also that they wore a

⁵⁷ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, pp. 75-78.

⁵⁸ Liakos, Antonis: *I italiki enopoiisi*, pp. 51-65; Pécout, Gilles: *Philhellenism in Italy*, pp. 405-427.

⁵⁹ See chapter 9, footnotes 1-3.

⁶⁰ *Empros*, 30.12.1899.

⁶¹ Quataert, Donald: *Clothing Laws*.

⁶² *Empros*, 24.02.1913.

⁶³ *Tilegrafos*, 02/15.10.1908. For more details about Greeks shifting to Islam in Egypt see chapter 9.3.

fez, something correlated to “Turkish yoke”.⁶⁴ Being a symbol of identification to the Ottomans in the perception of most late 19th century Greeks, the fez was symbolically thrown at sea by about 85 Cypriot Greek volunteers to the 1897 war, just as soon as the ship taking them to the warfront sailed from Egypt.⁶⁵ On the other hand, the picture of so many Greek migrants wearing a fez while in Egypt is further destabilizing the generalizing perceptions of local Greeks as forming part of the “westernmost part of the Greek world”; when a great number of Greeks departed from Egypt during the summer of 1882, their arrival to Piraeus made a local newspaper comment that “one would think of being in a Turkish city because of seeing more fezes than hats in the streets”.⁶⁶ Even Greeks in Egypt might wear non-European clothes, especially in the interior;⁶⁷ coming from Volos, already part of the Greek state, a Greek in Aswan explained to Andreadis that he had to wear a fez because, if he did not give himself an “Oriental appearance”, he would not manage to sell his “Oriental carpets”.⁶⁸ People with leading positions in Greek local society and communal affairs and without similar needs of “adjusting” their dress might be wearing a red fez at the turn of the century Egypt, such as Rostovic or Tsigadas in Cairo or Panagiotopoulos in Port Said.⁶⁹ In spite of the expectations of later authors and of the selective memory of Greeks in Egypt as particularly “European”, also in their dress and appearance,⁷⁰ not only were there Greeks with “European” style in different places, including Athens, but there were also Greeks in Egypt, the “Cosmopolis” of the 19th century, retaining for one or another reason an “Oriental” appearance.

Ionas Dragoumis claimed that an Alexandrian Greek woman had told him she would rather be a housemaid in Paris than the queen of Greece; this gave Dragoumis the opportunity to criticize people for being ashamed to say they were Greeks, even though, as he added, people in Paris were not ashamed to declare if they were French, English, Russian etc.⁷¹ With studies in Paris himself and with influences from people

⁶⁴ Tachydromos, 06/19.05.1914. About Syrians and Greeks in Egypt see chapter 10.2.

⁶⁵ Stavridis, Foivos (ed.): Tserkezis, Savvas: Imerologion, p. 50.

⁶⁶ Giannitsiotis, Giannis: I koinoniki istoria tou Peiraia, p. 293, footnote 102.

⁶⁷ Klunzinger, C[arl] B[enjamin]: Bilder aus Oberägypten, p. 27.

⁶⁸ O Ellinismos, March 1907, p. 187.

⁶⁹ See respectively: Omonoia, 30/12.06.1901; Aigyptiakon Imerologion Drakopoulou 1908, p. 62; Chaldoupis, Dimitrios K.: Anamniseis kai chronika Port-Said, p. 58.

⁷⁰ See chapter 2, footnote 85.

⁷¹ Dragoumis, Ionas: O ellinismos mou kai oi Ellines, pp. 60, 68.

like Maurice Barrès and Friedrich Nietzsche,⁷² before serving shortly as a diplomat in 1905 Alexandria, Ionas Dragoumis is an example of a Greek criticizing the relation of Greeks to more or less clear “Western” aspects through a “Western” angle. Many Greeks in Egypt understood themselves as part of Europe, even if they expressed, as in the two extreme cases of the Alexandrian Greek woman and of Ionas Dragoumis, an unlimited admiration for whatever “European” might be compared to something “Greek” or an equally “European” in arguments and comparisons demand of proudly expressing a national identification. “Western” arguments or selected aspects of them were applied by zealots as also from critics of the West and “European” ways were perceived, promoted or criticized differently by various agents in Egypt as well as elsewhere. One can assume that a decisive difference was not the existence of an extremely great number of Greeks sharing “Western” ways in Egypt, but that there, similarly to other places out of Greece, such an attitude was functioning as a way to distinguish Greeks from the “natives”, but could also be criticized in a stronger association with worries about the future of Greeks as such, especially of the second generation of migrants.

5.3 “Cosmopolitanism” as a threat to the nation

Critical arguments to the encounter of Greeks with aspects of a “Western” culture in Egypt referred predominantly to the danger of raising children as “cosmopolitans”, meaning not loyal to the Greek nation. An article of 1880 criticized “high society ladies” choosing a French or an English pedagogue for their children, commenting that it would be a “disastrous” novelty especially for the “*omogeneis*” abroad if “fish-sellers of Paris” and “barwomen of London” were preferred rather than the many young graduates of the Arsakeios School in Athens, which could provide children with an “*ellinoprepi*”, i.e. a proper for Greeks education.⁷³ Pinelopi Delta and her brother, Antonis Benakis, form an example indicating how exaggerated such fears might be. Children of the wealthy merchant Emmanouil Benakis, they were raised by nannies from Goriča, France or England,⁷⁴ Antonis even went to a school of Jesuits since, as his sister later wrote, teachers of the Greek communal schools were for many

⁷² Augustinos, Gerasimos: Consciousness and history, pp. 86-87.

⁷³ Imerisia Nea, 03/13.10.1880.

⁷⁴ Zannas, P. A. (ed.): Delta, P[inelopi] S.: Protes enthymiseis, pp. 16-18, 47, 115-122.

years considered as being of “lower quality” by Greeks of “good families”.⁷⁵ Even though their father, just a few years before starting a political career in Athens, was presented in a promoting article in *Empros* as having at home “only whatever is genuine Greek, even his tobacco”,⁷⁶ Pinelopi later recalled that at their home there was English furniture, silverware, crockery, glassware, linen, soaps, furniture varnish, buttons and many other English products, part of the equipment and decoration of it also came from Paris and only olive oil, olives, wine, figs and mastic came from their place of origin, Chios.⁷⁷ Young Pinelopi considered during her early years, before moving to Athens, that the Greek language was “for those who don’t know languages” and detested whatever written in Greek,⁷⁸ her brother practiced sports such as polo and horse riding,⁷⁹ whereas the names of the children were sometimes transformed in an “English” way.⁸⁰ There was, however, not a great distance from the “*ellinoprepi*” education, as evident not just in the early 20th century decades of conflict in Macedonia and the Balkan wars, when Pinelopi wrote historical novels to prove the Greek “historical rights” in Macedonia,⁸¹ or Antonis was leading the scouting and other activities connected to war preparations,⁸² but even in their earlier years: Pinelopi recalled of the enthusiasm of the children when, in 1882, they entered a Greek warship in Alexandria,⁸³ while a childish quarrel on the ship taking them to Greece was commented by her as a sign of the chauvinism they had.⁸⁴ In spite of the described fears about “cosmopolitanism”, the loyalty to the nation or at least a relation to a version of it were not necessarily threatened in the case of children having the possibilities of wealthy Greek families in Egypt. As commented about wealthy Italian families in Egypt, the same children going to French schools and speaking French to each other were also those having the opportunity to make their vacation in Italy every summer.⁸⁵

⁷⁵ Ebenda, pp. 161, 195-200.

⁷⁶ *Empros*, 19.06.1905.

⁷⁷ Zannas, P. A. (ed.): *Delta*, P[inelopi] S.: *Protes enthymiseis*, pp. 107, 67-68.

⁷⁸ Ebenda, pp. 27-28, 130, 213.

⁷⁹ Ebenda, p. 159.

⁸⁰ Ebenda, p. 76.

⁸¹ Karavas, Spyros: *To paramythi tis Pinelopis Delta*, pp. 193-289.

⁸² Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *Antonis Emm. Benakis*, pp. 16-17. About the correlation of scouting and war preparation see chapter 11, footnote 132.

⁸³ For the stormy summer of 1882 in Egypt see chapter 6.1.

⁸⁴ Zannas, P. A. (ed.): *Delta*, P[inelopi] S.: *Protes enthymiseis*, pp. 55, 66-68.

⁸⁵ Lazarev, Anouchka: *La colonia italiana*, p. 181.

Konstantinos Kavafis was one of the “Anglogreeks”, as children of Greek merchants and bankers in Egypt were sometimes called, raised in a family with a French pedagogue, an English nurse and an Italian cabdriver, among other servants.⁸⁶ According to Filippos Dragoumis, Kavafis was worried about the Greek language, connected with the “national sentiment” of Greeks in Egypt, considered that the Greeks in Egypt easily learned many foreign languages and might abandon their own one,⁸⁷ but also believed that the “cosmopolitanism” of Egypt was positive, since a “country with no character” offered the necessary freedom to become “master of yourself”.⁸⁸ Kavafis had written a text in 1892, where he explained that the “ancient Hellenism of Alexandria” had diffused the Greek spirit in the “Orient”, contributing with Greek finesse and elegance to Oriental ideas,⁸⁹ whereas at a text of 1906 he expressed an interest for the “long and glorious Byzantine life of our race”, but not as an alternative of the love on “ancient Hellenism”, as he specified, since “one love won’t preclude the other”.⁹⁰ In 1929, Kavafis praised the first volume of the study of Athanasios Politis as useful both for Greeks in Egypt as also for Greece, having an interest in the former, an “important part of our race”, as Kavafis added.⁹¹ To view Kavafis as a “cosmopolitan” as if the term meant the opposite of the way the description “Greek” could have been perceived in the late 19th or the mid-20th century would be as problematic as in the case of the children of Benakis. There are other examples confirming this hypothesis as well: some alumni of the “Victoria College”, a school where well-known Greek and other families sent their children,⁹² had fought in the Balkan Wars, the Greeks on the side of Greece.⁹³ A case of a Greek grown up at home with an English governess, sent by his father at a Jesuit school and speaking French, English and Arabic perfectly, but making mistakes when speaking Greek, “his language”, was mentioned by Gkikas. Although Gkikas, after working for five decades as a teacher in Greek schools in Egypt, was critical to the dangers of attending non-Greek schools and convinced that the Greek schools had nothing to be jealous of “foreign” ones, where Greek youth often learned to love “foreign

⁸⁶ Tsirkas, Stratis: *O Kavafis kai i epochi tou*, pp. 126, 132.

⁸⁷ Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): Dragoumis, Filippos Stef.: *Imerologio*, p. 98.

⁸⁸ Cited in: Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): Dragoumis, Filippos Stef.: *Imerologio*, p. 63.

⁸⁹ Pieris, Michalis (ed.): K. P. Kavafi. *Ta peza*, p. 65. About the identification of Kavafis with the anonymous author of the text, first published in *Tilegrafos*, see: ebenda, p. 351.

⁹⁰ Ebenda, p. 269. On the background story of the text see: ebenda, p. 381.

⁹¹ Ebenda, p. 151. More details about the book of Politis see in chapter 2, footnotes 12-15.

⁹² Hamouda, Sahar + Clement, Colin (eds.): *Victoria College*, p. 23.

⁹³ Ebenda, p. 44.

homelands” and “foreign habits”, he insisted that the particular person was a “patriot”.⁹⁴ It was, as further explained, the “momentum” of the period that made only ingenious and “supposedly Europeanized” Greeks capable of imposing themselves upon “foreign elements”, but this did not mean that they were unconcerned for the future of the Greeks; more than to “patriots” of the “type” of Averoff,⁹⁵ it was to those Greeks who “confused foreign to their own languages” that “Hellenism” was greatly indebted, complemented Gkikas.⁹⁶

The authors of a recent text about Greek migration since the mid-19th century mentioned Egypt, Russia and Australia as places, in which the maintenance of “national characteristics” for a longer period was easier, compared to the case of the Greeks in London; one of the reasons mentioned was a tendency of a third generation of the later to seek upward social mobility by keeping distance from “any ethnic identity differentiating them from English of the same age”, an attitude that did not characterize the “*omogeneis*” in the eastern Mediterranean societies, as pointed.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, some Greeks in Egypt also followed a strategy of upward social mobility, the difference being that they did so through participation to a “European” rather than a specifically “local” culture. It was to Greeks he met in the Sporting Club of Alexandria that Filippos Dragoumis referred to, commenting his disgust for their “ape [mimetic] style”. It was Greeks in a party at a cutter that he heard of speaking mixed English, French and Greek, considering them as snob and sloppy people “living only to spend their time”. It was Greeks at a tea by the vice governor of Alexandria that he listened speaking to each other in French, feeling that he wanted to “beat” them, as he noted in his journal.⁹⁸ This disgust might well be connected to prejudice and a general discontent of Dragoumis for his position in Egypt, which he did not consider as a place where “Hellenism could live and make up some sort of civilization”, but only as a place of speculation for Greek colonists,⁹⁹ but there are also other similar descriptions. A comedy written by a Greek lawyer in Egypt at about the same time was sarcastic to the new rich Egyptian Greek couple who sent their

⁹⁴ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: *Peninta chronia daskalos*, p. 78.

⁹⁵ Himself Vlach-speaking, Averoff supported greatly the spreading of the educational system based on Greek language in Egypt as well as in the Balkans. For more details see chapter 11, footnotes 62-67.

⁹⁶ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: *Peninta chronia daskalos*, pp. 43-45.

⁹⁷ Kardasis, Vasilis + Harlaftis, Gelina: *Anazitontas tis chores tis epangelias*, pp. 69-72.

⁹⁸ Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): *Dragoumis, Filippos Stef.: Imerologio*, pp. 51, 104-105, 148.

⁹⁹ *Ebenda*, pp. 54, 94.

daughter to a non-Greek school, to learn French and English instead of Greek;¹⁰⁰ the wife was further criticized for spending her time exclusively by singing and dancing tango, playing poker and visiting the cinema.¹⁰¹ The fact that such a behavior was selected so as to structure a comedy around it is an indication of a growing urban middle class trying to consume what was considered as “modern” and sending its children to “foreign” schools, having the expectation of upward social mobility.

Andreadis expressed his relief for the existence of some Greek associations in Egypt which, as he noted, were helping resist the “cosmopolitan character”, which “threatened to surround the life of the higher society, [but] gradually even of the always thriving middle strata”.¹⁰² Filippos Dragoumis feared about a broader strata of Greeks when he commented, after a visit in a Greek private school in 1916, that the later was trying only to make money and satisfy the ostentation of the middle class of Greeks, with women showing off their dresses and having a passion to exhibit that their children can speak French; he even suggested that such an attitude might be damaging for the loyalty to the Greek state, since the *Marseillaise* was much more warmly received than the Greek national anthem.¹⁰³ The overall frustration of Dragoumis about his service in Egypt is evident throughout his journal and this makes him prone to exaggerations; after all, just a few years before his visit, the exams at the same, private Greco-French school took place in front of the patriarch, the Greek and the French consul, with pupils reciting different French poems with a “real French accent”, as written in press, but also singing different (Greek) “patriotic songs”.¹⁰⁴

Similar fears were sometimes expressed by people associated with Orthodox Christian religious institutions and expressing worries, especially for the schools the children of migrants attended. Georgios Kipiadis, a lawyer from Cyprus with a service as a consultant of the Patriarchate, even though assuring that Greeks remained “patriotic” in Egypt, “without being influenced at all by the relations they established with other people in foreign countries”,¹⁰⁵ described “foreign” schools as offering children the “manners and customs of the European pseudo-civilization and the perverse philosophy of the 18th century, which distorted the correct faith of our holy

¹⁰⁰ Farnas, Foivos: *To glossikon zitima*, p. 55.

¹⁰¹ *Ebenda*, pp. 14, 23.

¹⁰² *O Ellinismos*, March 1907, p. 188.

¹⁰³ Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): *Dragoumis, Filippos Stef.: Imerologio*, p. 107.

¹⁰⁴ *Tilegrafos*, 03/16.07.1909.

¹⁰⁵ Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: *Ellines en Aigypto*, p. 63.

Orthodox religion and transformed the simplicity of the ancestral manners”.¹⁰⁶ Especially those sending their daughters to “foreign” schools were criticized by a patriarchic warden and school director of Port Said, pointing that the “future Greek mothers” were unintentionally “poisoned” by their parents and would not be able to bring up a child properly and run their house wisely; it was even argued against the necessity of English and French language in “practical life”, since “each member of every nation has to think and work primary about the existence and the material and moral height of the nation, where it belongs, and secondly about itself, about its individual thriving and prosperity”.¹⁰⁷ The patriarchic journal, on the occasion of a self-redress and a suicide following the antagonism for an already married woman, stressed that such dramatic events, which according to the author had become common among Greeks in Egypt, could be interpreted by the departure of the “Greek family” from “religious and national traditions” and the absorption from the “monster” named “cosmopolitanism”.¹⁰⁸ A theologian, Grigorios Papamichail, praised the loyalty of most migrants to “homeland”, which was for them connected to language and religion, manners and customs, memories of the past, problems of the present and hopes of the future. To these, Papamichail juxtaposed the “cosmopolitan” who did not care about the homeland or was a draft dodger regularly criticizing it to “foreigners”, having an aversion to the customs and manners of his fathers, despising with mania the “national language” and not reading Greek books and journals related to the religion, traditions, history and philology of the homeland, but rather the actual “scandals” and novels written in other languages.¹⁰⁹ A few years later, Papamichail would speak about the dangers from any expression of “Europeanism” or “cosmopolitanism”, proposing a “nationalist orientation” which, even if not totally avoiding some influence from “European spirit”, would allow Greeks become “absolutely self-sufficient” through “Greek dignity”, without imitating foreigners.¹¹⁰

Papamichail, who was also the director of the patriarchic journal, criticized through its pages those “soul- and nation-destroying”, “Frankish establishments”, to which parents sent their children to learn languages; he accompanied his critique with some Egyptian statistics, according to whom 5404 Greek pupils attended Greek

¹⁰⁶ Ebenda, pp. 77-79.

¹⁰⁷ Omonoia, 17/29.06.1899.

¹⁰⁸ Pantainos 1913, pp. 561-563.

¹⁰⁹ Pantainos 1908-1909, pp. 403-405.

¹¹⁰ Papamichail, Grigorios: *Ellinika provlimata*, p. 85.

schools, whereas 1768 went to those of “papal propaganda” and 2525 to other English, American or German schools.¹¹¹ Statistics about the first two decades of the 20th century indicate that, in two school-years compared (1907-1908 and 1912-1913), there were respectively 4993 and 5825 Orthodox Christian¹¹² pupils in non-Greek schools, mainly in French ones, compared to 5701 and 7031 going to Greek schools,¹¹³ whereas the director of a Greek communal school in Egypt estimated that in the school years 1912-1913 there were 2951 Greek pupils in “foreign” schools in Egypt, mainly in French ones.¹¹⁴ There was an important number of children considered as Greeks and sent to non-Greek schools, but often Greek parents did not even have a choice: as commented in 1886, it was embarrassing for the “Hellenism of Egypt”, where so many Greeks were showing off their wealth, that there was not a couple of good Greek high schools, as in other Ottoman places with a considerable presence of Greek merchants.¹¹⁵ By the turn of the 20th century, there was a considerable improvement regarding the number and quality of the Greek communal schools in Egypt,¹¹⁶ but still in 1918, the leaders of the Greek Orthodox Community of Asyut explained at a brief to the president of the Greek Orthodox Community of Cairo that there were about 30 children of Greek toilers having no choice but to “attend to nation-killing, Greek-hating schools of foreigners”, facing the danger of not learning their “mother tongue” properly and be led to “heretical doctrines”;¹¹⁷ Kitroeff mentioned a 1925 report of the Greek consul in Minya, writing about the problem of sending children to “foreign”, missionary or “local” schools, a problem connected to the lack of Greek schools and priests in the province.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, critique was made also regarding urban centers such as Cairo, where many Greeks lived in neighborhoods distanced from the few existing Greek schools.¹¹⁹

Besides the distance or absence of schools, there were apparently many Greeks in Egypt sending their children to non-Greek schools even if having a choice.

¹¹¹ Pantainos 1908-1909, pp. 403-404, 470-474; Pantainos 1909-1910, p. 305.

¹¹² The Orthodox Christian pupils are not identified to Greek pupils, but since no absolute and uncontested estimations of Greeks are available, this can serve as one indication, since most – although not all – of the Orthodox Christians in Egypt were ethnic Greeks. For more details on the relation of religion and national identification in Egypt see chapters 9 and 10.

¹¹³ Ministère des Finances: *Annuaire Statistique de l' Egypte* 1914, pp. 78-81.

¹¹⁴ Tsolekidis, Nikolaos T.: *I dimosia ekpaidefsis en Aigypto*, p. 46.

¹¹⁵ *Metarrythmis*, 12/24.08.1886.

¹¹⁶ See chapter 11.1.

¹¹⁷ GCC A21/2:22, 1918, letter n. 75.

¹¹⁸ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 25.

¹¹⁹ *Tachydromos*, 15/28.05.1900; *Pyrros*, 17.04.1904.

Gkikas commented that it was exactly the passion of Greeks with whatever “foreign” and their belief that “nation” could not be in danger in any way that made so many parents send their children to “foreign” schools.¹²⁰ A Greek visitor in 1889 worried about the lacking of Greek upbringing and “genuine” Greek education he observed in Egyptian Greek youth, since he noticed rather a trend to “*xenismo*”, to “foreign” habits, as also to imitation of whatever European, especially French, which might distort and poison their “Greek manners”; it was further argued that the absence of Greek classical education should be blamed and that the future of Greeks in Egypt was in danger, especially since they were living after 1882 among “civilized European people” and imitated them, in some cases even by pronouncing “*r*” like the French did.¹²¹ The form of education provided in Greek schools could be a reason for parents to send their children to “foreign” schools, but mostly not because of an absence of Greek classical education: common was also a critique to the classicism of Greek schools exactly for pushing many children of Greeks to non-Greek schools, especially of non-Orthodox Christian religious institutions, in order to learn the basic knowledge needed for a career in commerce in Egypt, leaving only the poor students to the inefficient Greek educational system.¹²² Lampridis blamed the inefficiencies of Greek schools for the current of children attending “*alloglossa*” schools, i.e. of other than the Greek languages, where according to him they “entered as Greeks” and mostly evolved to “Greek-haters”, learning other languages before their “mother tongue”, at a time English, French or Italians were giving a priority to the instruction of their own language.¹²³ German schools in Egypt, however, devoted about as much time to the German and French languages and just a little less for the English,¹²⁴ whereas an Italian state functionary of that time commented that a reform in the Italian educational system in Egypt should be introduced, since Italian schools were serving mainly the “popular classes” and the notables sent their children to “foreign

¹²⁰ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: *Peninta chronia daskalos*, p. 78.

¹²¹ *Kleio* 5:6, 1889, pp. 83-84.

¹²² See for example: Gavriilidis, Vlasis: *Taxidia*, pp. 103-109, 118-123. For the discussion about a “classicist” or a “practical” orientation of Greek schools, in Egypt and elsewhere, see more details in chapter 11, footnotes 95-102.

¹²³ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 51-52, 125-127.

¹²⁴ See for example the weekly program of the German School of Cairo in various school-years in the 1890s in: EZAB 5/3085/6; EZAB 5/3086/6; EZAB 200.1/3.839/191.1. In the next two decades, the hours for the German language were increased, although still much time was spent for French and English: EZAB 5/3087/6; EZAB 5/3089/6. Reports about the German Evangelical School of Alexandria at the turn of the century indicate that German, French and English were taught for about the same hours pro week after the first school years: EZAB 5/3097/7; EZAB 5/3098/7; EZAB 5/3099/7.

religious institutions”, where the Italian language was taught as a “foreign language”.¹²⁵ Leaving aside different points of exaggeration that often entered the discussion, it is interesting to note that once more the fear about “European” influences did not preclude comparisons with what “other Europeans” were supposed of doing, whereas the later might also express similar to the Greek fears for specific “European” aspects perceived as a threat, or might adjust the education they offered to specific needs for a career in Egypt.

It was most of the times acknowledged, also by Greeks, that the knowledge offered in “foreign” schools was needed for a career in Egypt. At a 1906 meeting of the committee of the Greek Community of Cairo, after discussing how Greeks and the Greek state were presented in school books instructed in Jesuit schools in Egypt, president Rostovic wondered whether it might be necessary to offer in Greek communal schools the kind of education expected by those Greeks preferring the “foreign schools”.¹²⁶ The French and the Italian language was taught after the Greek one in Greek communal schools in Alexandria¹²⁷ or even in Zagazig, the Greek Community of which had been looking through an advertisement in an Athenian newspaper for a French teacher who would preferably know piano and speak some Greek;¹²⁸ as Fragoudis observed, the French language was learned so good at the Greek communal schools of Egypt, that their graduates had a perfect knowledge of it, something considered necessary in order to prevent the sending of Greek children to “the Catholic schools of the proselytizing propagandas”.¹²⁹ The complaint expressed in press about a Greek school in Cairo which, instead of teaching “religious” and “patriotic” songs, preferred the recitation of French fairy-tales and “disgusting” songs with a pretended French accent, shows also that Greek schools might be trying to adjust and attract Greek children by providing aspects of the French culture that some wanted to imitate, so as to show their upward social mobility.¹³⁰

In spite of fears expressed especially in time of rapid social change, applying some elements from another culture does not necessarily mean a loss of particularities of any kind: the example of the clients of the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul and their signatures indicate that the use of the Latin alphabet by some clients, for example

¹²⁵ Ministero Degli Affari Esteri: Emigrazione e Colonie, p. 251.

¹²⁶ GCC A6, pp. 151-152.

¹²⁷ Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias, pp. 129-147.

¹²⁸ Akropolis, 27.07.1904; Akropolis, 29.07.1904; Akropolis, 08.08.1904; Akropolis, 12.08.1904.

¹²⁹ Akropolis, 22.05.1895.

¹³⁰ Tachydromos, 15/28.05.1900.

from Greeks, did not necessarily mean a real sacrifice of a Greek identity, but rather how different perceptions of it could exist in various contexts.¹³¹ If the encounter to different aspects of a hegemonic Western culture was not a process taking place exclusively in Egypt and if elements of that culture were differently perceived, not all migrants were necessarily “cosmopolitans” in the sense of being “more willing to become involved with the other” and concerned “with achieving competence in cultures that are initially alien”. As Peleikis suggested, many migrants could be described as “translocals”, in the sense of travelling in the world regularly, but remaining at the same time “deeply anchored” in social networks that “stand for specific translocal cultural practices and habits”.¹³² Having in mind the activities of most Greeks in Egypt as described so far, it is questionable whether the access to the “European culture” presented in the present chapter was achieved by all Greeks in Egypt. It was certainly not achieved in the same way and mostly not at the expense of Greek culture, at least not to the extent that was feared by many.

5.4 Summary

In chapter 5, a major argument was that Western culture was related to different groups of Greeks because of their actual or wished social status, wealth and education rather than due to their geographic location. It was opportunities of the late 19th and early 20th century that attracted many Greeks, already having specific studies and skills, in Egypt, and it was needs of promoting products and skills as “Western” that made this a useful argument by Greeks in Egypt. Even though being “Western” was considered as a sign of “success”, there were also reactions to ideas and activities mapped as “Western”, even though often expressed in “Western” arguments or with comparisons with what other “Westerners” did. In any case, the exaggerated fears of losing some members of the Greek nation, correlated with the European rather than with the Egyptian culture, referred mainly to the growing Greek urban middle class and less to the wealthy families usually associated with the Greek “cosmopolitan” belle époque of Egypt.

¹³¹ Eldem, Edhem: Signatures of Greek Clients, pp. 60-90.

¹³² Peleikis, Anja: Lebanese in Motion, p. 166.

6. “Lessons” exchanged across the Mediterranean: Greeks, Egypt and the British in the long 19th century

As has been seen so far, the description of “European” was associated with different notions negotiated in various ways by Greek and non-Greek agents and not always accepted in an uncontested way by Greeks in Egypt. Leaving aside the aspects already presented, the long 19th century was a period with attempts to reconstruct an Egyptian past including the ancient period but, as a scholar commented, making a comparison with similar processes of Greece and Italy in the same period, unlike them, “Egypt – on the wrong side of the Mediterranean and Muslim – was marked out for European imperial domination”.¹ On the “right side of the Mediterranean”, the same period was characterized by an attempt to prove that Greeks and their newly formed state could be considered as equal partners in the order of the “European nations”, including among other arguments a correlation of modern Greeks as heirs of the ancient Greeks.² In spite of drawing many arguments from the Greco-roman past and of being considered a “Christian state” on the “right side” of Mediterranean, however, Greece maintained an ambiguous position in the “European” order of the long 19th century, experiencing a situation that Herzfeld, trying “to use taxonomy to undo taxonomy” of the colonial bipolar model, defined as “crypto-colonialism”. By that, Herzfeld described how “certain countries, buffer zones between the colonized lands and those as yet untamed, were compelled to acquire their political independence at the expense of massive economic dependence, this relationship being articulated in the ironic guise of aggressively national culture fashion to suit foreign models”.³ One can not but wonder whether this definition could be applied for Egypt as well as for Greece: the process of conquering and studying Sudan in the mid-19th century facilitated the formulation of an Egyptian nationalism, but also enforced what has been described as an “actively self-colonizing colonized”, a process where “the colonized could aspire to be a colonizer not only by adopting the tools of the British, or the traditions of the Ottomans, but also by making the Sudan a part of what defined Egypt as truly Egyptian”.⁴ Irrespective of geographic position and of what happened in the course of the long 19th century, Greeks and Egyptians were trying to form

¹ Reid, Donald Malcolm: *Whose Pharaohs*, p. 93-95.

² See a critical approach in: Herzfeld, Michael: *Pali dika mas*.

³ Herzfeld, Michael: *The Absent Presence*.

⁴ Powell, Eve M. Troutt: *From Odyssey*; Powell, Eve M. Troutt: *A Different Shade*.

modern states, based on the assumption that they could convince the West that they constituted an equal partner among the “civilized nations”.

The mid-19th century was the period of the incorporation of Egypt within the European economic system, of increasing interventions and with a bankruptcy in the mid-1870s, followed by a brief period, when grievances correlated with rapid economic and demographic changes led to a revolutionary reaction and a military intervention of British and their allies, in the summer of 1882.⁵ Even though often excluded from the West or considered as a problematic part of it in a transitional status, Greeks were a part of the “foreigners” in Egypt associated with that phase. The present chapter starts by discussing some major ways many Greeks were involved in the turbulent mid-19th century period in Egypt, but also how the attempt to form a “European” state in Greece was compared to evolutions in Egypt confirming, in different variations and in spite of self-critical comments, the Greek perceptions about Greeks being considered as “Europeans” in as far as the right of sovereignty was concerned. Having the post-1882 Greek critiques to the British rule in Egypt as a starting point, it is also attempted to question in how far a Greek anti-colonialist argumentation can be detected at the turn of the 20th century.

6.1 Opposing violence with violence

At the apex of the June revolution of 1882, the anti-foreign riots in Alexandria were turned above all against communities such as the Maltese, probably not because of an Egyptian fear of “Maltese imperial aspirations, or Maltese control of the Caisse de la Dette Publique”, as a scholar pointed.⁶ In the 1950s, a distinction proposed in Egypt was that between the “real Westerners”, on the one hand, who “entered different countries with the intention of investing their money and, ultimately, either departed or settled there, retaining links with their own countries”, and the “immigrants [...] from the Mediterranean and Ottoman lands”, who “kept their foreign passports in order to enjoy the advantages which this afforded them [and] lived on the fringes of Western life as they had known it in their homelands”.⁷ Greeks in the long 19th century Egypt were often included to the second category from non-

⁵ Owen, Roger: *Egypt and Europe*, pp. 195-209; Schölch, Alexander: *Ägypten den Ägyptern!*; Cole, Juan R. I.: *Colonialism and Revolution*; Chalcraft, John T.: *The Striking Cabbies*.

⁶ Hanley, Will: *Foreignness and Localness*, p. 322.

⁷ ‘Ashmawi, Sayyid: *Perceptions of the Greek Money-lender*, pp. 249-250.

Greek perspectives, in spite of many later Greek texts describing them as the most “European” portion of Greeks, if the exploitative aspects of the “other Europeans” were not taken into account.⁸

A major issue provoking hostility towards Greeks in Egypt in the second half of the 19th century was the system of Capitulations, “so complicated that it threatens to prevent useful legislation, and already, too frequently, ends in a denial of justice”, as a lecturer at the Khedivial School of Law in Cairo pointed out in 1908.⁹ The Capitulations started as a grant of permission for the residence of non-Muslims in medieval Muslim states,¹⁰ but as the balance of power in the Mediterranean began to shift during the 18th century, they became irrevocable and their application increasingly one-sided. The Capitulations included various rights regarding not only religious freedom, but also commercial issues, such as not paying taxes besides the customs dues, not being searched at home and the immunity from local laws.¹¹ Problems, however, were associated with the way the Capitulations provided in the course of the 19th century the means for “the acquisition of great facilities for smuggling, for the vessel of the Greek smuggler cannot be searched without going through various technical formalities, which cause delay [during which] time is afforded for the smuggled goods to be removed, and all evidence of guilt is destroyed”. A second problem was “the right of trial by the Greek consular courts in all criminal cases, a right which is all the more valuable inasmuch as the Greek law-courts are often a mere mockery of justice, the judge being frequently more frightened of the criminal than the criminal is of the judge”, whereas a third one was the “right of bringing all civil cases in which a Greek is concerned, before the Mixed Tribunals [and thus] give the Greek usurer the legal power of grinding his unfortunate native debtor to powder”. Last but not least, a fourth problem described by critical voices was the “right to poison every villager in Egypt with the worst and most adulterated forms of spirituous drink”.¹²

The National Party, which expressed part of the growing dissatisfaction of different parts of the Egyptian population during the 1870s, admitted in 1879 the importance of foreign aid to Egypt, but repudiated the “political” interference of

⁸ See chapter 2.

⁹ Scott, James Harry: *The law*, p. vii.

¹⁰ Ebenda, pp. 12-21.

¹¹ Ebenda, p. 151.

¹² BNA, FO series 633/87: Cromer Papers, p. 829.

foreigners and proposed to attain its object by peaceful means, resorting to force only in the last instance;¹³ still in 1881, it declared of having “no quarrel” with “European residents in Egypt [...] either as Christians or as strangers, so long as these shall live conformably with the laws and bear their share of the burdens of the State”.¹⁴ A leading figure of the party, ‘Urabi, assured that the “Europeans” would be “well treated, as guests in Egypt”.¹⁵ Ninet, a Swiss positively disposed to Egyptian arguments as such, stressed that Europeans coming to Egypt when it was opened for the first time to “free trade” were welcomed, but blamed the “invading host” of Syrians, Maltese and Greeks, who were encouraged to come especially since the last years of Said’s regime, for bringing with them “the fierce fanatical prejudices of their respective races”. Ninet admitted, however, that the problems did not start immediately with the arrival of newcomers, since initially people were “too busy cultivating their land and making money by legitimate trade to quarrel much”, but only when, after the fall of cotton prices in the late 1860s, it became more difficult for peasants to pay their taxes and debts.¹⁶ One can assume that, in periods of crisis, groups of people considered as “foreigners” could easily become the target of animosity, especially if some of them took advantage from the loopholes of laws and from the weakness or corruption of the authorities involved.

A growing Egyptian discontent was evident in various incidents of urban disturbances in the 1860s and 1870s. They usually started from a friction of two relatively small groups but often, “when that conflict assumed an aspect of public violence, larger networks and loyalties came into play. Maltese and Italians came to the aid of Greeks, Egyptians to the aid of Nubians. Guilds that might otherwise have their own differences with one another would stand together against the foreigner”.¹⁷ Anti-European disturbances or sometimes exaggerated fears about them were important; even if correlated in the minds of European diplomats to international networks of Muslim activists, they usually originated “with the foreigners rather than with the Egyptians [since the former] could ignite fights with slurs on Islam or simply by starting drunken brawls”.¹⁸ The gathering of many Greeks and other Europeans of

¹³ Ninet, John: *Origin*, p. 131.

¹⁴ Cited in: Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen: *Secret History*, appendix V, p. 559.

¹⁵ Cole, Juan R. I.: *Of Crowds and Empires*, p. 119.

¹⁶ Ninet, John: *Origin*, pp. 240-242. For more details about the Greek-Egyptian relation in the province see chapter 3.3.

¹⁷ Cole, Juan R. I.: *Of Crowds and Empires*, p. 115.

¹⁸ Cole, Juan R. I.: *Colonialism and Revolution*, pp. 194-204.

lower social strata in the urban centres, sometimes engaged in illegal activities or frequenting ill-famed taverns, might also be a reason causing troubles not only because of the illegal activities *per se*, but also due to a growing general mistrust regarding the impression that all Greeks remained unpunished, whatever they might do.¹⁹ At a case in Port Said, for example, when some “joyful” Greek workers at a tavern were attacked by local policemen, people from the Arab suburbs holding guns and clubs hurried to assist the policemen, beating also a French and three Italians, whereas some Greeks were ready to use their guns to defend the “Europeans”, if the French vice-consul, directing at the same time the working in the Channel, had not managed to convince them to withdraw.²⁰ Violence was not always caused by or combined with “anti-European sentiments” of any kind, as evident at an occasion when, after some violent incidents initiated by some Italians, probably on political motivation, the consuls of European states started to discuss whether police should be organized “in a more European way”, according to Typaldos, with French and Prussian officers and in cooperation to the consulates.²¹ It was at that time that the Greek consul, after the murder of a Greek retailer, probably by two persons from Naples, followed by the murder of a Neapolitan, commented that the European consuls trying to find solutions were also to be blamed, since they were always ready to accept that the police would apply the rules for everyone, except people under their own jurisdiction.²²

The way the Capitulations depended from the power and interests of each state involved in mid-19th century Egypt was not the only problem, since some times people did not have the same understanding with Egyptian police about who was included to capitulatory protection. At an 1869 report, the Greek vice-consul of Alexandria explained as part of the problem with Egyptian authorities that their police arrested innocent Greek subjects against the provisions of the Capitulations and without sufficient evidence, just by receiving a complaint, often from “suspicious” and “profligate” persons having other motivation, using brutal violence against the arrested Greeks.²³ In a case of 1864, when a policeman killed a Greek in Ismailia, local Greeks protested and, according to a Greek diplomat, the local authorities

¹⁹ See chapter 4.3.

²⁰ HAMFA 36:1, 1865.

²¹ Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, pp. 55-59.

²² HAMFA 36:1, 1858.

²³ HAMFA 36:1, 1869.

encouraged attacks against Greeks, ending to two dead and twenty injured Greeks.²⁴ In 1867, the Greek vice-consul of Port Said complained about the arbitrary attitude of local policemen towards Greeks after a violent clash that arose, according to Greek diplomatic reports, when a Greek subject was arrested by Egyptians, carried to prison and beaten merciless; when local Greeks gathered at a demonstration, they were confronted to policemen with swords, whereas also people from the surrounding villages participated holding clubs and calling Greeks to come to battle.²⁵ The Greek consul in Alexandria mentioned “repeated repressions” from the Egyptian side against Greek subjects held in prison or deported against the regulation, demanding the acquiescence of the consulate before sending away jobless and “profligate” Greeks.²⁶ After a fight in Tanta, where some Greeks were injured, the protagonist of the fight that started the whole issue, a man described as having an “obscure past”, was put in jail with wounds after been hit from the crowd, in spite of attempts of policemen to protect him; he was the owner of a coffee-shop and had teased two imams, something that made a crowd gather and beat him as also two passing-by young Greeks and an Austrian subject. The Greek consul reporting all details, himself critical to the attitude of many Greeks, added that the Egyptian authorities were “often crabby, inclement and suspicious” and wrote about a problem based on a mutual mistrust.²⁷ Leaving aside the common prejudice of many Greek diplomats to Greeks of lower social strata,²⁸ it is interesting to see that also Greek officials might point the negative role of some Greeks. It is also plausible to think that the role of the police, especially in incidents of the late 1870s, was increasingly correlated to other factors: Cole suggested that the Egyptian police was also affected by the bankruptcy of Egypt and was weakened by poor morale resulting from arrears in pay, by the imposition of highly paid Europeans often ignorant of local conditions and by reductions in force necessitated by the difficulties in servicing the debt.²⁹ The establishment of a European fiscal control in 1876 and the Russo-Ottoman war were factors further politicizing the violent incidents, in which Europeans were involved.³⁰

²⁴ HAMFA 36:1, 1864.

²⁵ HAMFA 36:1, 1867.

²⁶ HAMFA 36:1, 1868.

²⁷ HAMFA 36:1, 1872.

²⁸ See for example HAMFA 36:1, 1871. Compare to chapter 8, footnotes 48-52.

²⁹ Cole, Juan R. I.: *Colonialism and Revolution*, p. 217.

³⁰ *Ebenda*, pp. 204-212.

Rumors and fears about a possible wave of violence against Greeks increased in the late 1870s and, even if they were often false or exaggerated, they are further indications for an increasing mistrust of Greeks and Egyptians. In Zagazig, rumors about a great demand on gunpowder, bullets and cartridges existed among Greeks in 1877 and, when the Greek vice-consul made representations to the local authorities about it, he received a reverse question concerning the Greek shops selling gunpowder.³¹ In Kafr El-Zayyat a couple of years later, when some young “Europeans”, “being jolly in a decent way”, according to a report in the Greek press, were confronted to “locals”, they were attacked by the local authorities at the head of a “crowd” of Arabs holding clubs.³² The Greek consul in Alexandria, Kleon Ragkavis, reported to Athens at about that time that Greeks, especially those of the “lower classes”, were trying to save other Greeks who have committed illegal activities, something that contributed to the worsening of the climate, since such issues arose almost every day and often by people with a contested nationality; Ragkavis added that the Greek vice-consul in Zagazig protected people that definitively had never been Greeks in nationality and made, due to the pressure of local Greeks, fake imprisonments in a case of four criminals, which were set free after a month, attitudes that provoked attempts of local authorities to bypass the provisions of the Capitulations and made the Greek vice-consul declare he was going to oppose violence with violence.³³

In June 11th, 1882, Alexandria was bombed from the warships of British and their allies and a massacre followed in the city. That violence might be the outcome of the disintegration of the fiscal control imposed in 1876 with a possible military intervention was a possibility in the mind of European diplomats in Egypt, as the Greek consul reported already in spring of 1879,³⁴ the question remaining of what would be the Greek position if things got worse. Hadziiosif suggested that part of the Greeks expressing worries in the late 1870s were examining the possibility of safeguarding their economic interests in Egypt through an alliance with the French or by hoping that a group of *pashas* would manage to proceed to a limited modernization, but they hesitated to turn to ‘Urabi, fearing a radical overturning of the existing relations of production and also because of different prejudices; the events of

³¹ HAMFA 98:2, 1877.

³² Imerisia Nea, 13/25.02.1880.

³³ HAMFA 35:5, 1881.

³⁴ HAMFA 58:3, 1879.

the summer of 1882 put an end to any possible success of such initiatives.³⁵ A current praising ‘Urabi as “very patriotic” and considering the Egyptian seek for “freedom” as justified as for any “civilized nation” has been detected in Egyptian Greek press,³⁶ whereas a few months later Oddis defended the hospitality of Egyptians to foreigners, reminding however to illiterate Egyptians that the Europeans were contributing to the “progress” of Egypt and that the “influence” of the Ottomans, the European “powers” and the creditors would continue until the debts would be paid and Egypt would be made a country “really capable of being self-governed”.³⁷ A few days later and always before the summer of 1882, Oddis was still positive to the liberal Egyptians, since they had a “good cause” and, if they were satisfied, the interests of foreigners in Egypt would not be damaged and “Europe” would “understand” that Egypt “was not just a country rousing an archaeological interest” but also “worth of rule of law and progress”.³⁸ Relatively sympathetic approaches to Egyptian demands had their limits also before the summer of 1882, but after that summer even people like Oddis were terrified, as indicated by extremely critical texts on Egyptian rebels.³⁹ The Egyptian revolt was met with different sentiments, ranging from a clear positioning against those considered as enemies of Christians to an enthusiasm of some Athenian newspapers about ‘Urabi as a leader of a national revolt,⁴⁰ but Greek texts mostly mentioned all kind of “crowd fanaticism”, the usual in such cases rumors about the release of criminals from the prisons to take part at the massacres,⁴¹ or attributed part of the responsibility to “personal passions” of the “petty colonels” and especially ‘Urabi, who had no “political thinking and patriotism” and was considered as worth of gratitude only to the point that his deeds brought the British in Egypt.⁴² Even when the views of the Egyptian National Party for no discrimination of people of different [than the Muslim] faith were cited, the revolution was still interpreted as an expression of religious fanaticism.⁴³ It was written that, if “the revolution of ‘Urabi”

³⁵ Hadziiosif, Christos: *Banques grecques*, pp. 182, 188; Hadziiosif, Christos: *Pascha stin Alexandria*, pp. 140-144.

³⁶ *Kaïron*, 02/14.10.1881.

³⁷ *Kaïron*, 22/03.02.1882.

³⁸ *Kaïron*, 05/17.03.1882.

³⁹ One example is a text under the title “Memoirs of a Refugees’ Family”, first published in the newspaper *Kaïron* and included a few years later in: Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, pp. 12-38.

⁴⁰ Louvi, Lina: *Perigelotos Vasileion*, pp. 217-227.

⁴¹ Marmaras, Georgios: *I katastrofi tis Alexandrias*, p. 29.

⁴² Skotidis, Nikolaos: *I en Aigypto krisis*, pp. 187-191.

⁴³ Botsis, Alfredos N.: *I epanastasis tis Aigyptou*, pp. 24-25, 85, 99.

was not a “foreign political conspiracy”,⁴⁴ it must have been the result of a “momentary religious fanaticism”,⁴⁵ whereas the protesters of 1882 were described as mostly jobless or hooligans of the streets or even as “atrocious cannibals”;⁴⁶ compared to such texts, to describe the revolt as “the first thoughtless outbreak of the native’s reaction against the foreigners”⁴⁷ or its leaders as “pseudo-patriots”⁴⁸ would seem moderate, even if still not recognizing a possibility or legitimacy of any Egyptian political action.

Kleon Ragkavis described the mass exodus of Greeks in June 1882 by commenting that until then, the “natives” considered Greeks as unrelated to their “dispute” against “Europeans”; this argument, if one considers the background already presented, might seem unrealistic and was probably serving as an argument of Ragkavis against the Greek intervention with warships. On June 22, a few days after the bombardment of Alexandria, Ragkavis expressed once more his fears about the continued presence of Greek warships in Alexandria and about texts in Greek press regarding a possible Greek collaboration to the British intervention, considering them as factors irritating the Egyptians and perhaps leading to “misunderstandings”.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, the plans of the consuls of Greece, the United Kingdom, Sweden and the Netherlands about the defense of “Europeans” in Alexandria through barricades, passages to the ships for the families and the presence of 3000 armed persons were rejected so as not to irritate the “Arab crowd”, as another Greek diplomat wrote,⁵⁰ but there were many armed Greeks ready to use their guns.⁵¹ A US-American diplomat considered the provision of arms to Greeks and Maltese as a decisive factor “that gave to the riots their sanguinary character”,⁵² but according to a Greek description of the violent events, the armed intervention of some Greeks and Maltese was the reason

⁴⁴ Theories that ‘Urabi was – unconsciously or intentionally – playing the game of the British existed among different kind of interpretations in Egypt as well as elsewhere. See for example: de Guerville, A. B.: *New Egypt*, pp. 18-21; Zannetos, Filios: *Istoria tis nisou Kyprou* – vol. 2, p. 374; Zannas, P. A. (ed.): *Delta, P[inelopi] S.: Protes enthymiseis*, pp. 51, 54.

⁴⁵ *Akropolis*, 17.05.1895.

⁴⁶ Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandria*, p. 43.

⁴⁷ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, p. 12.

⁴⁸ *Aigyptiakon Imerologion Drakopoulou* 1901, p. 63.

⁴⁹ *HAMFA ακκ / μ’*, 1882.

⁵⁰ Skotidis, Nikolaos: *I en Aigypto krisis*, pp. 49-50.

⁵¹ Botsis, Alfredos N.: *I epanastasis tis Aigyptou*, p. 88. Also the Greek consul in Port Said distributed guns to local Greeks, just in case: Chaldoupis, Dimitrios K.: *Anamniseis kai chronika Port-Said*, pp. 22-23, 56.

⁵² Farman, Elbert E.: *Egypt and its betrayal*, pp. 303-312.

many Europeans had been saved in Alexandria;⁵³ another Greek text, together with descriptions of Egyptian ferocities, commented that “those [Greeks] armed, had been saved” and that “the niggers, when they saw a revolver, run away”.⁵⁴ In any case, the 1882 “Christian massacres”, as described by most Greek and other European descriptions of that time, ended up with more Egyptian than European victims.⁵⁵

In June 18th 1882, Kleon Ragkavis reported not only that most Greeks had evacuated Alexandria or were about to do so, but also that about 200 Greek smugglers and criminals decided to remain to take advantage from the looting.⁵⁶ By the middle of July, Ragkavis informed about the existence and criminal activities of about a thousand Greeks in Alexandria, to add that he feared that Greeks might be collectively incriminated.⁵⁷ Vyzantios, the successor of Ragkavis, wrote in October of 1882 that the “anarchy”, a term probably not referring to the abovementioned activities of Greeks, was relatively diminished thanks to the application of “old-school traditions” in “suppression” by the British and, even though some violent incidents still existed against Greeks, it was explained that “the morale of the natives is so humble, that it suffices just a minimum of manly frankness for someone to correct even the most insolent”.⁵⁸ Owen wrote about the “enforced contact with the European economy” that preceded the loss of the political independence of Egypt.⁵⁹ Violence was opposed with violence, as some feared, with some Greeks having their share in the whole situation as well.

6.2 The post-1882 “order”

In 1874, an Alexandrian Greek newspaper commented that “we got tired of writing about stealing and similar cases”.⁶⁰ According to an 1863 report of the British consul in Alexandria, “British Ionian”⁶¹ as well as Maltese merchants complained about the problems their agents faced from local authorities in specific provinces of

⁵³ Botsis, Alfredos N.: *I epanastasis tis Aigyptou*, pp. 100-109.

⁵⁴ *Mi Chanesai* 303, 1882, pp. 7-8.

⁵⁵ Schölch, Alexander: *Ägypten den Ägyptern!*, p. 219.

⁵⁶ *HAMFA ακκ / μ'*, 1882. About Greek victims in the province during the 1882 revolt see also: Royle, Charles: *The Egyptian Campaigns*, p. 200; Botsis, Alfredos N.: *I epanastasis tis Aigyptou*, p. 107.

⁵⁷ *HAMFA ακκ / μ'*, 1882.

⁵⁸ *Ebenda*.

⁵⁹ Owen, Roger: *Egypt and Europe*, pp. 195-209.

⁶⁰ *Imerisia Nea*, 02/14.11.1874.

⁶¹ About the Ionian Greeks of British nationality see chapter 8, footnotes 78-82.

the Egyptian interior, sometimes even inciting the “mob” against them, with rumors that an agent of Petros Kavafis, the father of the famous poet, was seriously injured, or that a Greek in Minya was assassinated; the local population, as was further reported, had the impression of enjoying impunity for acts committed against Christians, in contrary to Cairo, where the “most perfect order” reigned.⁶² On the other hand, a visitor commented in 1880 that Egypt was very secure for foreigners even in the desert, in fact more secure than many Ottoman or Habsburg provinces, or places in Italy or Spain.⁶³ Having in mind these different statements regarding safety, the feeling of insecurity that migrants might have, especially in more isolated places, the need to stress fear to diplomats so as to assure a better protection or justify an intervention,⁶⁴ as also the possibility that visitors might get different impressions depending on variant experiences, should all be taken into account. An 1899 text of *Empros* praising the community of Greek and British interests commented that the austere administration of the later in Egypt had increased the public security even in the interior of the country: Egyptian peasants could not rob Greeks anymore, nor did abuses from *pashas* on Greeks exist, murders were punished and, as emphasized, you could “reach the second waterfall of the Nile with your walking-stick without anyone daring to harm you”.⁶⁵ If this statement arose from an overall admiration to the British and resembled to the usual colonial arguments of bringing order to non-European societies, arguments not always confirmed by facts,⁶⁶ it was nevertheless a belief not always shared by Greeks living in Egypt, making it therefore necessary to question the promoted “order” that was “restored” after 1882.

Just after 1882 and in spite of the application of “old-school traditions” in “suppression”,⁶⁷ insults of peasants against Greek merchants⁶⁸ as well as fears about possible massacres of Christians⁶⁹ were still occasionally reported in the province. A major reason was the debts of the peasants since, as the British consular agent in Zagazig reported, “some of the natives, indebted to Europeans” were selling the

⁶² BNA, FO series 78/1754.

⁶³ Dimitzas, Margaritis: *Periodeia tis Aigyptou*, p. 144.

⁶⁴ Making incidents of attacking Europeans greater as they really were had been a way to justify the 1882 intervention: Brown, Nathan J.: *Peasant Politics*, p. 181.

⁶⁵ *Empros*, 29.10.1899.

⁶⁶ As suggested at a recent study, “the view that British law and order swept across and transformed a chaotic pre-colonial legal landscape” needed to be questioned in the case of India: Kolsky, Elizabeth: *Colonial Justice*, pp. 29-30.

⁶⁷ See footnote 58.

⁶⁸ Brown, Nathan J.: *Peasant Politics*, p. 129.

⁶⁹ BNA, FO series 633/49: *Cromer Papers*, p. 31.

produce for their own benefit and would not pay up on the excuse that they had orders not to pay any one, since Europeans were not expected to return in the country;⁷⁰ a correspondent of a Greek newspaper of Cairo reported in 1884 that “European merchants” had not received anything from the amounts they had lent the villagers for the last two and a half years due to encouragement and protection by the local authorities, the amounts being mostly small and therefore not worth of making expenses at the costly courts.⁷¹ Syrian, Greek and other money-lenders, which were common in the mid-19th century Egyptian province,⁷² but disappeared during the summer of 1882, soon regained their position and confiscated land: in 1889, the Greek consul estimated that Greeks owned about 150.000 to 200.000 *feddans*,⁷³ whereas in 1913 there was a number of 4054 “foreign” smallholders who did not work the land themselves, apparently because the original owners were forced to sell them to fulfill their financial obligations.⁷⁴ Some of the violent incidents against Greeks mentioned at the last two decades of the century in different places in the Egyptian province might have been connected to these evolutions;⁷⁵ in 1902, when a Greek acquired the ownership of about 70 *feddans* of land at the village of Mit Khayrun by due process of law, as a Greek correspondent assured, the villagers attacked him as also his employees with guns and sticks, the attacked Greeks being saved only with the arrival of a military unit.⁷⁶ Growing inequalities increased the violent incidents related with property issues, especially in more isolated and less controlled areas.

Egyptian Greek press often stressed the Greek insecurity, especially in the interior; according to an 1884 Cairian Greek newspaper, “Europeans as well as natives remain closed at their houses” in Upper Egypt after the sunset because of the gangs of brigands that “rule the country undisturbed”.⁷⁷ Two years later, an Alexandrian Greek newspaper commented that, whereas the troubles Greeks had with the “natives” were earlier limited at not paying their debts back, in the meantime robberies and ambushes, including recent murders of a young boy from Limnos and

⁷⁰ Ebenda.

⁷¹ Kaïron, 09.06.1884.

⁷² See chapter 3.3.

⁷³ HAMFA ακ:ιζ', 1888-1890.

⁷⁴ ‘Ashmawi, Sayyid: Perceptions of the Greek Money-lender, p. 253.

⁷⁵ See for example: Brown, Nathan J.: Peasant Politics, pp. 130-131; ‘Ashmawi, Sayyid: Perceptions of the Greek Money-lender, pp. 264-265.

⁷⁶ Alitheia, 14.09.1902.

⁷⁷ Kaïron, 09.06.1884.

of an old person from the Milos, were steadily increasing.⁷⁸ The same newspaper often hosted complaints and comments about the increasing insecurity of Greeks in the villages, such as at a letter from Samannoud pointing that the security of local Greeks depended on willingness of policemen, who might instead arrest Greeks celebrating a religious fest and “cheered up in a perfectly decent behavior” and hit them with the butt of the gun.⁷⁹ The greatest part of the complaints referred to the Egyptian authorities, such as reports about the “violation of asylum” of Greek shop-owners in the town of Maghaghah, at the same time local Greeks complained also about the indifference of police to denounces about crimes against their lives and properties;⁸⁰ it was in the same town that, about a year later, the existing “*omogeneis*” came to a bloody quarrel with the policemen.⁸¹ Dissatisfaction might be expressed for the cooperation of police with local antagonists of Greeks, as implied at a case of a police lieutenant in Mit Jabir, about local notables in the interior not assisting the authorities due either to fear or to interest, or about the Native Courts not punishing “enough” those arrested.⁸² A story from Luxor presented a “native”, accused for stealing things from a coffee-shop of a Greek, as walking around free and threatening the later, at the same time another Greek received threats from a police officer about the future of his butcher’s shop, because he had expressed his complaints to the British.⁸³ It was even implied that it sufficed that some “natives” started a quarrel with “Europeans”, in purpose and in concert with policemen, to end up at the police station and give money so as to confirm their identity and be let free,⁸⁴ whereas a Greek diplomat suggested that some accusations against Greeks selling alcoholic drinks without permission might have been made by policemen in order to receive “*baksheesh*”, i.e. to be bribed, in exchange for the new permissions.⁸⁵ A reporter of an Alexandrian Greek newspaper wrote that Greeks in Upper Egypt complained about the increase of crimes since the time the police took responsibilities from the local notables, the later avoiding any cooperation with the police; murders became “very frequent” and robberies “a part of the agenda”, complemented the reporter, who also

⁷⁸ Metarrythmisis, 11/23.09.1886.

⁷⁹ Metarrythmisis, 10/22.05.1888.

⁸⁰ Omonoia, 28/09.06.1893.

⁸¹ Tachydromos, 28/09.11.1894.

⁸² Tachydromos, 29/10.11.1894.

⁸³ Tachydromos, 15/27.07.1900.

⁸⁴ Tilegrafos, 21/04.12.1903.

⁸⁵ HAMFA 9.1, 1905. Compare to similar allusions made regarding the 1891 regulations in: Metarrythmisis, 18/30.10.1891.

referred to the popular interpretation that the British approved of the situation, so that their presence would seem necessary.⁸⁶ Regarding the murder of a young Greek grocer at a village near Tallah, it was commented that living “isolated in places far away, in the middle of a population perpetually running wilder and more impudent” was the reason for a “record” of martyrs and that “only a great and exemplary punishment can cut down the daily increasing crime”.⁸⁷ At a case of the robbery at the warehouses of a Greek, it was commented that a local police officer did not even report it, as also any from the murders and other crimes, to the *moudiria*.⁸⁸ According to a report of 1897, foreigners working in some banking up works suffered from the local authorities, not only failing to protect them from the “inhospitable and fanatic [local] population”, but actually rousing them to attack Greeks with clubs and axes, as in some examples mentioned, so as to manage to sent foreign workers away and let a Syrian friend of local authorities to be hired instead.⁸⁹ The case of a Greek in Asyut murdered for his money by his Egyptian servants was one with which Egyptian Greek newspapers dealt much, reporting the worries of Asyut Greeks for the inefficient initial inquiries, for which the Greek consul was also considered responsible; would the murderers remain free, went on the story, “the belief of the [Greek] inhabitants [of Asyut] about their safety, already problematic, would be justifiably shaken”.⁹⁰ A fight in Damanhur, with attacks to Greeks and four serious injuries, started from an insignificant quarrel and became great, as reported in *Tachydromos*, due to the tolerance of the police authority.⁹¹ A Greek in Shibin El-Kawm, murdered while reading his newspaper at the yard of his villa, was added to the list of Greeks “who had been victims of the crimes and the fanaticism of the natives”;⁹² the same newspaper, often expressing this kind of critique, added a trader of wood and coal from Cyprus, murdered for 25 pounds, at the “long record of martyrs of Greeks murdered by the natives”.⁹³ This was a commonly used vocabulary in Greek descriptions of criminality of any kind in Egypt, when the victim was Greek. On the other hand, when many locals took part at the chasing of a Greek murderer and his

⁸⁶ Omonoia, 22/03.08.1893.

⁸⁷ Metarrythmisis, 11/23.01.1894; Metarrythmisis, 12/24.01.1894.

⁸⁸ Ermis, 06/18.02.1896.

⁸⁹ Omonoia, 22/03.02.1897.

⁹⁰ Tachydromos, 04/17.08.1900.

⁹¹ Tachydromos, 02/15.03.1901.

⁹² Tachydromos, 12/25.11.1903.

⁹³ Tachydromos, 08/21.12.1904.

brother in Tanta and three of them as also a policeman were injured by the shootings of the two Greeks, it was the Egyptian police that was criticized for allowing the “crowd” to be involved and it was questioned what could have happened had the victim of the murder been a “native” and not a Greek.⁹⁴

Texts of this kind blamed the fanaticism or corruption of the “natives”, usually without posing any questions about the role of some Greeks and their activities in the broadening of inequalities, or without using the defending arguments reserved for Greeks committing crimes in Egypt.⁹⁵ Besides Greek diplomats, the complaints often addressed the British as well, who were expected to assure order and safety for the Greek presence in Egypt. When four Greeks were murdered in just one year in Tallah, a place where, according to the reporter, only “peace-loving and industrious” Greeks were living, the British, who came to reform Egypt, according to the same report, were accused for not showing any sensitivity about the security of Greeks.⁹⁶ Describing the murder of a Greek in Shibin El-Kawm, the reporter questioned whether life in Egypt, “after more than twenty years occupied by a powerful and civilized power”, had returned to “the years of the complete anarchy”.⁹⁷ The discussion about safety included Greeks in urban centers as well, such as at the case of a grocer in Alexandria strangled at his shop by two Egyptians wishing to steal him, since he had collected about 20.000 francs and was about to return to Cyprus;⁹⁸ when a Greek contractor from Santorini was attacked with a hidden blade by a poor Egyptian, it was commented that such an “atrocious crime” did not take place “at a central African country”, in which “they say that cannibals exist”, but in Cairo.⁹⁹ One of the Alexandrian Greek newspapers frequently complaining about the British failings to fulfill their promises concerning the security of the Greeks published a letter about Aswan arguing that Greek merchants had been living “in the greatest harmony” with the local authorities until the arrival of the British, because of the envy, hatred and interest of the later to Greeks.¹⁰⁰ The Greek press in Egypt criticized the British among others for not fulfilling the expectations of securing a new order in

⁹⁴ Tachydromos, 04/17.05.1904.

⁹⁵ For different defensive arguments regarding Greeks in Egypt involved in criminal activities see chapter 4.3.

⁹⁶ Tachydromos, 21/02.01.1895.

⁹⁷ Tachydromos, 12/25.11.1903.

⁹⁸ Foni tis Kyprou, 20/01.02.1890; Foni tis Kyprou, 09/21.03.1890.

⁹⁹ Metarrythmisis, 03/15.01.1891; Metarrythmisis, 08/20.01.1891; Metarrythmisis, 08/20.02.1891.

¹⁰⁰ Metarrythmisis, 13/25.08.1886.

Egypt and the emphasis was on Greek migrants not as criminals in general, as in non-Greek generalizing descriptions,¹⁰¹ but as victims of both the fanaticism of the “natives” and the inability of the British to assure safety. In spite of such complaints, however, there are also some Greek descriptions, by Greek visitors rather than from local Greeks, where the post-1882 “order” was praised and, in different ways, compared to Greece.

6.3 “European” and other states in the Mediterranean

Different aspects regarding the goals and problems of the young Egyptian autonomous and Greek sovereign state were compared in Greek texts during the long 19th century, already before the European “order” that prevailed in 1882. The faculty of surgery, formed in the early 19th century Cairo according to the advices of professors invited from Europe, served as an example for the University of Athens,¹⁰² whereas the 1833 proposals of Michail Tositsas about the future prospects of cotton manufacture in Greece, as also the preference of him and other Egyptian Greek merchants to support a technical university rather than the University of Athens, were also signs of influence by evolutions in early 19th century Egypt.¹⁰³ The French engineer Ferdinand de Lesseps was perceived as a “hero” in the era of progress and technology and the construction of the Suez Channel, directed by him, was the main mid-19th century example used by the supporters of the opening of the Corinth Channel in Greece.¹⁰⁴ Commenting some material achievements of that period in Egypt such as the railway and the telegraph, Typaldos observed that they came out of the attempts of “a handful of [...] Arab and European fortune-hunters [whereas] we the Greeks, claiming of being the leading nation of the East, have managed to achieve just a few remarkable practical achievements of that kind”.¹⁰⁵ Such an argumentation was standard, in different variations, during the long 19th century and especially in periods of crisis and when a Greek readership was addressed. When a Greek, travelling in 1895 in what he called the “Greek East”, compared the “progress” of the Bulgarians or the Egyptians to the situation of Greece, he commented that “the whole

¹⁰¹ See some examples in chapter 4.3.

¹⁰² Lappas, Kostas: *Panepistimio kai foitites*, p. 60.

¹⁰³ Hadziiosif, Christos: *I giraia selini*, p. 322.

¹⁰⁴ Kokollis, S. E.: *Ta egkainia*, pp. 40-41; Papagiannopoulou, Evi: *I dioryga tis Korinthou*, pp. 30-33, 70.

¹⁰⁵ Typaldos, Georgios K. (*yios*): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, p. 11.

East” was full of “the smell of the Greek stink” and that a Greek could not travel anywhere with pride anymore.¹⁰⁶ If the confirmation of a Greek failure was common in comparisons with “Europe” during the long 19th century, it is interesting to see such statements also regarding countries belonging to the “East” in Greek mental maps, like Egypt, before and especially after 1882.

Typaldos described the central part of Alexandria as similar to any “European, modern and commercial” city,¹⁰⁷ even though the presence of palm trees, of people going around on donkeys and of peasants reminded the visitor that he was not in Europe.¹⁰⁸ An 1888 Greek visitor juxtaposed the Alexandria of the Europeans, with “wealth, movement, elegance, propriety, cleanness and laughter”, to that of the “*fellahs*”, with “filthiness, poverty, flabbiness, impropriety and degradation”.¹⁰⁹ Alexandros Ragkavis, a major romantic author and diplomat as well, visited Egypt at about that time and observed that the railway connecting Alexandria and Cairo was faster and better preserved from Greek ones,¹¹⁰ commented that many European cities would be jealous of the central square of Alexandria¹¹¹ and considered Cairo a “European rather than Oriental city” due to the breadth, order and clearness of its streets, in fact a model for Athens and Piraeus.¹¹² Also other Greek visitors of the late 19th and early 20th century compared the dust, the withered trees and tearless fountains of Athens to the paved streets of Alexandria and the dense alleys and the permanently flowing fountains of Cairo,¹¹³ or considered Cairo as a “true megalopolis with all the relaxations, pleasures and entertainments a 19th century person might wish”, as opposed to “miserable Athenians, poor Athens”.¹¹⁴ At one case, it was reported that Athenians should be jealous of both Cairo and the “European” Alexandria for the gardens, the paved streets, the squares and the mansions, all being the result of the notables system which, in contrary to mayor candidates in Greece, had to own immovable property and be literate.¹¹⁵ Besides the neighbourhoods of “natives”,¹¹⁶ a

¹⁰⁶ Akropolis, 30.05.1895.

¹⁰⁷ Typaldos, Georgios K. (*yios*): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, p. 10.

¹⁰⁸ Ebenda, p. 42.

¹⁰⁹ *Akropolis Filologiki* 5, 28.02.1888, pp. 65-67.

¹¹⁰ *Estia Eikonografimenei*, 28.08.1888, p. 548.

¹¹¹ *Estia Eikonografimenei*, 31.07.1888, p. 482.

¹¹² *Estia Eikonografimenei*, 28.08.1888, p. 550.

¹¹³ *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1902, p. 227.

¹¹⁴ *Akropolis Filologiki* 9, 27.03.1888, pp. 129-130.

¹¹⁵ *Akropolis Filologiki* 5, 28.02.1888, p. 66; *Akropolis Filologiki* 8, 20.03.1888, p. 113.

¹¹⁶ On some less enthusiastic Greek descriptions of poor neighborhoods in Egyptian cities see chapter 4, footnotes 28-31.

part of Egyptian cities was proposed by Greek visitors as a model showing that “Eastern” people could also form a part of the “modern” world of the European cities, but mainly served as an opportunity to criticize whatever each observer, depending on political views and sensibilities, disliked in Greece.

It was not only technical achievements and urban planning that were admired by Greek visitors in such a way. Examples of integrity and other positive qualities of the Egyptian post would be mentioned as model for the Greeks,¹¹⁷ as also the order prevailing in the Mixed Courts of Egypt,¹¹⁸ whereas the Egyptian legislation was considered as one to be imitated in Greece as well.¹¹⁹ A columnist of *Empros*, commenting the 1906 Greek-Egyptian negotiations regarding hashish commerce, wondered whether Greeks should be jealous of the Egyptian peasants which “without having a constitution, a parliament and orators, do have a government, which does not hesitate to make demands upon foreign states for the sake of its subjects”.¹²⁰ The early 20th century appearance of a generation of nationalist leaders in Egypt with European studies offered another opportunity to make some comparisons;¹²¹ Gavriilidis observed in one such occasion that, regarding the linguistic issue and the use of the popular idiom by Egyptians in their newspapers, correlated to their political awakening, Greeks were even worse than the “*fellahs*”.¹²²

Most of the abovementioned comparisons were related less to the way Greeks perceived Egyptians, but more to colonial achievements and different ways a European impact was experienced in Egypt, especially after 1882, an inferior position of Egyptians hardly being questioned in most of the cases. Paraskevopoulos, a journalist often reporting from and about Egypt, wrote that Greeks should “take lessons” from the “*fellahs*”, since a reversal of the “laws of nations” had turned Egypt to England, arguing that it was a common place of many Greeks at that time that the place was the *par excellence* “free and civilized, secure place of the East”; even if commenting that “whatever the *fellahs* might be, *fellahs* they were, *fellahs* they would remain”, the same journalist pointed out that it was the Greeks that were the real

¹¹⁷ *Empros*, 17.01.1898.

¹¹⁸ *Akropolis Filologiki* 7, 13.03.1888, p. 100.

¹¹⁹ *Empros*, 25.12.1906.

¹²⁰ *Empros*, 10.06.1906.

¹²¹ For more details about Greek reactions to early 20th century Egyptian nationalism see chapter 13.1.

¹²² Gavriilidis, *Vlasis: Taxidia*, p. 125. It was however the same journalist that just a few years earlier argued that the whip was needed against “inferior races”, such as the Egyptians: *Akropolis*, 04.07.1906. For more details about the Greek language question in Egypt see chapter 11.1.

“*fellahs*”, “tied hand and foot, slaves of the deputy, of the [tax-]collector, of the field guard, of the teller, of the mayor, of the minister, of the prime-minister”. The Egyptian peasant was still considered as “having no awareness of its individuality, of its human essence, of its real freedom”, even if having “all the means and the rights of the probably most civilized people of Europe” and Paraskevopoulos was probably having his discontent regarding the Greek state in mind when explaining how the British managed to make much in just a decade at a place in Africa, which was “with no constitution, disordered, misgoverned, disorganized, ignorant, immature [...] where the sharper yataghan was in effect instead of law, where the worlds’ most motley and fortune-hunting population had initially gathered”. In Egypt, in spite of the colour of their skin, went on the same journalist, people “were susceptible not only of being civilized [but also] of Europeanization”, whereas the police organization was, thanks to the British and in just a decade, as repeated, so perfect, that it could be compared to European ones, even if “we”, i.e. the Europeans, mockingly call them as “*fellahs*”.¹²³ A few years later, in a book full of impressions from his travels as a reporter, Paraskevopoulos would make the comparison clear by commenting that the “exceptional British plans” gradually turned the “*fellahs*” to “perfect subjects of the queen Victoria” at the same time Greeks were governed in a way that would turn them to proper “*fellahs*”.¹²⁴ George Fragoudis, a young Cypriot Greek lawyer who later, in the polarized Greek mid-1910s,¹²⁵ would describe Great Britain as “the natural ally and protector of the Greek race”,¹²⁶ commented during a visit to Egypt that “in opposition to the Arabian disorder and filthiness”, Alexandria presented signs of “order and exactness, indicating European administration”,¹²⁷ it was during the same trip that he suggested that Greek politicians ought to visit Egypt to see how the British managed it with the Egyptian debts and how the British turned “*fellahs*” to “truly Londoner policemen.”¹²⁸

In 1889, a Greek visitor in Egypt described the system of British “protection” as one in which Great Britain was not much visible, since it was “a little the English, a

¹²³ Akropolis, 11.01.1895.

¹²⁴ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: I Megali Ellas, p. 433.

¹²⁵ During the First World War, some Greeks preferred neutrality, whereas others supported the participation in the war, on the side of the British and French allies. This polarization is the period of “*dichasmos*”, meaning “disunity”, is usually called “National Schism”.

¹²⁶ BNA, FO series 141/589,2: Cyprus.

¹²⁷ Akropolis, 17.05.1895.

¹²⁸ Akropolis, 30.05.1895.

little the Egyptians, a little the Turks [...] and more the inhabitants themselves [that govern]”;¹²⁹ in a report of 1913, a Greek diplomat with a great experience in Egypt, Antonios Saktouris, summed up the complicated diplomatic situation of the late 19th and early 20th century by describing Egypt as being “a province of the Ottoman Empire in name only, seemingly autonomous under the rule of the khedive [...] and in fact under the administration of the English governor”.¹³⁰ Spandonis, a journalist often praising the British, wrote not only about their success on the issue of the Egyptian debts, but also about their “magnificent organizing mind” and their “scientific conception of order”, achieved “without seeing even one Englishman, without feeling even any pressure or inconvenience”.¹³¹ This was a common place often repeated, such as when another visitor commented how “the Arabs” became “perfect English policemen” and that, although one could rarely see any soldiers, “yet England was everywhere and always like a hidden machine, setting all these people in motion”,¹³² or when the editor of *Akropolis* commented that Greeks in Egypt enjoyed “rule of law, order, safety, good administration”.¹³³ A character of a 1929 novel written by Georgios Arvanitakis, a Jerusalem-born Greek already residing in Egypt for many years, compared the British achievements in Egypt after 1882 to the Greek “misfortune” in aspects such as legislation, justice or infrastructure in the province,¹³⁴ but even if that critique of Greek “misfortune” was made irrespective of “system of government and governor”, as Arvanitakis explained,¹³⁵ critiques such as those mentioned and addressing a Greek readership often questioned even the ability of Greeks to be governed by themselves or specific systems of government.

A critique of the Greek state could be made by comparing to colonial achievements in Egypt, but Greek civil servants in Egypt would on the other hand demand the exemplary punishment of Egyptian civil servants. At an example already in 1857, just after Greece was acknowledged as a capitulatory state in Egypt, an Egyptian policeman was accused of using insults and violence in his attempt to “restore order” at a tavern in Alexandria, after a fight had taken place between Greek

¹²⁹ Kleio 5:6, 1889, p. 83.

¹³⁰ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, p. 24.

¹³¹ *Empros*, 28.12.1899.

¹³² *Empros*, 18.11.1904.

¹³³ *Akropolis*, 24.08.1906.

¹³⁴ Arvanitakis, G[eorgios] L.: *Mia tragodia eis to Kaïron*, pp. 34-37. About the opinion of Arvanitakis for the British achievements see also: Pargas, Stefanos + Arvanitakis G[eorgios] L.: *Synoptiki istoria tis Aigyptou*, p. 81; Arvanitakis, G[eorgios] L.: *Stoicheiodis geografia tis Aigyptou*, pp. 59-60.

¹³⁵ Arvanitakis, G[eorgios] L.: *Mia tragodia eis to Kaïron*, p. 36.

sailors and some passing by members of the Ottoman garrison of Mecca; as the Greek consul demanded, the policeman was beaten 200 times with a stick as a punishment.¹³⁶ When, however, a similar demand for “satisfaction” was made in Greece, reactions were different. This is evident from an 1885 incident, when a British diplomat felt insulted by a gendarme in Athens and asked for his exemplary punishment. In this case, the British demands sparked off discussions regarding British interventions in Greece and complaints were expressed regarding the British attitude, proper for “Zulus”, “Kaffirs” or “Arabs”, as argued, but not to a “civilized nation”.¹³⁷ These aspects of the Egyptian experience were not stressed much in the abovementioned comparisons of Greece with Egypt, mainly produced by Greeks with a brief experience in Egypt and different kinds of critique about Greece.

It has been suggested that the late 19th century Egyptian history was in many ways less connected with sub-Saharan African and more with Mediterranean or even Latin American cases with similar impulses and crises, where the conditions “led minor nations with major debts to lose their independence by failing tests of credit-worthiness set by external examiners”.¹³⁸ The mid-19th century khedive of Egypt Ismail is said of having expressed the wish that his country would be “no longer in Africa [but] form part of Europe”, something that a US-American correspondent of early 20th century commented as demanding the extra addition: “by my folly I have thrown my country into the arms of Europe; she holds it, and will it, and will never release her hold”.¹³⁹ It was an ironic comment emphasizing aspects such as waste, considered as specifically “Oriental” in a period when the “West” was credited the ability, if not duty, to govern the “Orient”. A Greek author of 1893, summarizing the European literature of his time, blamed Ismail for wasting the resources of Egypt and provoking the establishment of the fiscal control of 1876, arguing that foreign intervention improved the economic situation and that it was ‘Urabi to blame for exhausting the British and French patience.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, according to Ninet most of the Syrians, Greeks and Jews became rich at that period “through an ‘intelligent’ contest, directly or indirectly, on monstrous abuses of tyrant Ismail”.¹⁴¹ If the Swiss author was a fervent critic of the “Levantine” and their activities in Egypt, he was not

¹³⁶ HAMFA 36:1, 1857.

¹³⁷ For the incident and the Greek reactions see: Carabott, Philip: *To epeisodio Nicolson*.

¹³⁸ Hopkins, A[ntony] G.: *The Victorians and Africa*, pp. 363-391.

¹³⁹ de Guervill, A. B.: *New Egypt*, p. 94.

¹⁴⁰ Botsis, Alfredos N.: *I epanastasis tis Aigyptou*, pp. 11-27.

¹⁴¹ Ninet, John: *Au pays des Khédives*, p. 113.

the only one writing about a share of non-Egyptians in the debts. A mid-19th century Greek text described that period as one when Egypt became “the Land of Promise at which all fortune-hunters from anywhere came and huge fortunes were formed at the expense of the khedive”.¹⁴² Already in 1859, a British diplomat would note that it was a great surprise that Said finally gave a Greek, Ziziniás, some money he demanded from the revenues of Egypt, without even the formality of an investigation; as further commented, that case was characteristic for a host of claims brought daily by such “foreigners” against the Egyptian government.¹⁴³ Syngros, one of the famous Ottoman Greek bankers of that time, would later recall of “the period of Egyptian loans, of provisions to the army, and first of all of the khedivial courts”, during which “it sufficed that someone takes any order, even of two hall mirrors, to make a fortune through it”, something that led to lives full not only of “comfort”, but also of “waste” among the Greek friends of Syngros in Egypt.¹⁴⁴ The issue of the Egyptian debt was discussed by Greek diplomats and the government in Athens, since Greek subjects were also among the creditors and Greek diplomats wanted to assure that Greek mortgage creditors would be treated like those of other [European] nationalities.¹⁴⁵

The last quarter of the 19th century was however also a period a group of Ottoman Greek bankers benefited from speculation in the Greek stock market at the expense of people with small savings, enjoying privileges through the exploitation of opportunities in order not to invest in Greece, but rather to have the maximum profit with a minimum work and risk.¹⁴⁶ The international fiscal control imposed on Greece by the end of the 19th century gave the opportunity even to a Greek in Egypt to comment that some local Greeks had an interest, since they would profit themselves from the Greek stocks they possessed, speculating thus “over the dead body of their homeland”.¹⁴⁷ This attitude was explained by their perception of Greece as a “poor, economically backward country having the additional ‘disadvantage’, compared to colonies (such as Egypt) to be not only an independent, but also a democratic country

¹⁴² Estia Eikonografimēni, 23.09.1879, p. 607.

¹⁴³ BNA, FO series 78/1467.

¹⁴⁴ Syngros, Andreas: Apomnimonevmata, p. 102.

¹⁴⁵ HAMFA 8:4, 1879.

¹⁴⁶ Dertilis, Georges: *To zitima ton trapezon*; Chatziioannou, Maria Christina: *Relations between the state and the private sphere. According to an estimation of the 1890s, about 40% of the Greek debt was to Greek creditors, living either in the Greek state or elsewhere*; Hadziiosif, Christos: *I belle époque tou kefalaïou*, p. 313.

¹⁴⁷ Empros, 21.10.1897.

with a parliament”.¹⁴⁸ The “detail” of the system of government was decisive for drawing the limits between the “Europeans” and the “non-Europeans” in the Greek mental maps of the long 19th century. Despite the rhetoric about Greeks as a “civilized” nation, the fear of being found at a similar position to the Ottoman and Egyptian bankrupt states was expressed in different occasions caused mainly by Greek debts, especially by supporters of “federalist” projects regarding the “Eastern” people.¹⁴⁹ One of them was also Typaldos, who expressed an understanding about the “difficult position of the [Egyptian] government to foreigners, who live and behave themselves in Egypt as if it was an occupied country”,¹⁵⁰ or for Egyptian people suffering from the speculation of “many infamous European fortune-hunters” and from the European consuls.¹⁵¹ Typaldos mentioned that what happened to Egypt ought to be instructive to Greeks in different ways,¹⁵² but at the same time observed that the “native” of Egypt “could never become sovereign, except if his nature would be transformed”.¹⁵³

Many Greek texts ascertained of the failure of “Europeanization” of Greece, the ironical figure of the *“psorokostaina”* being the symbol of a permanently poor and weak Greek state in the Greek long 19th century;¹⁵⁴ nevertheless, as suggested by the indicating 1875 metaphor of a chrysalis, standing for “a Greece that is not Greece any more, but [is] neither Europe – yet”,¹⁵⁵ Greece was recognized as deserving a place among the “civilized nations” and the “European” states. On the other hand, Karatheodoris suggested after his Egyptian experience that the loss of the Egyptian independence was an example, since “when the inhabitant of a country does not have himself the ability to exploit the wealth of his place, it is natural that the foreigner comes and becomes not only master of his property, but finally also of his political freedom”.¹⁵⁶ Despite the use of Egypt as an example to be avoided in Greek rhetoric, even if aspects from the European achievements in colonial Egypt were praised by some authors or used as arguments in critique against specific aspects of the political

¹⁴⁸ Dertilis, Georges: *Istoria tou ellinikou kratous* – vol. 1, p. 507. Compare to chapter 12.3.

¹⁴⁹ See an example of 1885 mentioned in: Chasiotis, Loukianos: “I Anatoliki Omospondia”, p. 65.

¹⁵⁰ Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, pp. 55-59.

¹⁵¹ Ebenda, pp. 12-13, 75-78. Typaldos mentioned, though, that the Greek consul was an exception to such attitudes: ebenda, p. 78.

¹⁵² Ebenda, pp. 75-78, 91-92.

¹⁵³ Ebenda, p. 70.

¹⁵⁴ Skopetea, Elli: *To “protypo vasileio”*, p. 233.

¹⁵⁵ Ebenda, pp. 162, 231-247.

¹⁵⁶ Karatheodoris, K[onstantinos] St.: *I Aigyptos*, p. 55.

life in Greece, a possible limitation of the Greek independence was for most Greeks during the long 19th century not considered as similarly “natural”. In 1894, some Greek deputies commented that a loss of independence was a “natural” consequence “only for the Asiatic nations, which don’t have the awareness of their nationhood and are conditioned by divine law”. According to Hadziiosif, citing and commenting these arguments, they were supposed to prove the incompatibility of the foreign fiscal control and the representative system in Greece, since the former was a system that had been applied “in the theocratic Ottoman Empire, the Egypt of the khedive and the Tunis of the beys”; in the same logic, such a control could not be imposed in parliamentary Greece also “because that would cancel the titles of Greece on the inheritance of the Ottoman Empire, based on the supposed cultural superiority of the Greek Kingdom, its Europeanness”, of which a basic element was exactly the parliamentary system.¹⁵⁷ In spite of critiques of different kind, in Greek mental maps of the long 19th century the Greeks and, more or less, Greece had been considered as “European” or, in worst case, as being in the process of being “Europeanized”, whereas, in spite of solidarity, compassion and common fears sometimes expressed, Egyptians were not perceived as capable of governing themselves.

6.4 The “first conqueror of Egypt”

“Ariagni” was a heroine of a novel of the Egyptian Greek author Stratis Tsirkas standing for the Greeks of lower social strata, as Tsirkas would like them to be.¹⁵⁸ she was placed in a poor neighborhood of Cairo and was close to non-Greek Egyptians in their everyday life, assisting them also by their anti-colonial struggle and, as pointed, exceeding any Egyptian-Greek character of Tsirkas or other authors “in her pronounced humanity”.¹⁵⁹ She was the opposite “to all those clever guys who sit in their offices and wear hard collars [...] speak like Europeans [...] go around with Europeans, their minds work the European way [and for which Egypt] isn’t their country”.¹⁶⁰ It is therefore even more impressing that she is presented commenting the housework made by an Egyptian boy at her kitchen as a great mess because of the

¹⁵⁷ Hadziiosif, Christos: *I belle époque tou kefalaiou*, p. 312.

¹⁵⁸ Pechlivanos, Miltos: *Apo ti Leschi*, pp. 241-242.

¹⁵⁹ Kazamias, Alexander: *Between Language, Land and Empire*, pp. 184-185.

¹⁶⁰ Tsirkas, Stratis: *Drifting Cities*, p. 444.

absence of order, speaking about “the usual Arab way of doing things”.¹⁶¹ If even “Ariagni” is presented by Tsirkas, a mid-20th century author positively disposed to the Egyptian anti-colonial struggle,¹⁶² as having such a radically different perception of order compared to “Arabs”, one can not but question what might have been the understanding of mid-19th or early 20th century Greeks with studies in European universities and visiting Egypt or settling in it, people with the expectations of a “European”, whose knowledge on Egypt was often based on the reading of texts produced by classics of the Greco-roman antiquity, such as Herodotus, by recent European travellers, such as Chateaubriand and by Western guides, such as those of Baedeker.

Even if some kind of “sympathy” to the “natives” was showed, it would hardly exceed a superficial criticism to Western civilization not differing from non-Egyptian Greeks with federalist ideas, when commenting Egyptians affairs. One such example is Typaldos, a person with a background of studies in French and German universities, who mentioned that Greeks were “essentially Easterners” and therefore understood Arabs better than the “cold Europe” could,¹⁶³ or commented that calmness at extraordinary occasions was often missing by “us Easterners”, compared to Americans and “Anglo-Saxons”.¹⁶⁴ At the same time, however, Typaldos could describe the joy felt by the “European”, including Greeks, after going around in “wild and uninhabited” places such as deserts and then finding “inside his tent Europe, the civilization, his home”, things like a table with lamps and everything needed for writing and reading on it.¹⁶⁵ More than half a century later a Greek diplomat serving in Egypt, Filippos Dragoumis, brother of the well-known diplomat and author Ionas Dragoumis and often expressing federalist and anti-Western ideas in his journal, remarked that the Egyptian peasants preferred Greeks than “other Europeans”, even if they didn’t really like them, since Greeks had tolerance and a better understanding to the peasants.¹⁶⁶ As written in an Athenian paper of 1883, most of the Greeks in Egypt “were not inferior to Europeans in arts and sciences”, whereas they had the additional characteristic that they did not just cheat the Egyptian peasants, as the “other

¹⁶¹ Ebenda, p. 373.

¹⁶² See in particular his short novel, written in the aftermath of Nassers’ accession to power and referring to the 1919 revolt against the British: Tsirkas, Stratis: Nourentin Bompas.

¹⁶³ Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, p. 122.

¹⁶⁴ Ebenda, p. 98.

¹⁶⁵ Ebenda, p. 106.

¹⁶⁶ Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): *Dragoumis, Filippos Stef.: Imerologio*, p. 51.

Europeans” did, but were rather “socializing” with them, as their “teachers”. As further explicated in the same text “the Greek”, through a “natural inclination to discuss and speak about politics, sits at night by the notable at the village of the fellah and [...] judges and criticizes, speaks, declaims, explains, teaches and steadily sharpens the mind of that human-like child”.¹⁶⁷ Commerce was a major field, in which Greeks were considered the “teachers” of Egyptians as well as other people out of Europe, with the Egyptians acknowledged of being, when compared to the “teaching and civilizing” of “natives” in other places, “big pupils”, to which “lessons of all arts and sciences” were given.¹⁶⁸ What was meant as “civilization” to be “taught” might be varying in different texts and a Greek visitor even asked whether it was not “civilization [when Greeks kept] in the middle of Egypt the best barber’s shops, the best schools and churches, the best bakeries, hotels, confectioneries and groceries”.¹⁶⁹ In *Tachydromos*, it was argued that “the small retailer contributed as much as the great banker to the noble and civilizing project” of Egypt.¹⁷⁰

If Greeks were in some cases selectively dissasociated from “Europeans”, arguments from the antiquity might have been used as a further indication of a special relation of Greeks to Egypt, always in comparison to the “other Europeans”. Lampridis described Greeks as the first among “European people” to “know and conquer Egypt”, having at the turn of the 20th century a “new historical mission” to accomplish there and pushed by an “unexceptional natural law” that would always push Greeks to Egypt “instinctively”.¹⁷¹ To these conclusions he was not an isolated case, since many late 19th and early 20th century Greek texts, in Egypt as also elsewhere, appealing to antiquity so as to speak about a “natural for our race colonial policy”,¹⁷² or expressing an enthusiasm about the prospects of “the Greek”, the “first conqueror of Egypt” and “introducer of the first civilization in Egypt”.¹⁷³ Aspects from the antiquity were used in order to justify this new “mission” of Greeks such as, for example, the “civilizing spirit” of ancient Greek merchants in Egypt reminded occasionally during the long 19th century by Greek visitors or diplomats as being

¹⁶⁷ Mi Chanesai 585, 1883, p. 2.

¹⁶⁸ Prokopiou, Sokratis: Neoellines, pp. 166-167.

¹⁶⁹ Akropolis Filologiki 5, 28.02.1888, p. 67.

¹⁷⁰ Tachydromos, 16/28.04.1891.

¹⁷¹ Lampridis, I[oannis]: O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos.

¹⁷² Imerisia Nea, 10/22.05.1875.

¹⁷³ Akropolis, 08.06.1895.

mentioned by Herodotus;¹⁷⁴ Greeks in the interior of Egypt resembled, according to Alexandros Ragkavis, “to the ancient settlers [scattered] all over the country [...] introducing and promoting civilization” like that time.¹⁷⁵ The non-Greek Egyptian antiquity might be appreciated as well when ancient Greeks were presented as “ignorant barbarians” coming to Egypt to receive inspiration, wealth and knowledge, or owning their “civilization and ennoblement” to Egyptians,¹⁷⁶ but at an archaeological study, it was explained that Alexandria, the “base for the diffuse of the thriving European civilization to the barbarous nations of Africa and Asia”, was the place where “the first civilization of mankind started and, developed and perfected by the Greeks, was transmitted to Europe, which now has to return this received capital with interest”.¹⁷⁷

The admiration of some aspects of the Egyptian antiquity did not contradict with the reproducing of the usual orientalist descriptions of that time. There are many descriptions of quite not exceptional Greek visitors in Egypt calling the peasants in the Delta creatures between “human and beast”,¹⁷⁸ that “would still be at the lowest rank between human and beast”, if Greeks had not settled in Egypt,¹⁷⁹ being characterized by dullness and unconcern to education, living a primitive life following instincts and passions and even having the same nutrition to orangutans.¹⁸⁰ A Greek visitor from Istanbul observed that Egyptians were frugal, industrious, with some sort of sly intelligence, obedient by fear to the law and the rulers, lustful, coward and always dirty,¹⁸¹ whereas Syngros similarly commented that peasants of mid-19th century Egypt had no life’s needs other than paying for having many wives, since they lived from what they cultivated, were half-naked, had just a hovel to stay in and did not complain for working just for paying their taxes and interest.¹⁸²

Even if Greeks were “the first conquerors”, their “mission” was sometimes correlated to the British presence in Egypt or generally in Africa. Already in 1875, at a speech in a Greek lodge in Alexandria, it was explained that Egypt might form the

¹⁷⁴ Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, p. 53; Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, p. 48.

¹⁷⁵ *Estia Eikonografimeni*, 28.08.1888, p. 550.

¹⁷⁶ *Esperos* 64, 15/27.12.1883, p. 242; Oikonomopoulos, D[ionysios] I.: *Alexandrinou Diakosmos*, p. vζ; Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: *Ellines en Aigypto*, pp. 12-13; *Kosmos*, 03/16.03.1902, p. 284.

¹⁷⁷ Dimitis, Margaritis: *Istoria tis Alexandrias*, p. 45.

¹⁷⁸ *Akropolis Filologiki* 7, 13.03.1888, p. 97.

¹⁷⁹ *Akropolis*, 30.04.1895.

¹⁸⁰ *Empros*, 10.05.1902.

¹⁸¹ Vaxevanoglou, Kal.: *To Kaïron*, pp. 12-13.

¹⁸² Syngros, Andreas: *Apomnimonevmata*, p. 103.

bridge to Africa, so that Greek material interests would be served together with transforming the “beasts” to “humans”.¹⁸³ A Greek judge serving in Egypt argued that the British did not systematically opposed Greeks in Egypt, since their role for specific jobs, such as shoemakers, grocers, tavern-owners, bakers and retailers, was never questioned.¹⁸⁴ A letter published in *Empros* actually explained that it was to the interest of the Greeks in Egypt to remain attached to the British, even arguing that it was the British presence that had made the coming of Greek retailers possible in the first place after 1882,¹⁸⁵ a few weeks before a reporter of *Empros* would argue about the mutual interests of Greeks and British in Egypt and complain about the Greek “high society” of Alexandria, which did not learn English and did not have good relations to the British.¹⁸⁶ In an Egyptian Greek journal of 1901, the British were praised for their contribution in Egypt as well as for their activities in Sudan and towards central Africa, something that might bring wealth to both Egyptians as also – and especially – Greeks which, it was reminded, had shown their gratitude to the British by participating at the “civilizing war in Transvaal”.¹⁸⁷ A text published in *Atlantis* referred to the British “project” in Egypt and Sudan, for the preparation of which Greeks had largely contributed.¹⁸⁸ In 1904, trying to answer whether the British domination in Egypt, which he predicted as one that was going to last for many centuries, was to the advantage of Greeks, Lampridis correlated the geographic position of Egypt to a possible future of Greeks in Africa, provided that his pro-British ideas and strategies would be followed and that Greeks would have a role in assisting the British attempt to “civilize Egypt”, in spite of the mutual prejudices of Greeks and British.¹⁸⁹

A text focusing on Egyptian Italian writers stressed that not all Italians in Egypt ought to be identified to an imperial discourse since a non- or even anti-imperialist one was also possible.¹⁹⁰ Especially since the mid-20th century, the British role in the Greek civil war and specific phases of the decolonization, including a

¹⁸³ Athina 1:3, 1875, pp. 35-36.

¹⁸⁴ Akropolis, 03.07.1906.

¹⁸⁵ *Empros*, 29.10.1899.

¹⁸⁶ *Empros*, 30.12.1899.

¹⁸⁷ *Aigyptiakon Imerologion Drakopoulou* 1901, pp. 62-63. In fact there were Greeks fighting for both sides: Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*, pp. 92-93; Mantzaris, E[vangelos] A.: *The Greeks in South Africa*, p. 121.

¹⁸⁸ *Atlantis*, May 1911, pp. 24-25.

¹⁸⁹ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*.

¹⁹⁰ Re, Lucia: *Alexandria Revisited*, pp. 163-196.

Greek anti-British revolt in Cyprus and an attempt to reduce British influence in Egypt, were welcomed by different Greek authors in Egypt, especially of the Left and / or with a Cypriot origin, with an attempt to ascribe in retrospect an anti-colonial stance to some Greeks in the early 20th century Egypt. The character of “Ariagni” in a novel of Tsirkas and especially her role during 1919 is one such example.¹⁹¹ A Cypriot author writing about her childhood in Egypt referred to the advices her grandfather gave to Egyptian revolutionaries in 1919 as also to the parallels between Cyprus, Greece and Egypt and their struggles against the British.¹⁹² A collection of poems of Kostas Simos issued in Cairo made references to British violence in Cyprus and expressed a joy of Greeks for the “liberation” of Egypt in the 1950s.¹⁹³ On the other hand, even a journalist of that period like Gialourakis, considered as having a relatively critical stance, referred to the 1882 revolt and justified what he described as Greek “apathy” towards it by arguing that it would be “inconceivable” for the Greek community to “undertake a role [...] of the Egyptian people and only”, especially since “Greeks went to Egypt to live and create [and not] to dabble in politics and perish in struggles that did not concern them directly”.¹⁹⁴

If even some critical Egyptian Greek voices in the decolonization period might have such an understanding, it is hard to detect the tracks of a possible Greek anti-imperialist perspective in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in spite of the existence of some critique to the British. An attempt to categorize Egyptian Greek literature into the polarized categories of orientalist, on the one hand, and humanist, anti-colonial, on the other, has been made by Kazamias.¹⁹⁵ Nevertheless, it is questionable in how far all authors included to the “humanists”, ranging from liberal to communists and forming part of different mid-19th to mid-20th century discourses, could be described at a coherent group of people that, as mentioned, “stressed in particular the free and voluntary cooperation between Greeks and Egyptians and called for mutual friendship and solidarity across ethnic boundaries to resist British colonialism”.¹⁹⁶ A 1908 text published in a major Athenian journal and praising an Egyptian nationalist leader has been included to this category, even though the text was rather a critique of Greeks studying in Europe and not being as “patriotic” as Moustafa Kamel, who had also

¹⁹¹ Tsirkas, Stratis: *Drifting Cities*, especially pp. 236-238.

¹⁹² Palaiologou-Petronda, Evgenia: *Ston kairo tou Pappou mou*.

¹⁹³ Simos, Kostas Ks.: *Skliri poreia*.

¹⁹⁴ Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 141.

¹⁹⁵ Kazamias, Alexander: *Between Language, Land and Empire*, pp. 177-191.

¹⁹⁶ Ebenda, p. 181.

studied in Europe, was presented of having been.¹⁹⁷ Gkikas was another of the authors included to the “humanists” by Kazamias, even though the later admitted that the “moralistic, liberal and humanist critique of British imperialism” by Gkikas was “tinged with a mix of populist, nationalist, orientalist and anti-British stereotypes, all recruited in the service of the noble cause of defending the Greek presence in Egypt”.¹⁹⁸ Gkikas published two texts in successive volumes of a major Egyptian Greek journal, starting with an ironic critique for “us the Europeans, the privileged race”, who exploited the Egyptians so as to have the material means to live in comfort and deal with philosophical and scientific studies, “it goes without saying, for the sake of the progress of the humanity”; the text ended with remarks about the “civilized” Europeans being unable to understand why the “*fellahs*”, “perennially the same and identical” people, were not willing “to be educated in the European civilization, inventing like us dynamites and bullets so as to contribute as masterly as they can to the killing of the noble humanity, which we Europeans proudly call progress and civilization”.¹⁹⁹ A couple of months later, Gkikas published another text defending the Greeks in Egypt, which had been described by Cromer as usurers, profiteers and corruptors of the morals of “natives” because of selling alcoholic drinks.²⁰⁰ Gkikas argued that Cromer wanted to get rid of Greeks from Egypt because he could not stand the Greek domination in commerce and that Egyptian peasants loved Greeks more than the “noblest Englishman”, because of being more honest in their dealings and more sympathizing to the slavery the “liberal and merciful Albion” had imposed on Egyptians. Together with arguments of this kind, quite optimistic if having in mind various aspects of the Greek presence in Egypt presented so far, Gkikas concluded that the problem for the British was that the Greeks “conquered the whole Egypt and Sudan and civilize too fast” the “*fellahs*”, posing thus an obstacle to the British control of Egyptian commerce.²⁰¹ As another text of about that time further commented on that issue, Greeks had been in Egypt since the antiquity and contributed to the civilization of Egypt invited on that purpose by the pharaohs at a time the British “were eating masts and lived in caves like wild animals”. The Greeks, went on the same author, with the exception of “a few criminals”, came in contact

¹⁹⁷ About this text see chapter 13, footnote 57.

¹⁹⁸ Kazamias, Alexander: *Between Language, Land and Empire*, p. 182.

¹⁹⁹ *Nea Zoi*, December 1907, pp. 708-710.

²⁰⁰ The issue of selling alcoholic drinks was one of the common matters of disagreement between Greeks and the British in Egypt. See chapter 12, footnote 145.

²⁰¹ *Nea Zoi*, March 1908, pp. 791-794.

easier to the “native element” and could enjoy its sympathy, whereas the attempt of Cromer to make Greeks lend money to Egyptian villagers for an interest rate of only 5% was criticized because Greeks in the interior, suffering hardships, were in danger not only of losing their capital, but also their lives due to the “falsely understood rights” Cromer gave the “natives” in such a “thoughtless” way.²⁰² According to the same author, during the 19th century the French had handed over to the Greeks a role concerning “progress and civilization” in Egypt because the later had “the special qualities of the colonial spirit par excellence” and, “adjusting to foreign customs, but gradually imposing their superiority, associating with [the Egyptians], but not assimilated, [the Greeks] diffused the first elements of civilization and tamed the wilderness of the manners [of Egyptians]”.²⁰³ Kazamias included Oddis – justifiably – to the other “trend” of Egyptian Greek literature, one that “reproduced many features of European Orientalist discourse”,²⁰⁴ something indicating for the problematic classification in two polarized categories, especially when speaking about the turn of the 20th century. Quite often, critique to the British was not part of an anti-colonial discourse, but rather emphasized the need to safeguard Greek activities in Egypt and to justify a Greek “civilizing mission” there.

6.5 Summary

Most Greek discourses examined in chapter 6 would hardly overcome a hierarchical division between the “Europeans”, the “teachers”, and the Egyptians, considered in the best case as an example of how “European” achievements could be made “even” by “non-European” people, as one to be avoided by protecting the “European” institutions in Greece, or admired as the perennially “same and identical” Egyptians since the antiquity, in a “noble savage” romantic approach. Among Greeks living in Egypt, more common were the fears, actual or exaggerated, towards the “natives”, accompanied by complaints for the British ability to assure “order” after 1882.

²⁰² Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, pp. 71-75. About Greek defending arguments regarding money-lending activity in the interior see chapter 3, footnotes 130-136.

²⁰³ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, p. 3.

²⁰⁴ Kazamias, Alexander: *Between Language, Land and Empire*, p. 185.

7. Going “without reason beyond the ocean”: Greek human mobility at the turn of the 20th century

In a 1973 text mentioning the presence of many Greeks from Rhodes there, Egypt was described as being for the Greeks in the 19th century what “America” was in the 20th century, i.e. “a country of migration”;¹ a 1999 study on the Greeks in Egypt also described Egypt and the United States of America as the main destinations of Greek migration.² In spite of the existence of such references and of evidence destabilizing the absolute differentiation of two models defined by the criterion of destination, the stereotypical juxtaposition having Egypt and the United States of America as the exemplary cases for two completely different phenomena of Greek human mobility is still dominant. This distinction is not new, even though people at the turn of the 20th century might perceive “America” as an opportunity for a quick profit just like Egypt. Late 19th century texts in Samian Greek press, for example, mentioned that Averoff was a model for migrants going to Egypt and, from there, to other places of Africa, hoping to acquire great properties.³ A text of the early 20th century, however, would refer to the migrants crossing the Atlantic and dreaming to become the Greek Astor, Vanderbilt or Rockefeller and the “new” Sinas, Zappas, Averoff and Syngros, imagining of “New York, Boston, Chicago” as similar to “Galati, Braila, Odessa, Cairo and Alexandria, seedbeds of so many national benefactors”, such as those just mentioned.⁴ In the case of the last text, these expectations were criticized, in an attempt to dissuade Greeks from taking the decision to cross the Atlantic.

The distinction between two antithetic models of late 19th and early 20th century Greek human dispersion, a mass migration movement across the Atlantic and a “diaspora” in the “Greek East”, has prevailed in later texts, even in scholar ones. An explanation lies in the orientation of research, since the interest of contemporary scholars is only rarely turned to migration of Europeans to Egypt or other eastern Mediterranean areas.⁵ Human mobility has been for a long time considered as a problematic deviation from a supposed “order” of the world; as commented in a

¹ Kypriotis, Platonas: *Oi Venetokleis kai to Venetokleion*, p. 52.

² Souloyannis, Euthymios: *I thesi*, p. 22.

³ Moutafis, Giorgos: *I parousia Samion*, p. 122.

⁴ Lykoudis, Emmanouil: *Oi metanastai*, pp. 27, 48.

⁵ For some exceptions to this tendency see: Fuhrmann, Malte: *Der Traum*; Hanley, Will: *Foreignness and Localness*; Fuhrmann, Malte: *Down and out on the quays of İzmir*.

critical overview of “methodological nationalist” approaches, “in nationalist doctrine as well according to the container model of society, immigrants must appear as antinomies to an orderly working of state and society, even in societies where past immigration constitutes the foundation myth of the nation”.⁶ Migration towards places other than the “New World”, even to Europe before the second half of the 20th century, have been even less “part and parcel” of collective memory due to “the idea of stable and static national populations, disturbed only by occasional refugee movements”.⁷ The mobility of people in the long 19th century, however, was not limited in just a small number of “cosmopolitans” or merchant networks, where literature about European newcomers in the eastern Mediterranean countries usually focused. The main goal in the present chapter is to examine the ideological premises underlying the juxtaposition of the two stereotypic typologies of Greek human mobility and dispersion regarding the long 19th century and to challenge the existence of two totally antithetic models, by arguing that in many ways human mobility in the Mediterranean and across the Atlantic were both comparable and interrelated.

7.1 Models of Greek human mobility

A legal distinction, suggested in 1913 and defining as “migrants” only those travelling in third class, exceeding the number of 50 and going out of Europe, beyond Suez and Gibraltar, was considered as indicating of the differentiation between the Greeks taking the decision to go to another place individually, in order to improve their economic situation, before 1913, and the migrant workers lacking social, political and cultural privileges, compared to the older Greek diaspora, and travelling out of the historically inherited “natural, historical and geo-cultural landscape of Hellenism”, i.e. the areas of Europe and the Near East.⁸ Questions about “historicity” of a Greek presence and the geography of the “Greek world” are often implied in the distinction between “diaspora” and “migration”, including even the use of the adjective “natural” or other descriptions, such as that of “national space”. Hasiotis is a major historian describing the “Greek diaspora” as comprising “the expatriated part of a people which, although settled, in relative permanence, in countries or areas out of

⁶ Wimmer, Andreas + Schiller, Nina Glick: Methodological nationalism and beyond, pp. 309-311.

⁷ Lucassen, Leo: The Immigrant Threat.

⁸ Laliotou, Ioanna: Diaschizontas ton Atlantiko, pp. 128-129.

the *national space*, maintains collectively or individually material, cultural and sentimental relations to the country of its direct or older origin”.⁹ By the description “national space”, Hasiotis understood the Greek state and “all those areas of the southeastern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean maintaining for centuries a stable Greek presence in populous and solid *communities*”, comprising both the “erstwhile unredeemed Hellenism” as well as the “so-called peripheral Hellenism”; the later was composed by people who, after the “definitive conclusion of the process of the so-called ‘national integration’”, still remained out of the Greek state’s borders.¹⁰ A teleology around the Greek state, evident by the term “national integration” (even if preceded by a “so-called” description), is furthermore clear by understanding the Greek state and a relation to it, either as its potential province or as a “periphery”, used for a space defined as “national”, excluding in an arbitrary and *a posteriori* way of organizing space some areas from a “diaspora” because of being part of the “national space”. Scholars like Clogg also excluded Ottoman Greeks from a “Greek diaspora” description, but accepted that there had been some mobility of people in the Ottoman Empire at late 18th century. Clogg proposed the term “diaspora proper” for migration including the “merchant communities” formed since the 16th century in the Balkans or the Mediterranean, but not including the “Greek East”, i.e. modern Turkey, Albania or Cyprus.¹¹ It is questionable in which sense such a geographic differentiation could be useful analytically for understanding the human mobility and all kind of identifications during the long 19th century; after all, leaving aside the blur limits and ambivalent meaning of the “Greek East”, there were places with a great concentration of migrant newcomers also in the “Greek East” of Clogg’s distinction.¹²

The references to a “natural” or a “national” space of “Hellenism” are only part of the problem in the usual Greek distinction between “diaspora” and “migration”. A book on the history of the Greek state referred to the significant Greek migration of the late 19th and early 20th century as being directed towards Australia and America,¹³ mentioning only a role of “Greek merchants of Asia Minor and Egypt” as benefactors, before dealing again with Greek migration, mainly with the

⁹ Hasiotis, Ioannis K.: *Eisagogi*, p. 15.

¹⁰ Hasiotis, I[oannis] K.: *Episkopisi*, pp. 29-30; Hasiotis, Ioannis K.: *Modern Greek Diaspora*, pp. 85-94; Hasiotis, Ioannis K.: *Eisagogi*, p. 16.

¹¹ Clogg, Richard: *The Greek Diaspora*, pp. 7-8.

¹² About the increased human mobility also in the Ottoman Empire see chapter 10, footnotes 49-50.

¹³ Koliopoulos, John S. + Veremis, Thanos M.: *Greece. The Modern Sequel*, p. 205.

current to the United States of America and to the postwar Germany.¹⁴ This is an indication of a tendency to exclude Egypt from any understanding of Greek mass migration. Kitroeff observed that the Greek merchant communities disappeared by the interwar period with the exception of those in London and in Egypt, the later receiving great numbers of people gathered around the Greek “merchant elite”; just after this comment, however, reference was made to the Greek mass migration at the end of the 19th century, directed towards the United States or other places of America, or towards Russia.¹⁵ The same author pointed that Greek migrants before the turn of the 20th century were mainly merchants or people engaged in services correlated with commerce, which took advantage from the geographic proximity of Alexandria or Izmir with their places of origin, as also from the advantages of the presence of a dynamic merchant elite and of the Capitulations, assuring them an important social status and political security. On the other hand, migration to the United States of America was described as a “totally different experience”, on the argumentation that most Greeks went there as unskilled workers and worked mainly as artisans or in industries and mines; as further argued, only a small number of these people were able to open their own enterprise in the first years after arriving there, but that was a first stage of a process of a great upward social mobility different from the more static, old type Greek merchant communities.¹⁶ Besides the merchant communities and the massive transatlantic migration, a suggestion about a third type of Greek migration in the 19th century was made, regarding migrants oriented towards places like Alexandria, Odessa and Izmir and including many doctors, lawyers, or employees and smallholders.¹⁷ At a text in a 2006 volume of the Greek Parliament on “diaspora Greeks”, two authors made a distinction between two types of Greek diaspora from mid-19th to mid-20th centuries: the powerful business families related with commerce and shipping and dispersed in port-towns of the Black Sea, of western Europe and America, of India and eastern Asia, and the mass migration of thousands of families with limited resources, seeking for better luck in Russia and Romania or later in America and Australia.¹⁸ The absence of Egypt from this first description is noteworthy, but later in the same text Greeks in Egypt are mentioned both in the first

¹⁴ Ebenda, p. 210.

¹⁵ Kitroeff, Alexander: *Emporikes paroikies kai metanastes*, pp. 361-363.

¹⁶ Kitroeff, Alexander: *I yperatlantiki metanastefsi*, pp. 125-126.

¹⁷ Ebenda, p. 124.

¹⁸ Kardasis, Vasilis + Harlaftis, Gelina: *Anazitontas tis chores tis epangelias*, p. 53.

group, with merchant families engaged in the local cotton markets,¹⁹ as also in the second, where they are even described as the “most typical” case at the turn of the century.²⁰ Contrary to the usual Greek distinction between migration and diaspora the same authors, both dealing mainly with topics of Greek economic history in their major individual studies, referred to the existence also of branches of Greek big merchant enterprises in the United States of America, including well-known families that were active also in Egypt, such as that of the Benakis’ and of the Zizinias’.²¹ One might wonder whether the observation of another scholar about the Greek presence in 19th century Odessa, that it “probably resembles what we would find in a large American city in the same period”, with the only difference that the Greek community in Odessa “still included comparatively larger numbers of distinctively prosperous members”,²² might be applied about the Greek presence in Egypt, which was not just a community of merchants similar to those earlier formed in Trieste, Marseille or Vienna, but was related with mass migration, as other authors suspected as well.²³ The question, having in mind the different types of Greek migration to Egypt described in the previous chapters, is whether classifications largely ignoring a numerically important part of the Greek human mobility to Egypt reflect of perceptions of the turn of the 20th century, reproduced in later literature as well.

A first point to pose this question is that of distance and the crossing of borders. Criticizing one aspect of “methodological nationalism” and commenting an 1889 text on internal and international migration, two social scientists pointed out that the later “caused inconvenience for the researcher compiling statistics but did not produce different social dynamics”.²⁴ In the case of Greeks in colonial Egypt, a Greek study of 1957 argued that not only could the Greek presence not be described as “colonization”, because of being “individual” and with the goal only of working, but neither was it a “migration” since Greeks, mostly Ottoman subjects, could move freely in the – *de jure*, if not *de facto* – Ottoman Egypt;²⁵ it must be kept in mind, however, that this was an observation used probably in order to disassociate from

¹⁹ Ebenda, pp. 55, 62. About these families compare also: Kalogeras, Giorgos: *Ethnotikes geografies*, p. 40; Papadopoulos, Giannis: *I metanastefsi*, pp. 124-128.

²⁰ Kardasis, Vasilis + Harlaftis, Gelina: *Anazitontas tis chores tis epangelias*, p. 57.

²¹ Ebenda, pp. 64-65.

²² Herlihy, Patricia: *The Greek Community in Odessa*, p. 241.

²³ Trimi, Katerina: *Mia “astiki metanastefsi”*, p. 235, footnote 26; Trimi-Kirou, Katerina: *Dorean i epi pliroimi*.

²⁴ Wimmer, Andreas + Schiller, Nina Glick: *Methodological nationalism and beyond*, p. 313.

²⁵ Tsourkas, Cl[eovoulos]: *Les Hellènes dans l’ intérieur*, p. 14.

negative aspects of colonial conquest, even though Greek turn-of-the-century comments might describe even economic power, real or wished, of Greeks of Egypt as a “conquest”,²⁶ whereas it was not only Ottoman Greeks that went to Egypt, let alone that nationality was far from a self-evident given.²⁷ In 1967, another author, after pointing out that the “Hellenism of Egypt” was almost as old as Egypt itself, with the sea being a connecting link rather than a barrier,²⁸ repeated the argument that Greek settlement was neither “migration” nor “colonization” because Ottoman Greeks were able to go around Egypt freely,²⁹ whereas a third one at about the same time mentioned how most of the Greeks had gone to Egypt during the late 19th and early 20th century without being invited and without a passport, since Egypt had its doors “wide open”.³⁰ Nevertheless, it is questionable whether it was really that easy to enter Egypt, not just institutionally, but also regarding other practical difficulties, especially compared to cases framed as “migration” because of geographic and other “distance”. By 1913, there were 12 steamship companies connecting Egypt to Europe and other destinations, including many Greek or Ottoman ports,³¹ this however does not mean that the trip had been an easy task for all people, not even for those from neighboring islands. At a case of a Cypriot shoemaker, who had left his wife and mother-in-law in Egypt returning to Cyprus due to their bad behavior, as he claimed, the appeal to the costs of the trip might have been just an excuse of him after priests searching for him in both Egypt and Cyprus detected him and asked him to return to his wife,³² but even if this might be a legitimate hypothesis in some cases, it was definitely not a pretext for many migrants from Cyprus making a long, adventurous and risky journey before arriving in Egypt,³³ not always having the possibility to make frequent visits to Cyprus.³⁴ The pattern of a Greek employer pretending of being the father of juvenile Greeks, future workers, peddler and shoe-shiners was common at turn-of-the-century

²⁶ See for example the use of that description in chapter 8, footnote 3.

²⁷ See in detail chapter 8.

²⁸ Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 9. Compare, however, the equally exaggerated theories existing since the 1930s among Greeks in the United States of America concerning a Greek origin of Christopher Columbus: Moskos, Charles C. Jr.: *Greek Americans*, p. 1.

²⁹ Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 151.

³⁰ Malanos, Timos: *Anamniseis enos Alexandrinou*, p. 373.

³¹ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, pp. 87-88.

³² APA - ELIA 189, 1875-1897: letter of the archbishop of Cyprus Sofronios to the patriarch of Alexandria Sofronios, 1/13.03.1897.

³³ See for example the story in chapter 4, footnote 92.

³⁴ See chapter 11, footnotes 204-206.

migration towards the United States of America, Australia, or even south America,³⁵ but was not unknown in Egypt, as indicated by a case of 20 such children, both Greek and Ottoman subjects, detected in just one occasion by the Egyptian police.³⁶ Greek migrants might experience forms of oppression by networks of “*padrones*” in the north American West, “a bastion of coercive labor relations in the early twentieth century”, or in other places in the United States of America with an exploitation of worker’s mobility,³⁷ but even if numbers may differ, there were impoverished carpenters and builders wandering in the interior of Egypt as well,³⁸ or as south as in Darfur, where Athanasios Pantelas, perhaps the same person mentioned earlier as having assisted the British in Sudan,³⁹ complained to the British about the adventure he and eight Greek fellow workmen of him experienced, after having agreed, in 1903, to make some repairs and buildings in El Fasher, but without actually being paid.⁴⁰

A scholar argued that the 19th century Greek transatlantic migration was a new phenomenon exactly for being for the first time a mass migration of mainly young men, whereas the destination was also different from traditional places of the past, such as Romania, Egypt, Russia and western European destinations.⁴¹ The impact of the migration to the United States of America was great at the beginning of the 20th century, when it was estimated that “from 1900 to 1915, close to one in every four Greek males between the ages of fifteen and forty-five departed for America”.⁴² The impact of migration to Egypt, even if not so great, is not beyond comparison. In the 1870s, the number of Greeks in Egypt was greater than 30.000,⁴³ whereas the number of migrants, at least from the Greek state, to the United States of America did not exceed the 3000 during the period 1820-1890.⁴⁴ Around 100.000 Greeks lived in turn-of-the-century Egypt, the number of those having passed from there being probably much greater, since the estimations were based on those detected and classified as Greeks at each time and no calculation could be made from available sources so far about the total number of Greeks having passed from Egypt, even for a short time, as

³⁵ See for example: Marketos, Mpampis I.: *Oi Ellinoamerikanoi*, pp. 34-35; Tamis Myrodi, Anastasios: *Oi Ellines tis Latinikis Amerikis*, p. 15.

³⁶ *Tachydromos*, 30/12.09.1905. In more detail see chapter 4.2.

³⁷ Peck, Gunther: *Reinventing Free Labor*, p. 47.

³⁸ *Tachydromos*, 06/19.03.1902; *Empros*, 01.05.1907.

³⁹ See chapter 3, footnote 11.

⁴⁰ BNA, FO series 371/664: Number 41586.

⁴¹ Kalogeras, Giorgos: *Ethnotikes geografies*, pp. 31-32.

⁴² Moskos, Charles C. Jr.: *Greek Americans*, p. 11.

⁴³ See chapter 1, footnotes 16-17.

⁴⁴ Marketos, Mpampis I.: *Oi Ellinoamerikanoi*, pp. 63-64.

was the case for many.⁴⁵ Greek estimations suggested a number of near to 150.000 Greek migrants being in the United States of America until 1911, even if about 250.000 had gone there in the period 1899-1911,⁴⁶ whereas the US-American archives gave a number of 2308, 15.979, 167.519 and 184.201 newcomers from the Greek state for the two last decades of the 19th and the two first decades of the 20th century respectively;⁴⁷ these numbers do not include those illegally entering the country or Greeks from Ottoman places, Egypt, Cyprus or the Balkans, estimated to be about 100.000.⁴⁸ The impression from these numbers, leaving aside the common ambiguity of who would be considered and officially recognized as a Greek, is that the numbers of Greeks going to Egypt or to the United States of America at the turn of the 20th century do not justify extreme differentiations of migration patterns and that the transatlantic migration was definitively not the first mass migration of Greeks, even if more data are available for it.

The still dominant perception of the Greek migrant in the United States of America as crossing the Atlantic to work in an industry, before managing to become a “successful” American of Greek origin was a real, yet partial picture influenced by the legacy of both the promoted “success stories” of “Greeks Abroad” as also of the “American dream”. Even more than at the case of transatlantic migrants, aspects of exploitation and misery are not often mentioned in later stories regarding the “cosmopolitan” Greeks in Egypt, inscribed in another kind of “success story”, one described by Dertilis – himself without making a generalization, but also without mentioning anything about migrants of another type in Egypt – as “migration of upward social mobility / luxury”; Dertilis mentioned the example of Benakis, who did not started, but actually continued his upward social mobility in Egypt.⁴⁹ As has been argued and showed so far, the social composition of Greeks in Egypt could be compared to a diamond, the bulk of which would be the middle strata.⁵⁰ It was less the wealthier landowners and artisans or the workers, but mainly the small landowners and artisans of Naousa, for example, which went to Egypt and set up enterprises, mainly groceries trading products of their town, besides a mediating role in the

⁴⁵ About the numbers and the difficulties in the estimation see chapter 1, footnotes 7-25. About the non-permanent character of the settlement of many Greeks in Egypt see also chapter 4.2.

⁴⁶ Repoulis, Emm[anouil]: *Meleti peri metanastefseos*, pp. 9, 23.

⁴⁷ Cited in: Moskos, Charles C. Jr.: *Greek Americans*, p. 11.

⁴⁸ Ebenda, pp. 11-12.

⁴⁹ Dertilis, Georges: *Istoria tou ellinikou kratous* – vol. 2, p. 855.

⁵⁰ See chapter 4, footnote 10.

commerce of cotton and “colonial products”.⁵¹ A workshop set up in 1904, with both the owners as well as those working there coming from the Dodecanese Islands,⁵² or a small industry set up by a Cypriot Greek confectioner, the father of the mid-20th century author Giorgos Pieridis, with 5 or 6 workers, all Cypriot Greeks,⁵³ or even spinning-mills such as one formed in Alexandria in 1901, with twenty Greek workers departing from Piraeus to work there,⁵⁴ are just some among many examples in sources of that time about people in small industries in Egypt, besides those working in construction works and in big industries or active in different sort of less glorious activities.⁵⁵ On the other hand and besides workers in industries and mines, Greek migrants in the United States of America included even the famous in “success stories” of Egypt migrants from Pilion, reported for being “successful” owners of hotels and of having founded a tobacco industry there,⁵⁶ let alone merchant families engaged in the cotton market.⁵⁷ There were mainly three categories of Greek migrants to the United States of America at the turn of the 20th century: workers in railroad gangs and mines in the western federal states, workers in textile and shoe factories in New England, but predominantly Greeks in the large northern cities and working not only in factories, or as busboys, dishwashers, bootblacks and peddlers, but often engaged in middle class activities, establishing restaurants, bars, different stores and hotels, either from the beginning or after having spend some time as manual laborers.⁵⁸ Leaving aside that the extent of such “success stories”, from the beginning or later on, should not be uncritically reproduced, it was not less common in Egypt or other African places, where many Greeks initially went to work as manual workers, but in some cases managed, sooner or later, to establish their own small enterprises.⁵⁹

In spite of indication against the absolute distinction based on geographic criteria, the power of the “diaspora” / “migration” models as ideally expressed in Egypt and the United States respectively is evident, also in the power of stereotypes.

⁵¹ Gkoutas, Achilleas F.: *Naousaioi metanastes*, pp. 188-189.

⁵² Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandria*, p. 342.

⁵³ Pieridis, Giorgos Filippou: *Mnimes kai istories*, p. 13.

⁵⁴ *Empros*, 22.06.1901.

⁵⁵ See chapters 4 and 13.2.

⁵⁶ *Empros*, 28.03.1899.

⁵⁷ See footnote 19.

⁵⁸ Moskos, Charles C. Jr.: *Greek Americans*, pp. 13-24. Compare also: Papadopoulos, Giannis: *I metanastefsi*, pp. 54-77.

⁵⁹ For this pattern among workers in the Suez Channel, for example, see chapter 4, footnotes 44-45. Similar cases were not uncommon all over Africa: Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*, p. 45. About other indications of an increased social mobility among Greeks in Egypt see chapters 3 and 5.

A major Greek-American author of the mid-20th century, Theodore Saloutos, referred in the 1950s to the “Egyptian-Greeks” in order to make comparisons to the “repatriated Greek-Americans”: the former, at least those of them Saloutos had in mind, had been “a very influential element” in the places they had gone to as “substantial merchants, druggists, exporters, shippers, or professional people”, the “typical” case being that of “a wealthier and a more cultured person than the Greek-American”, a person who “often maintained a residence on the Greek mainland or on an island, had business ties, and traveled regularly between Greece and Egypt”.⁶⁰ As late as in 2008, Giannaras compared two different kind of recent films, “Alexandria” and “My big fat Greek wedding”, to draw conclusions about “the Egyptian Greek”, representing for him the “out of the boundaries of state cosmopolitan Greekness”,⁶¹ as also “the Hellenism of America”, a “typical offspring of the modern Greek nation state”.⁶² The usage of the description “*amerikanaki*” for a naive or stupid person or “*amerikania*” for whatever considered of terribly bad taste,⁶³ Greek versions of broader European stereotypes, expressed in the context of specific Greek experiences during the 20th century, might be further influencing the perceptions of the inhabitants of the Greek state about Greeks coming from the United States of America. The Greek community in the later remained more populous, in opposition to that of Egypt, hardly offering visible examples in the late 20th century, when the greatest part of them, with exceptions mainly coming from people with a specific economic and cultural capital and connections in Greece, had already moved from Egypt to other than the Greek states. This made even easier their use as a case in producing and reproducing an idealizing past and Greeks in Egypt were preferred for a positive model for many reasons, including that their benefacting activity constituted a major part of their track in Greek collective memory. In addition to this explanation and in opposition to the Greeks in London or even to famous benefactors from Romania, the presence of Greeks in Egypt has been associated also with a better integration in the local “European society”. Rather than the “Levantine” stereotypes that prevailed among non-Greeks or the critical discourses towards “Western” ways, it is the

⁶⁰ Saloutos, Theodore: They remember America, pp. 130, 142, footnote 21.

⁶¹ About the different meanings of “cosmopolitanism”, depending on context, see chapter 2.2.

⁶² Giannaras, Christos: Ellinismos tis Alexandreias kai tou Sikagou. Compare also to: Giannaras, Christos: Ta tria simadia palingenesias.

⁶³ See respectively: http://www.slang.gr/lemma/show/amerikanaki_8941 and http://www.slang.gr/lemma/show/amerikania_2171. Compare to an attempt to explore some Greek stereotypes in: Kirtsoglou, Elisabeth + Theodossopoulos, Dimitrios: The Poetics of Anti-Americanism.

“Westernness” of the Greeks in Egypt that has prevailed in memory. As argued so far, this has not been the result of radically different experiences and composition of the people involved in the two cases.

7.2 Attempts to control Greek human mobility

In 1898 Solon Vlastos, one of the pioneer Greek journalists in the United States of America, commented in a well-known Athenian journal of that time that neither were Greeks in the United States of America necessarily cut off from their homeland nor did they fail, especially those with small enterprises; as Vlastos further argued, Greeks would hardly have any intention for a long-term presence across the Atlantic and would remain Greeks, even when acquiring a US-American nationality, whereas Greeks ought to be encouraged to go to the United States of America, since those of them who were not lazy would succeed in the commerce of fruit or flowers or in confectionery, a prospect preferable than failing in the Greek state due to maladministration and social prejudice.⁶⁴ A mixture of stereotypes about the Greek “*psorokostaina*”⁶⁵ state and the “American dream” might be detected behind such ideas and, at about the same time, a comment in *Akropolis* regarding a contribution for the “Greek causes” made from Greeks in the “innermost parts of Africa”, ended in a suggestion that also “in America all of those who can work and want to work manage to do it”; the point to be made was that, in spite of the general disappointment of the 1890s, after a bankruptcy and a lost war for the Greek state, the “Greek character” remained “indomitable” even in places far away, something that made *Akropolis* to change its initial strategy to dissuade Greeks to cross the Atlantic.⁶⁶ In spite of the existence of such texts, however, or even of stories about “America” as the “land of promise” and the “successful” Greek migrants, common in Greek press of Athens or Peloponnisos,⁶⁷ turn-of-the-century texts and especially since the 1910s decade of mostly successful wars and reforms started to be more critical to the growing transatlantic migration. Similar to discourses produced, for example, in early 20th century Croatia and Slavonia, considering emigration harmful for both

⁶⁴ Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou 1898, pp. 66-71.

⁶⁵ See chapter 6, footnote 154.

⁶⁶ *Akropolis*, 18.07.1897.

⁶⁷ Kitroeff, Alexander: *I yperatlantiki metanastefsi*, p. 141.

individuals and their families as also for the nation, that was losing members,⁶⁸ a Greek campaign was maintained against migration even by *Akropolis*, presenting for example stories of Greek migrants in the United States of America as begging, dying of starvation and being led to suicide or madness.⁶⁹ There is a great number of turn-of-the-century texts describing the few chances of “success” and other problems of Greek migrants in the United States of America or the danger for the Greek nation and the possible ways of limiting the current of migration across the Atlantic;⁷⁰ the influence of a broader and not exclusively Greek discussion on the issue is evident by a front-page text in *Empros*, a newspaper often publishing texts against transatlantic migration,⁷¹ referring to the danger of “depopulation”, the term written in Latin characters.⁷² Even Spyros Matsoukas, a “patriotic poet” often promoted in the early 20th century and organizing tours all around the world so as to collect money for the “Greek causes”,⁷³ initiated in the early 1910s a campaign in different central Greek provinces preaching against migration.⁷⁴ A 1911 text at the monthly journal of the “Hellenism Society” considered migration a much greater enemy even than the Bulgarians, the usual “threat” mentioned in Greek texts of that time, expecting that in the following 20 years, Greece would be inhabited only by old people, consumptive, those suffering from trachoma and from infectious diseases, whereas the provinces it was hoped to be included to the Greek state, such as Ipeiros, Macedonia, Thraki, the islands and the opposite coast of the Aegean, would be depopulated from Greeks and left to Turks, Bulgarians, Albanians and Jews.⁷⁵ If Greek migration currents across the Atlantic and towards Egypt were comparable in many aspects, it must be questioned whether the later had been considered as a destination with similar dangers in Greek public discourse and if it received a place in Greek attempts to control migration.

After gaining control over the Ottoman provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, Italian nationalists emphasized that Italians were the “natural born rulers”

⁶⁸ Brunnbauer, Ulf: *Labour Emigration*, p. 39.

⁶⁹ *Akropolis*, 18.04.1908.

⁷⁰ See for example: Parnassos 13:14, 1890, pp. 216-220; Lykoudis, Emmanouil: *Oi metanastai*; Andreadis, Andr[eas] Mich[ail] (ed.): *I elliniki metanastefsis*, pp. 40-59.

⁷¹ See for example: *Empros*, 16.11.1899; *Empros*, 01.05.1901; *Empros*, 17.06.1912; *Empros*, 17.10.1902; *Empros*, 11.08.1904.

⁷² *Empros*, 12.10.1899.

⁷³ See chapter 11, footnote 175. “Greek causes” were in this context usually the plans for adding territories to Greece.

⁷⁴ *Empros*, 17.07.1912; *Empros*, 20.03.1914.

⁷⁵ *O Ellinismos*, April 1911, pp. 245-246.

and that Italian migrants would not have to “grovel in Latin America” any more.⁷⁶ In spite of the common European fears of “losing members of the nation” when crossing the Atlantic, about 60% of Greek migrants in the United States of America from 1908 to 1930 crossed the Atlantic back to the other direction,⁷⁷ including apparently some of the 45.000 of them who took part in the Balkan Wars;⁷⁸ if some of the later might have just gone to bring relatives or newly acquired wives back with them,⁷⁹ for others, a ticket to Greece paid by the Greek government and other Greek organizations during the Balkan Wars must have been a factor for a decision of a permanent departure.⁸⁰ Regarding Egypt, Arvanitakis observed in the 1920s that the “natives” never had any tendency to migrate, whereas Greeks rarely remained in Egypt for more than two generations;⁸¹ in 1945, the author of an essay on the possible future of Greeks in Ethiopia commented that the local Greeks had the feeling of being transient even more than those of Egypt.⁸² In spite of discourses correlating a Greek presence in Egypt with a destiny since the antiquity,⁸³ such indications further suggest that many Greeks had nothing than short-term plans in Egypt,⁸⁴ similar to Italians; to a 1919 observer, Italian migration did not seem to be permanent in most of the cases in either northern Africa or the United States of America.⁸⁵

In cases of wars, such as the Crimean War in the 1850s, most Greeks departed or were deported from Egypt, still an Ottoman yet autonomous province,⁸⁶ whereas a great number of Greeks, who had meanwhile increased in the following decades, left Egypt during the turbulent summer of 1882, often to return after the British prevailed.⁸⁷ It was not just during periods of war or revolt that part of the Greeks chose to leave from Egypt; despite of attempts by local authorities to prevent them and avoid panic in cholera epidemics such as in 1860s,⁸⁸ in the 1880s,⁸⁹ or in the early

⁷⁶ Choate, Mark I.: *Emigrant Nation*, p. 172.

⁷⁷ Laliotou, Ioanna: *Diaschizontas ton Atlantiko*, p. 148.

⁷⁸ Moskos, Charles C. Jr.: *Greek Americans*, p. 31.

⁷⁹ Ebenda, pp. 31-32. Compare also: Marketos, Mpampis I.: *Oi Ellinoamerikanoi*, p. 34.

⁸⁰ Karpozilos, Kostis: *Ellinoamerikanoi ergates*, p. 31.

⁸¹ Arvanitakis, G[eorgios] L.: *Stoicheiodis geografia tis Aigyptou*, p. 61.

⁸² Petridis, Petros: *To mellon tou Ellinismou en Avyssia*, p. 25.

⁸³ See chapter 6.4.

⁸⁴ Compare chapters 3.4 and 4.2.

⁸⁵ Foerster, Robert F.: *The Italian Emigration*, p. 105.

⁸⁶ Radopoulos, Rad[os] G.: *Eisagogi*, p. 31; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, pp. 246-247, 461.

⁸⁷ *HAMFA ακκ / μ'*, 1882; Skotidis, Nikolaos: *I en Aigypto krisis*, pp. 66-69; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 461.

⁸⁸ Neroutsos, Tassos: *I cholera en Aigypto*, p. 54; Dimitzas, Margaritis: *Periodeia tis Aigyptou*, pp. 262-263; Tsirkas, Stratis: *O Kavafis kai i epochi tou*, p. 60.

1900s,⁹⁰ more or less Greeks managed to depart, temporary or permanently, from Egypt. It seems too risky to juxtapose a transient character of transatlantic migration to a more permanent dispersion of Greeks in Egypt, even though surprisingly many women can be found in sources regarding Egypt of the period examined in the present study: Greek authorities counted 12.355 men and 8051 women of Greek citizenship in Egypt of 1889,⁹¹ 22.006 men and 16.202 women of Greek nationality were counted in 1897,⁹² while the statistical yearbook of Egypt for 1909 gave a number of 35.175 male and 27.798 female residents of Greek nationality in Egypt.⁹³ It is estimated that less than 5% of transatlantic migrants in the first decade of the 20th century was female, increased however to 20% in the following decade.⁹⁴ In spite of such a difference, one has to take into account of the cases of, mostly unmarried young men, which spent some time in Egypt before moving to another destination. The first elected president of the Greek Community in Johannesburg was a Greek that went to South Africa after going through Egypt and San Francisco,⁹⁵ whereas the departure of some young Greeks towards Transvaal in order to seek “a better luck” was an issue reported by Greek press of Port Said.⁹⁶ A Greek diplomat commented in 1913 that migration was almost unknown among Egyptians, but was common among the Europeans of Egypt, often people completely destitute and with no speciality or qualifications to work in Egypt, who did not make it there and decided to go to America via Piraeus or Patra, to South Africa or Australia via Suez.⁹⁷ In the first decades of the 20th century, Australia was a major destination for Greeks via Suez, even if not all of them managed to be granted the facilities to proceed legally from Egypt to Australia,⁹⁸ America, particularly the United States of America, had been the wished destination for some migrants passing by Egypt from different places such as Naousa or Cyprus,⁹⁹ but at their case as well, the process for those attempting to go

⁸⁹ Zannas, P. A. (ed.): *Delta, P[inelopi] S.: Protes enthymiseis*, p. 85.

⁹⁰ *Empros*, 03.08.1902.

⁹¹ *Ypourgeion Esoterikon: Statistiki tis Ellados*, p. 72.

⁹² Tomara-Sideris, Matoula: *Oi Ellines tou Kairou*, p. 24.

⁹³ Ministry of Finance: *Statistical Yearbook of Egypt for 1909*, p. 24.

⁹⁴ Moskos, Charles C. Jr.: *Greek Americans*, p. 27.

⁹⁵ Mantzaris, Evangelos: *The Greek Cypriot Diaspora*, pp. 153-154.

⁹⁶ *Syndesmos*, 24/05.10.1896.

⁹⁷ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, p. 83.

⁹⁸ BNA, FO series 141/486. 3: Exclusion of Greeks from Australia.

⁹⁹ BNA, FO series 141/467: Entry of Cypriots into Egypt, 1915-1929; Gkoutas, Achilleas F.: *Naousaioi metanastes*, p. 187.

legally could last several months and result the stranding of them in Port Said.¹⁰⁰ Christos Tsakonas, considered a “prototypical [Greek-American] immigrant in many ways”, first departed from his village near Sparti to Piraeus, then to Alexandria and only later crossed the Atlantic.¹⁰¹ At the turn of the 20th century, there are tracks of Greeks having settled in Argentina or other places in southern America after having spent some years in Egypt.¹⁰² Indicating is also the story of Savvas Tserkezis who, originating from a village in the southern coast of Cyprus, spent an adventurous life at late 19th and early 20th centuries, doing all kind of jobs in different eastern Mediterranean places, including Egypt, but also in different places of the American continent, trying to take advantage of different networks and institutions and to avoid troubles by following rumors about what was going on in different places.¹⁰³ In 1905, two doctors mentioned as one of the factors causing tuberculosis in Egypt the arrival of poor workers from America, mainly Italians, Greeks, Armenians and Syrians,¹⁰⁴ something further suggesting of the possibility that some transatlantic migrants might also go – or return – to Egypt.

There is information about a tendency of some wealthy Ottoman and Egyptian Greeks to reorient their business activities in the Greek state by the end of the 19th century,¹⁰⁵ but besides this specific portion of migrants there is only sporadic information about late 19th century migrants in Egypt taking the decision to move to the Greek state, let alone of being encouraged to do so: a merchant from Korçë taking the decision to invest the money he earned in Egypt by opening his own clothing industry in Piraeus,¹⁰⁶ or a couple traveling on the purpose of permanent settlement in Greece and having a bag with 150.000 drachmas, which were stolen in the steamship,¹⁰⁷ are some isolated examples detected. There were, however, some voices about a strengthening of the relations of the Greek state and people defined as Greeks out of its limits, i.e. of control by the Greek state, especially in the course of early 20th century. Spandonis, for example, claimed that the Greek state should “supervise” and “direct” its migrant communities in Egypt in order to avoid a decline similar to that in

¹⁰⁰ BNA, FO series 141/467: Entry of Cypriots into Egypt, 1915-1929.

¹⁰¹ Moskos, Charles C. Jr.: Greek Americans, pp. 10-11.

¹⁰² See some examples in: Tamis Myrodi, Anastasios: Oi Ellines tis Latinikis Amerikis, pp. 125, 131, 305, 307, 451, 619.

¹⁰³ Stavridis, Foivos (ed.): Tserkezis, Savvas: Imerologion.

¹⁰⁴ Nea Zoi, November 1905, p. 271.

¹⁰⁵ Dertilis, Georges: To zitima ton trapezon; Hadziiosif, Christos: Banques grecques, pp. 193-199.

¹⁰⁶ See chapter 10, footnote 198.

¹⁰⁷ Empros, 08.06.1903.

Russia or Romania; the proposal was that a “continuous ebb and flood-tide between Greece and its colonies” should be maintained, with the young, jobless and poor Greeks migrating and those who got richer returning with their wealth.¹⁰⁸ Lampridis criticized at about the same time the different inefficiencies of the Greek state, perceived as “nothing but a country of usurers and [university] graduates”, something that had as a result that the current of migration from “other Greek countries”, i.e. from places with Greek inhabitants, was not turned to the Greek state, a “disastrous drain” for it, as he commented.¹⁰⁹ Concerns were made also about the “future provinces” of the Greek state and ideas about the buying of land in Ottoman Macedonia by wealthy “*omogeneis*”, as a way to assure the Greek future control of the region, were also expressed at the turn of the 20th century, even if not followed by great results;¹¹⁰ in late 1913, just after the end of the Balkan Wars, the Cypriot author Nikolaos Kl. Lanitis expressed in the *Nea Imera*, a Greek newspaper of Trieste read also in Egypt,¹¹¹ his hopes that “Greek-macedonian capital from England and Egypt and elsewhere” would return to the newly acquired provinces,¹¹² but it is not known in how far the intentions expressed by people like Kotsikas, a wealthy industrialist of Cairo, to open an industry in Macedonia after the war,¹¹³ were actually fulfilled. References detected concerning a 1914 discussion in the local Greek press on a possible future of Greeks in Egypt indicate of the existence of at least one newspaper, the *Efimeris*, suggesting the migration to the “*nees chores*”, the “new lands”, as the recently acquired provinces of the Greek state were called; a Greek diplomat with a long experience in Egypt, Saktouris, was one of the authors of such texts.¹¹⁴ The Greek prime-minister Venizelos also declared to a Greek audience in Egypt that Greeks should gather at a Greek state with extended borders, giving as a major example that of the half million Greeks of Russia, who ought to be gathered in the Ottoman provinces expected to be gained.¹¹⁵ By 1919 it was commented, perhaps in an enthusiasm not justified yet, that the Greek state was not any more a country

¹⁰⁸ Empros, 04.01.1900.

¹⁰⁹ Lampridis, Ioannis: *Ai ellinikai apoikia*, p. 17.

¹¹⁰ Karavas, Spyros: “Makarioi oi katechontes tin gin”, pp. 104, 198-200.

¹¹¹ See chapter 11, footnote 199.

¹¹² Cited in: Papapolyviou, Petros (ed.): *Ypodouloi eleftherotai*, p. 147.

¹¹³ Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): *Dragoumis, Filippos Stef.: Imerologio*, pp. 108-109.

¹¹⁴ Akropolis, 21.01.1914; Akropolis, 25.03.1914; Tachydromos, 28/13.02.1914; Nikolaou, G[eorgios]: *O aigyptiotis ellinismos*, p. γ'. The specific newspaper where the discussion had started had not been detected.

¹¹⁵ Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 176.

“where nobody came, everybody left, and even worse those migrating rarely returned”, but a place that, with the provinces already acquired or expected to be gained and having a need to be repopulated, would attract the bulk of “*omogeneis*” living “abroad”.¹¹⁶ A Greek economist, Ioannis Tournakis, also expressed his hopes in 1923 for a possible attraction of migrants and their properties especially from America after the end of the period of wars,¹¹⁷ whereas similar expectations were expressed also regarding the wealthy “*omogeneis*” from places such as Egypt.¹¹⁸ It is not clear if the prospect of gathering the mass of dispersed Greeks or a specific portion of them was so successful, leaving aside the people coming to Greece because of various insecurities in their countries or wars. In 1913, Italian rumors about a great number of Ipeiros Greeks leaving Egypt so as to settle in the western Balkan provinces the Ottomans had just lost were considered as exaggerated by *Akropolis*, since it was explained that it was not more than 5000 Greeks, a number that would not alter dramatically a possible plebiscite about the future of the Albanian part of Ipeiros.¹¹⁹ The part of Macedonia gained by the Greek state, estimated as having a Greek 42,6% of the total population in 1912, was not settled with a great number of the Greeks scattered in Egypt or America, but mainly with the Ottoman Orthodox population exchanged in 1923.¹²⁰

The impact of mass migration to Egypt was great in mid- and late-19th century, especially in some Ottoman places largely inhabited by Greeks. A folks song of Kasos, a small island in the southern Aegean from which many migrants went to Egypt, especially during the construction of the Suez Channel,¹²¹ expressed the “complaint” that “if Lesseps was alive, I would like to judge him, for making the desert habitable, and deserting Kasos”;¹²² it is estimated that 12% of the inhabitants of another Aegean island, Samos, were working in Egypt by the end of the century.¹²³ In spite of some sporadic references, no systematic effort was made by Greece so as to attract ethnic Greeks scattered in Egypt and often prepared to move further on, to various destinations. It was the impact of the large wave of the transatlantic migration

¹¹⁶ Dendias, Michail G.: *Ai ellinikai paroikiai*, pp. 153-157, 173-174.

¹¹⁷ Tournakis, Ioannis: *Metanastefsis kai metanastefitiki politiki*, p. 19.

¹¹⁸ Stylianidis, Stylianos St.: *O ethnikos evergetis*, pp. 45-46.

¹¹⁹ *Akropolis*, 24.05.1913.

¹²⁰ Protonotarios, Athanasios V.: *To prosfygikon provlima*, p. 165.

¹²¹ See chapter 4, footnotes 42-43.

¹²² Cited in: Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 137.

¹²³ Moutafis, Giorgos: *I parousia Samion*, pp. 113-114.

at the turn of the century that was felt with greater intensity, with experts from Greece being sent to different countries so as to study and compare the legislation models that had already appeared concerning migration;¹²⁴ the interest in controlling Greek migration was reflected even in Greek press of Egypt, reproducing the worries expressed in Athenian press and the attempts of the Greek government to deal with the growing transatlantic migration.¹²⁵ The first Greek bill concerning migration was published in 1906, after a research about legislation in Italy, Germany, Hungary and France,¹²⁶ providing the imposition of various restricting measures especially on young migrants,¹²⁷ but also stressing that migrants “need not be left unprotected”;¹²⁸ the authors, members of the Greek parliamentary committee on migration, considered that they were dealing with a “new expression of social life”.¹²⁹ Published together with a bill on the control of migration in 1912, the study of Repoulis, then minister of interior, further suggested an active role of the Greek state so that migration would be limited,¹³⁰ but it was only in 1920 that a law about controlling migration was voted.¹³¹ As commented at a 1919 text on migration, the Greek state ought to take measures, so that a number of people, such as those not having done their military service, those not knowing a specific art or science, those suffering from specific illnesses or those of questionable conduct, would not be allowed to migrate and “often be the reason the name of thousands of honest Greeks was maligned due to the misdeeds of a few”.¹³² Having in mind all data discussed so far, it seems that the major novelty was not transatlantic migration *per se*, as a new form of migration, but the attempts to limit the increasing losing of potential members of the nation. The impact of broader European tendencies was a factor making a difference compared to the period Egypt was the main destination of Greek migrants, especially the – often exaggerating – fears about migrants crossing the Atlantic for ever. It can be assumed that it was not just distance that increased such fears, but that perceptions of hierarchies between Europeans and non-Europeans in Greek mental maps also played a role.

¹²⁴ Manitakis, Nikolas: To italiko paradeigma.

¹²⁵ See for example: Omonoia, 20/02.04.1902; Tilegrafos, 21/03.04.1907; Omonoia, 28/10.04.1907.

¹²⁶ Epitropi tis Voulis: I ex Ellados metanastefsis, p. 18.

¹²⁷ See for example the concern about military duty: ebenda, pp. 18-19, 27.

¹²⁸ Ebenda, p. 21.

¹²⁹ Ebenda, p. 1.

¹³⁰ Repoulis, Emm[anouil]: Meleti peri metanastefseos, pp. 104-123, 159-181.

¹³¹ Manitakis, Nikolas: To italiko paradeigma, p. 72.

¹³² Dendias, Michail G.: Ai ellinikai paroikia, pp. 150-151.

7.3 Migration and colonial hierarchies

In the 1966, a major Greek racist author presented Egypt as a major example where a Greek, even if living there from infancy, speaking Arabic, being a Muslim, following what Plevris considered as “the Egyptian customs” and having a common history with Egyptians, would still be “racially Greek”, but could not be a member of the Greek nation without feeling part of the “great national Greek family”, remaining actually “hanging in the air in the interim between the Greek and the Egyptian Nation”.¹³³ Plevris criticized “multiracial states” as being fragile, but mentioned the United States of America as a successful case to the extent different members of the “White Race” were mixed and had the goal of a “broader cooperation”, in order to make profit.¹³⁴ The use of examples from the Greek migration to Egypt and the United States of America was not new, since similar distinctions applying cultural – when not also biological – criteria of superiority existed also in other than the Greek cases or from authors of different political orientation and in the late 19th century as well as in the 20th. Vangelis Skouvaras, a left-wing scholar, mentioned for example at a preface of a mid-20th century book about Greeks in Egypt that they had avoided assimilation because of their prosperity and the low standard of living and culture of the [non-Greek] Egyptians.¹³⁵ These are tracks of ideas existing already in the long 19th century. According to a major late 19th century German perception, while the assimilation of German migrants in northern America proceeded rapidly, in the southern part of the continent their “Germanness” could be maintained;¹³⁶ in Egypt it was similarly argued that the “danger” of “Egyptianization” or “Levantinization” and therefore the “loss” of the German “essence” and language was not great, in contrast to the “Anglo-Saxon setting” where, as explained, “Germanness” was confronted to a “culturally inferior environment”.¹³⁷ It should not be assumed that Greek perceptions were necessarily following German ones, even though similarities or clear influences are common in late 19th and early 20th century texts, a time of extended Greek-German cultural exchanges. In any case, Greek perceptions regarding migration formed part of a European mental map during the long 19th century.

¹³³ Plevris, Kostas: *I kosmotheoria tou ethnikismou*, p. 20.

¹³⁴ Ebenda, pp. 21-22.

¹³⁵ Konstantinidis, Apostolos G.: *Dianooumenes Ellinides*, p. 3.

¹³⁶ Conrad, Sebastian: *Globalisierung und Nation*, p. 238.

¹³⁷ Fueß, Albrecht: *Die deutsche Gemeinde*, p. 49.

A scholar pointed out that it was specifically “the mass migration of Greeks to the USA and their transformation to proletarians in a country considered to be culturally superior” that contributed to a shift of focus “from the wealth and intellectual radiance of the merchant diaspora to pointing out the risks of the nation ‘bleeding out’ and of its poor and uneducated emigrants been assimilated”.¹³⁸ As has been argued, concerns regarding poor Greek migrants in Egypt were of another kind, related to the damaged prestige of Greeks,¹³⁹ whereas fears about losing members of the Greek nation referred rather to middle class Greeks of Egypt attending French schools.¹⁴⁰ A shift against migration was, indeed, correlated with the period of a growing transatlantic migration, but there were critical texts also regarding migration to Africa. A 1908 text in *Akropolis* took position against the migration of Greeks or the investment of their money in either America or Sudan, suggesting instead the creation of conditions in Greece so that not only would a further loss of working force and capital abroad be avoided, but the return of some might be achieved as well.¹⁴¹ Other texts however would make a clear choice, such as an enthusiastic 1904 text of a young author, Angelos Tanagras, on the occasion of his visit in Egypt, where he argued that it was a shame that the current of Greek migrants “runs without reason beyond the ocean, becoming miserable and Americanized, whereas it became rich and Hellenized” in Egypt and as far as in the deserts of Sudan.¹⁴² In 1907, a Greek parliamentary committee suggested that, if the current of Greek migrants could not be completely averted, it should be at least turned to Egypt and Sudan, where Greeks held “the sceptre of civilization and the supremacy of wealth” and always provided willing soldiers and great benefactors, rather than to America, where they “suffer a defeat concerning their nationhood”.¹⁴³ Intervening at the discussion, taking place also in Athenian newspapers, about the possibilities of Greek migration to Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia rather than across the Atlantic, a Greek doctor residing in Port-Sudan gave a pessimistic description of the possibilities for migrants there at that time, reporting about an absolute lack of profitable jobs, with the exception of just a few people having qualifications, such as the ability to speak foreign languages.¹⁴⁴ A few

¹³⁸ Venturas, Lina: “Deterritorializing” the Nation, p. 134.

¹³⁹ See chapter 4.

¹⁴⁰ See chapter 5.3.

¹⁴¹ *Akropolis*, 11.02.1908.

¹⁴² *Empros*, 31.10.1904.

¹⁴³ *Tachydromos*, 08/21.05.1907.

¹⁴⁴ *Empros*, 01.05.1907.

months later, it was reported at the same Athenian newspaper that dozens of Greek mechanics and doctors were arriving to Egypt, but had only a few chances of success because of the crisis and the increase of Egyptian and Syrian antagonists with similar studies.¹⁴⁵ Another Greek from Sudan, in a letter published in *Akropolis* in 1909, tried to dissuade Greeks from going there, arguing that information about great opportunities for jobs there were superficial and that Sudan was definitely not a proper place to turn the Greek migrant current, but rather a place where even the few remaining workers could hardly find a job.¹⁴⁶ Even though some Greeks at the spot might warn about the limited possibilities of finding a job, it was not doubted that being in Africa was not a threat in the same way going to America was supposed to be, because not only of the distance, but also of an explicit or underlying understanding of colonial hierarchies in Greek symbolic geography.

Fears about the assimilation of Greeks existed, but regarded mainly the possibility of relations to non-Greek Europeans. One of the many texts referring to an idealized “cosmopolitan” Alexandria made special reference to the local Greek cosmopolitan bourgeoisie, the members of which might marry to other Europeans.¹⁴⁷ Nevertheless, not all Greeks in Egypt were positive to such a marriage: Evangelos Achillopoulos, a wealthy merchant mentioned as an example of the sensibility and adjustment of Greeks to the “social and religious setting” of Egypt,¹⁴⁸ left his sons big amounts of money as a legacy in the condition they would marry with an Orthodox Christian Greek woman.¹⁴⁹ During his 1895 visit in Egypt, Fragoudis mentioned of the necessity “first of all of good Greek mothers”, especially in “mixed societies”.¹⁵⁰ Therefore and since such ideas were common in turn-of-the-century Greek texts and speeches held in Egypt,¹⁵¹ even if no formal restriction to the marriages with non-Orthodox Christians existed,¹⁵² Greeks had a greater percentage of “endogamy” compared to English, Italians and French in Egypt;¹⁵³ the marriages of Orthodox

¹⁴⁵ *Empros*, 07.01.1908.

¹⁴⁶ *Akropolis*, 17.01.1909.

¹⁴⁷ Navet-Grémillet, Marie-Cécile: *Pinelopi Delta*, p. 317.

¹⁴⁸ Tomara-Sideris, Matoula: *Evergetismos kai prosopikotita* – vol. 1, p. 26.

¹⁴⁹ *Ebenda*, p. 37.

¹⁵⁰ *Akropolis*, 22.05.1895.

¹⁵¹ Compare for example similar arguments in chapter 5, footnote 107.

¹⁵² In an 1897 circular, the patriarch explained that marriages with a person of another faith could be made, provided there was a certificate from the competent religious institution or consulate proving that that person was not married: Sofronios: *Egkyklios epistoli*, p. 17.

¹⁵³ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 14. Endogamy was however the rule also among Italians, especially those of lower social strata: Lazarev, Anouchka: *La colonia italiana*, p. 181.

Christian Greeks with non-Greek Christians in Egypt usually did not exceed an annual percentage of 5% in the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the most usual partners being Italians.¹⁵⁴ Mostly in relation to “cosmopolitanism”, Greek press in Egypt occasionally criticized the intermarriages as also an indifference ascribed to local Greek youth concerning Greek language,¹⁵⁵ whereas marriages of Greeks with French, English, Italians and Germans as part of exaggerated “national” fears were regarded a commonplace even among people of lower social strata.¹⁵⁶ An 1891 article of *Tilegrafos* blamed Greeks and their commercial ambitions, since they would avoid marrying Greek women without a promising dowry, whereas even people of an increased “national sentiment” chose to marry a non-Greek woman on material motivation.¹⁵⁷ Lampridis criticized the intermarriage of Greeks with “other nations” in Egypt, which brought in conflict the “habits” of “Greek life” and those of the “foreigners” and led to the loss of the former, especially among people with a lower education; that would result, after one or two generations, to making their Greek origin indiscernible or even turning their children hostile to Greek “race”, as was further explained.¹⁵⁸ It is not clear if he referred also to marriages with non-Greek Orthodox Christians, but his comment is in any case indicating of Greek fears about “mixed” marriages and their impact to the loyalty to the Greek nation. A 1912 comment at the patriarchic journal also criticized “mixed marriages” in Egypt on the occasion of the funeral of an Orthodox Christian Greek, married with a Catholic Christian Italian woman: the sons of the deceased, who had attended “Frankish schools”, as stressed, wanted to bury their father at the Italian cemetery and it was only by attempts of both the Patriarchate and the Greek consulate that the dead person was buried in an “Orthodox” way. The story makes evident not only the antagonism between different Christian faiths even at a moment of mourn, but also the correlation

¹⁵⁴ The data compared is drawn from: APA - Alexandria: Protokollon Synoikesion tou Patriarchikou Grafeiou Alexandreias, 1868-1892, 1893-1901, 1915-1929 [Record of marriages of the Patriarchal Private Office in Alexandria, 1868-1892, 1893-1901, 1915-1929]; APA - Alexandria: Iera Mitropolis Pilousiou. Kodix gamon (1872-1931) [Holy Archdiocese of Pilousion. Catalogue of marriages (1872-1931)]; APA - Alexandria: Iera Mitropolis Leontopoleos – Katagrafi Orthodoxon 1915 [Holy Archdiocese of Leontopolis. 1915 record of Orthodox].

¹⁵⁵ *Metarrythmisis*, 12/24.08.1886.

¹⁵⁶ *Metarrythmisis*, 07/19.10.1886.

¹⁵⁷ *Tilegrafos*, 04/16.04.1891.

¹⁵⁸ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, p. 51.

made between “mixed” marriages, “Western” schools and the fears about a “loss” of people from both the national and religious community.¹⁵⁹

If these “dangers” were discussed regarding marriages of Orthodox Greeks with European Christians, in the detected 1915 lists of Orthodox Christians living in the towns under the authority of the archdiocese of Leontopolis there is reference about two Orthodox Christians, one from Volos and one from the island of Folegandros, which “illegally cohabited” with Muslim women and had some children with them as well.¹⁶⁰ The problem with such cases was not just “cosmopolitanism” or even “legality”:¹⁶¹ male white German colonists in Africa feared the intermarriages which might lead to the loss of legal, political and social privileges of “whiteness”, especially for people of lower social strata,¹⁶² whereas in colonial Asia, if a European man would not necessarily lose rank when living with or marrying an Asian woman, European women did not even have a choice, ascribed with a role “as the caretakers of male physical well-being and guardians of morality”.¹⁶³ Colonial hierarchies, racial as also religious prejudice were often combined in the case of Greek migrants in Egypt, making it difficult for them to select non-European and / or non-Christian wives, a choice considered as even more problematic than marriages with other Europeans of Christian faith, even if it was the later that were feared, probably because of being more common than the former. In 1919, Dendias commented that the preference of many Greeks in Sudan and Upper Egypt to “native” women had as a result Greek children who were “far from copies of Greek beauty” and “wives of Greeks” which did not speak a word of Greek and could not transfer any such knowledge to their children,¹⁶⁴ it was admitted, however, that Egypt was neither the “American labyrinth” nor the “ravenous Russian melting-pot of people” and that assimilation of Greeks in Egypt was not an “incurable disaster” compared to these two cases.¹⁶⁵ According to a later testimony, Greeks especially in isolated provinces of the interior might marry not only “native” Christian, but even Muslim girls,¹⁶⁶

¹⁵⁹ Pantainos 1912, p. 365. More about this antagonism see in chapter 5.3.

¹⁶⁰ APA - Alexandria: Iera Mitropolis Leontopoleos – Katagrafi Orthodoxon 1915 [Holy Archdiocese of Leontopolis. 1915 record of Orthodox].

¹⁶¹ About the difficulties regarding a marriage of a Christian and a Muslim see chapter 9.3.

¹⁶² Walgenbach, Katharina: Die weiße Frau, p. 262.

¹⁶³ Stoler, Ann Laura: Rethinking Colonial Categories, p. 148; Stoler, Ann Laura: Race and the Education of Desire, p. 115.

¹⁶⁴ Dendias, Michail G.: Ai ellinikai paroikiai, p. 72.

¹⁶⁵ Ebenda, p. 78.

¹⁶⁶ Tsagkaradas, Kostas: Ta provlimata tis xeniteias, p. 97.

whereas cases of “innocent and pure Greek girls” forced to marry Copts or even Muslims and shift to Islam themselves were also mentioned.¹⁶⁷ The narrator at a 1929 novel recalled that “in old times”, apparently the 19th century, Greeks hesitated to bring their families with them especially in the villages of Egypt because of the conditions of life but, since they would not marry [non-Christian] “native women” due to religious restrictions, they sometimes had to take an Ethiopian wife, in spite of the hesitation of many Greeks to marry black women.¹⁶⁸ This hesitation was connected with prejudices about people with a black skin colour and Greek migrants generally in Africa tended to prefer either to bring their wives from their place of origin, immediately after they settled or later on, or to be sent one originating from their own or a neighbouring village or island through match-making;¹⁶⁹ children of “mixed” marriages, for example in Ethiopia, had to go to a distinct school, as they were not accepted by Greek communal institutions of Addis Ababa.¹⁷⁰

There are, however, some cases of Greeks who did not hesitate to mix with the “natives”. According to a testimony of an Italian late 19th century traveler, a Greek blacksmith, who had gone to Egypt in the 1860s, worked as a sailor, as a mason in Khartoum and later as a hunter in the southern provinces of Sudan, having a nomadic life and a perfect relation with locals.¹⁷¹ Paraskevopoulos mentioned of his encounter with two or three Greeks which, according to his descriptions, turned into “*fellahs*” by their continuous mixing with black people in the “filthy villages” of Tell El-Kebir.¹⁷² Tsokopoulos, referring to the shortages of Greek institutions in distant places of Upper Egypt, added his own personal experience, as he went there with a British friend of him and met a person who, even though being a perfect type of “*fellah*” and having no knowledge of Greek, proved of having a Greek origin, had even given Greek names to his children and was moved to tears when informed that one of the two visitors was Greek.¹⁷³ A few other similar incidents are also known, such as a Cretan wearing a burnoose and speaking Arabic and the local dialect, who served as a

¹⁶⁷ Ebenda, p. 103. More about cases of shifting to Islam see in chapter 9.3. Even if Christians, the Copts were usually part of the same category of non-Europeans in Greek hierarchies and, as Typaldos clearly explained already in the mid-19th century, they “did not differ much from the Fellahs”: Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, p. 74.

¹⁶⁸ Arvanitakis, G[eorgios] L.: *Mia tragodia eis to Kaïron*, pp. 20-21.

¹⁶⁹ Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*, pp. 49-50.

¹⁷⁰ Ebenda, p. 68.

¹⁷¹ Cited in: Markakis, Giannis: *Ellines stin mavri Afriki*, p. 39.

¹⁷² Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, p. 465.

¹⁷³ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: *Aigyptiakai anamniseis*, pp. 17-20.

mayor at a distant place in Upper Egypt, but stressed that he was a Greek, or other cases of Greeks that were “Arabized”, according to descriptions, because of marriage with Egyptian women or of their life in isolated places.¹⁷⁴ In 1895, Lampridis mentioned of Greeks that were “absorbed” by “natives” in Egypt, adding however that the “gaps” were “filled” with the arrival of a greater number of newcomers.¹⁷⁵

Even if there were a few cases of “Egyptianized” Greek migrants, mainly people *de facto* isolated from the Greek migrant community, most Greek texts of the turn of the 20th century assured that Greeks had no danger to be “lost” in Egypt since, as the Greek politician Timoleon Filimonas explained during a visit there, Egyptians were “much inferior to foreigners”;¹⁷⁶ it was mainly these “foreigners”, actually the Europeans among them, which were perceived as a potential danger for Greeks in Egypt.¹⁷⁷ Authors like Emmanouil Lykoudis, a leading member of the “National Society”,¹⁷⁸ would write about the difference between transatlantic migration, on the one hand, or “temporary migrations of our fathers” in countries “*omofylous*”, i.e. with many people of the same race, or in countries “barbaric and unexploited”, where the return to homeland was assured and the conditions of life were such, that the “national conscience” and nostalgic feelings to the birthplace were not in danger. According to Lykoudis such places were the Ottoman provinces, Egypt and the interior of Africa as also regions by Danube, Russia and Caucasus, even if it was explained that Russia or Romania had a “stronger assimilating power” because of being “civilized and prosperous” countries. The “mass migration of rural and generally working population of Peloponnisos to the great melting-pot of the United States of America” was considered, on the contrary, as an act of people leaving their country for ever.¹⁷⁹ As Lykoudis further explained, examples preceding Greek transatlantic migration, such as the millions of Germans, French and Italians that crossed the Atlantic, indicated that even people with a greater power, organisation and cultural “capitals of racial endurance” had a limited success in the issue of returning migrants.¹⁸⁰ Dendias considered that Greeks were rather prospering in America as compared to Russia, Romania or Egypt, since they were “formed in manners and customs of a country,

¹⁷⁴ Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, pp. 370-371.

¹⁷⁵ Lampridis, Ioannis: *Ai ellinikai apoikia*, pp. 26-27.

¹⁷⁶ *Omonoia*, 04/16.04.1895.

¹⁷⁷ Compare also to chapter 5.3.

¹⁷⁸ Gianoulopoulos, Giannis: “*I evgenis mas tyflosis*”, pp. 35, 37.

¹⁷⁹ Lykoudis, Emmanouil: *Oi metanastai*, pp. 6-8.

¹⁸⁰ *Ebenda*, pp. 48-58.

which is swimming in civilization”,¹⁸¹ and predicted that Greeks had a greater future in Egypt not just because of geographic proximity, but mainly due to the rare assimilation to the “locals” because of their “superiority over the natives”.¹⁸²

Predictions of this kind were not unusual and, in 1889, another Greek author argued that Greeks would lose their manners and nationhood easier when living between “civilized European people”; following his calculations, if 25 years were needed for the Greeks of Russia or Romania to disappear, perhaps 50 years would be necessary in Egypt if Greek education was not improved.¹⁸³ Before the great current of Greek transatlantic migration and commenting the similarities of Greeks and Germans, which both had the tendency to migrate, to “civilize” other people and then to be assimilated by them, an 1883 Greek author commented that the millions of Germans which had gone to America had the same fate as those Greeks in Russia and Romania, where the Greek power was lost.¹⁸⁴ It was specifically the case of Romania that was often mentioned in Greek texts of this kind of worries as an example to be prevented in Egypt, such as a text of 1914,¹⁸⁵ or even comments of the interwar period, such as one mentioning Russia, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Syria as countries initially “uncivilized”, from which Greeks were deported, more or less violently, after the “natives” had made some progress.¹⁸⁶ On the other hand, there were texts arguing that the assimilation of Greeks in the United States of America would not be easy also because of the different manners and habits of the migrants compared to the US-Americans or even to transatlantic migrants originating from England or Germany.¹⁸⁷ As Tournakis argued three decades later, Greeks in the United States of America were able to resist assimilation as “Southerners” and a “loss” similar to the German millions assimilated in America would have happened only if the Greeks had migrated to a place like Italy; Tournakis was actually disappointed because of the limited influences of the superior, “Northern” civilization among migrants because of a number of factors such as their illiteracy or the great “*paroikismos*” of them, i.e. the tendency to prefer other Greeks for their social

¹⁸¹ Dendias, Michail G.: *Ai ellinikai paroikiai*, p. 95.

¹⁸² *Ebenda*, pp. 77-79.

¹⁸³ *Kleio* 5:6, 1889, p. 84.

¹⁸⁴ *Mi Chanesai* 585, 1883, pp. 2-4.

¹⁸⁵ *Akropolis*, 25.03.1914.

¹⁸⁶ Michailidis, Evgenios: *O aigyptiotis ellinismos*, pp. 32-33.

¹⁸⁷ *Parnassos* 13:14, 1890, p. 217.

relations and services.¹⁸⁸ The report of the parliamentary committee on migration in 1906, however critical it was to certain aspects of Greek transatlantic migration, considered that the assimilation of Greek migrants to the “modern civilization” could accelerate the process of the “civilization” of Greeks through the maintenance of contact with migrants across the ocean and the return of some to their villages.¹⁸⁹ The line dividing the “civilized / European” nations, as often suggested in the present study, was shifting and used differently depending on perspective, goals and preferences of all kind. Migration contributed to this Greek symbolic geography, something that had an impact in policies regarding Greek migration, but also in later representations and even in typologies of a Greek migrant past.

7.4 Summary

As suggested in chapter 7, the Greek presence in late 19th and early 20th century Egypt is both a chapter of a Greek colonial history yet to be written, as also of a Greek migration history, in spite of the popularity of a typology stressing the differentiation between a model of new “migration” and one of an age-long “diaspora”. More than just the limited interest of scholars in specific aspects of the Greek presence in Egypt, this typology can be explained by the Greek symbolic geography of “civilized” and “uncivilized” people and by an understanding of the past as static, especially in the Mediterranean. In the previous chapters, it has been attempted to destabilize the basis of this understanding. The next step is to check how this shifting boundary between Europeans and non-Europeans influenced also the delimitation of Greeks, in Egypt and elsewhere, as also how it limited the possibilities of a meaningful identification of Greeks with Egyptians in Egypt.

¹⁸⁸ Tournakis, Ioannis: *Metanastefsis kai metanasteftiki politiki*, pp. 14-15.

¹⁸⁹ *Epitropi tis Voulis: I ex Ellados metanastefsis*, pp. 16-17.

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“... coming from an island or from Asia Minor, Peloponnisos or Thraki, Macedonia or Thessalia, Ipeiros or Albania, they all meet each other there [in Egypt] and forget their birthplace to the advantage of the one and common [Greek] homeland”

Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, p. 71

8. The “tangible things”: nation and nationality in colonial Egypt

In the 1993 version of his classical study on nationalism, Benedict Anderson referred to the census-makers’ “passion for completeness and unambiguity”, their “intolerance of multiple, politically ‘transvestite’, blurred or changing identifications” and that, according to them, “everyone is in it [...] everyone has one – and only one – extremely clear place [in it]”.¹ For people like Colquhoun, a late 19th century British diplomat and scholar, nationality was the decisive criterion for the taxonomy of people: trying to define Greeks and after rejecting the criteria of race, religion, language, geography or even a combination of them, Colquhoun suggested that a definition of Greeks should include “those, and those only, on whom the consent of Europe has conferred their designation [...] the subjects of King George by law and by no other title”.² An 1899 Greek reporter, having consulted “tangible things”, as he assured, i.e. numbers and statistics, could claim that “the conquest of Egypt from Greeks is proceeding in a solid and systematic way”.³ He was writing about people coming from the “four edges of Hellenism”,⁴ places in Greece and elsewhere, without bothering to explain if the “tangible things” referred to estimates about holders of Greek nationality or to other criteria and in how far the number of holders of Greek nationality, if that was his criterion of defining “Greeks”, was identified to the number of Greeks in Egypt. Even though a national community was increasingly identified with an actual state, or one yet to be, supposedly representing a nation based on exclusivity, nationality was not necessarily identified to national identification, especially as this was perceived by their holders. The need of giving some numbers as an indication should not make social scientists forget that people might have multiple identifications and / or various and even shifting strategies regarding nationality, whereas the later was also negotiated with states and civil servants in different ways.

Referring to the system of the Capitulations, Kitroeff argued that “foreigners of the same citizenship” were unified in Egypt since, “more than a common cultural background”, they shared “common civil rights and privileges defined and upheld on the basis of their nationality”.⁵ Nationality, i.e. the legal status of people in their

¹ Anderson, Benedict: *Imagined Communities*, p. 166.

² Colquhoun, Patrick: *The Modern Greeks*, pp. 459-461.

³ *Empros*, 27.12.1899.

⁴ On the whole description and the places included to the “four edges of Hellenism” see footnote 10.

⁵ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, pp. 2-3.

relation to states, was no doubt an important unifying factor for people coming from different places, but one should keep in mind that it was also not unquestionable, unchangeable or identic to the identification of people with a national community. As argued in the following paragraphs, many people in the long 19th century tried to take advantage of different opportunities through shifts of nationality, even though this was not always correlated with their loyalty to a specific national ideology and / or a state claiming of representing a nation. The main question is to see the different strategies regarding nationality for Greece and its diplomats, on the one hand, as also for ethnic Greeks in Egypt, on the other. As suggested from evidence regarding the criteria of providing or claiming nationality, they constitute just one among many of the unifying factors, which contributed to the formation of a Greek national community in colonial Egypt.

8.1 The “manufacturers of citizenship”

According to an Italian diplomatic report, Italians in Egypt could be distinguished in two great categories, the “Levantine”, who had been in Egypt for many generations, and the recent migrants from Italy.⁶ Regarding Greeks, there are even scholar texts assuring that they had existed in Egypt “for hundreds of years”, pursuing a life having “very little to do with the Greek world within the kingdom [and a culture] out of the past which survived into the twentieth century”.⁷ Most of the inhabitants of Egypt included to any possible definition of “Greeks” in the course of the 19th century, however, were newcomers,⁸ whereas many people living in Egypt originated from areas forming part of the Greek state at that period, not to mention of any other kind of relations with the Greek state. Paraskevopoulos mentioned the existence of Greeks coming “from all the cities, the villages and the towns of both the free and the enslaved Greece”, including “innumerable” from Peloponnisos or a great number from Thessalia,⁹ also part of the Greek state since 1881. In *Empros*, the author of an 1899 text about the Greeks of Egypt, with a great experience in Egypt and assuring of having consulted numbers and statistics, “tangible things”, as

⁶ Ministero Degli Affari Esteri: Emigrazione e Colonie, p. 203.

⁷ Augustinos, Gerasimos: Consciousness and history, p. 105.

⁸ Check also the numbers of migrants in different phases during the long 19th century in chapter 1, footnotes 12-25.

⁹ Akropolis, 30.04.1895.

explained, concluded that “the conquest of Egypt”, a “peaceful” one, was proceeding from Greeks “in a solid and systematic way”: the protagonists of that “conquest” were the “small and invisible workers” coming from the “four edges of Hellenism”, i.e. from places such as Pilion, Peloponnisos, Sterea Ellada, the Cyclades, the Ionian Islands, Macedonia, Ipeiros, Anatolia, Cyprus, Kasos, Mytilini and others mentioned, “in the free as well as in the enslaved Greece”.¹⁰ The “four edges of Hellenism” included places both in and out of the borders of Greece, either in its 1830, the 1864 or the 1881 version. According to the Greek census-takers in 1889, 1831 people from Attiki and Boeotia, 591 from Evvoia, 612 from western Sterea Ellada, 920 from northwestern and 3169 from northeastern Peloponnisos plus the island of Kythira, 632 from Arcadia, 1480 from the Ionian Islands, 8019 from the Cyclades and 955 from Thessalia and Arta were found in Egypt.¹¹ Not less than 54,368 people born in Greece were detected by the Egyptian census-takers in 1907.¹² The birthplaces of people of Orthodox Christian faith living in 1915 in the towns under the authority of the archdiocese of Leontopolis, mainly towns around the Suez Channel, included the Ionian Islands in 27, Cyclades in 56, Attiki and Sterea Ellada in 19 or Kythira and Peloponnisos in 25 from a total of 743 cases, where place of origin was declared,¹³ an indication further confirming the hypothesis that in spite of the predominance of origin from eastern and southeastern Aegean islands, especially in the towns around Suez, there was a considerable presence of Greeks coming from other places, including some in the Greek state.

An important number of people in Egypt were directly related to the Greek state, including people with Greek nationality born elsewhere. In the Egyptian census of 1907, where 54,368 people declared having been born in Greece,¹⁴ there were 62.773 people with Greek nationality.¹⁵ Greek nationality was much in request by migrants in Egypt, a major reason being the advantages provided by the Capitulations. An 1862 quarrel ending with people injured by the use of knives started when “joyful” Greeks dancing in a tavern in Alexandria refused to obey orders they had received to close the shop by Egyptian policemen, demanding that they would obey

¹⁰ Empros, 27.12.1899.

¹¹ Ypourgeion Esoterikon: Statistiki tis Ellados, pp. 19-49.

¹² Lowis, C. C.: The Census of Egypt taken in 1907, pp. 38-87.

¹³ APA - Alexandria: Iera Mitropolis Leontopoleos – Katagrafi Orthodoxon 1915 [Holy Archdiocese of Leontopolis. 1915 record of Orthodox].

¹⁴ Lowis, C. C.: The Census of Egypt taken in 1907, pp. 38-87.

¹⁵ Ebenda, pp. 132-145.

only to Greek consular guards. The Greek consular secretary admitted in his report that the owner of the tavern was an Ottoman subject,¹⁶ but Greek press often mentioned of attempts of Greek diplomats to provide ethnic Greeks held in Egyptian prisons with the needed certificates proving their Greek citizenship, against the mistrust of the Egyptian authorities,¹⁷ with similar incidents mentioned also at Greek diplomatic correspondence, even in the early 20th century, after decades of negotiations on the issue of recognition of migrants with Greek nationality.¹⁸ Nevertheless, Greek diplomats would not necessarily show an interest for any ethnic Greek, leaving aside some special cases. An Ottoman Greek, for example, arrested for a murder of an Ottoman spy, managed to prove his Greek nationality, in spite of the indefinite information given by him, mainly due to attempts of the Greek consul, claiming it was “too significant for a case” for Greek interests to be left in Egyptian courts.¹⁹ There are, however, also cases of Ottoman Greeks who did not try or did not manage to receive papers proving a Greek nationality and were trialed in Egyptian courts for stealing,²⁰ for murder,²¹ or even for cheating different “*omogeneis*”.²² The willingness of the Greek state and its civil servants could be a factor regarding the possibility of providing the proofs of citizenship and not all people claiming Greek protection had equal chances of getting it, even though the Greek state was supposed of representing Greeks all over the world, in theory equal members of a national community. The reasons for the different approaches varied, as also the criteria of defining who would be considered as an “*omogenis*”, a member of the Greek national community.

Admitting that French nationalism and xenophobia might include both an assimilationist and an exclusionist face,²³ Brubaker mentioned nonetheless that the German slogan, applied since the mid-1970s, that “we are not a country of immigration”, having the implicit meaning that Germany was “not a country of *non-*

¹⁶ HAMFA 36.1, 1862.

¹⁷ Metarrythmisis, 26/07.09.1892; Metarrythmisis, 26/08.10.1892; Metarrythmisis, 02/14.10.1892; Tachydromos, 26/08.02.1901; Tachydromos, 22/05.12.1902.

¹⁸ HAMFA 57:4, 1913.

¹⁹ The report was written by the Greek consul in Alexandria on the 7th of August, 1904: HAMFA 69.4, 1904. For more details about the specific story see chapter 1, footnote 3.

²⁰ Tachydromos, 18/31.03.1909.

²¹ Tachydromos, 05/18.10.1905.

²² Empros, 24.08.1909.

²³ Brubaker, Rogers: *Citizenship and Nationhood*, p. 113.

German immigration”,²⁴ was indicating for a difference of priorities concerning the naturalization policies of the German and French state since the late 19th century, the French elite being more confident to the possibilities of transforming the children of migrants to citizens.²⁵ The legal tradition of the Greek state has also been trying to facilitate people considered of Greek origin.²⁶ Regarding late 20th century policies, it has been suggested that being recognized as “*omogenis*” has been “a mode of delimitation of the nation [contributing] to excluding the aliens ‘of foreign descent’ who live and work in Greece from the political and national community”.²⁷ Nevertheless, difficulties in specific cases of people considered as such, but discouraged from moving to Greece for different reasons related to strategies of the Greek state,²⁸ as also the prejudice of all kind even against migrants claiming a Greek origin,²⁹ are indications of the different hierarchies in and the flexibility of the criterion of “*omogeneia*”, i.e. of being recognized as an “*omogenis*”. As suggested through the case of Albanian migrants to Greece, those having the status of “*omogenis*” experienced “almost similar conditions” to the rest, occupying for example disadvantageous positions in the labour market. Nevertheless, being recognized as an “*omogenis*” has been an advantage in acquiring entry and work permits in Greece as well as welfare benefits and the certificate of Greek minority membership or a certificate of “Greek origin” was negotiated for migration reasons, making the “business of certificates of ‘Greekness’” in Albania a “lucrative enterprise” for different agents.³⁰

Providing civic rights, more than correlated to ideology, could be a “lucrative enterprise” also in the long 19th century, especially since Greece became a capitulatory state in Egypt, a place considered as providing many opportunities for migrants. A case much discussed in press during the late 1850s was when some Greek diplomats were accused for providing dead people with Greek certificates in order to facilitate abuses and the usurpation of inheritances; at a publication describing the

²⁴ Ebenda, p. 176.

²⁵ Ebenda, pp. 15-16.

²⁶ Vogli, Elpida: “Ellines to genos”, pp. 15-16, 21-22.

²⁷ Venturas, Lina: “Deterritorializing” the Nation, p. 137.

²⁸ See for example the mid-1990s official Greek policy of containing rather than encouraging the migration of “*omogeneis*” from the ex-Soviet Union states to Greece: Voutira, A. Eftihia: Post-Soviet Diaspora Politics, p. 397. Compare also to Greek concerns about a numerical decline of Greeks in Albania: Kretsi, Georgia: The uses of origin, p. 196.

²⁹ Those coming from ex-Soviet Union, for example, are often considered as lazy and ignorant: Voutira, A. Eftihia: Post-Soviet Diaspora Politics, p. 397.

³⁰ Kretsi, Georgia: The uses of origin, pp. 196-197.

story, the author accused a “band” of diplomats who, assisted by their friends in Athens, became “manufacturers of citizenship and inheritance right”.³¹ Similar accusations can be found at another libel during the 1870s,³² but are also mentioned in different mid-19th century diplomatic reports.³³ The 1893 consul of Greece in Cairo, Nikolaos Skotidis, admitted that people had often been awarded protection, about which Greek courts later found out they could not have any responsibility, remained unpunished and then returned to Egypt to continue their illegal activities.³⁴ Profit was the main motivation and accusations regarding bribing, corruption or protection offered to Greek criminals were often made against diplomats in the towns of the Suez channel area.³⁵ Some Greek diplomats in Egypt complained about the inadequate issue of certificates proving the origin of Greeks in Greek prefectures, a phenomenon which led to the rejection of all the certificates by the Egyptian authorities,³⁶ but it was not exclusively bureaucrats in Greece that were to blame for such issues: at a 1906 interview, a Greek judge with a long service in Egypt mentioned that Egyptian authorities had tangible proof about false certificates, including the existence of a “manufacture” of them at the seat of Greek diplomats in Cairo.³⁷ A story in Greek press mentioned the existence of a racket of people in Greece gaining money by issuing falsified certificates for people living in Egypt, allowing them thus to be recognized as Greeks,³⁸ but another reporter sending information from Egypt a few years later, even if accusing the issuing authorities in Greece, suggested a role also to servants at different Greek consulates in Egypt, which sold certificates.³⁹ Corruption could be related also to bad payment.⁴⁰ As part of its overall critique to the Greek governments, especially after the lost war of 1897, *Empros* added comparisons with the salaries of diplomats of countries with much less citizens in Egypt than the Greek state.⁴¹ Another reporter touring in 1899 Egypt described the Greek consuls as being paid like the last doorkeeper of Choremis and

³¹ Kovvakos, Alexandros: Ta teratourgimata. About the accusations against Spanopoulos compare: HAMFA 36.1, 1858; HAMFA 36.1, 1859; HAMFA 36.1, 1860.

³² Dimopoulos, D[imitrios] P.: O archilistis ypoproxenos.

³³ HAMFA 36.1, 1869; HAMFA 35.1, 1880.

³⁴ Metarrythmisis, 16/28.02.1893.

³⁵ Soutanakis, Ioan[nis] P.: To lefkoma, pp. 179-180.

³⁶ Empros, 03.10.1899.

³⁷ Akropolis, 01.07.1906.

³⁸ Tachydromos, 05/18.10.1904.

³⁹ Empros, 27.10.1911.

⁴⁰ HAMFA 36.1, 1881; Empros, 24.01.1898; Empros, 25.01.1898.

⁴¹ Empros, 09.12.1897; Empros, 04.01.1900.

Benakis, two of the wealthier Greek merchants in Egypt,⁴² whereas in a previous trip of him in Egypt, he had implied the corruption of some employees of the Greek consulate, having a salary of 200 francs and spending about a thousand, while making profit from the “simple Greeks”.⁴³ Some rumors about the corruption of lower consular employees, correlated also with their miserable salaries, could also form part of the usual late 19th century critiques to the political life in the Greek state.⁴⁴ Cromer and other non-Greek observers in Egypt also implied of corruption in many opportunities.⁴⁵ Even if one assumes that part of the mistrust was related to prejudice about people classified as “Levantine”,⁴⁶ these statements form an additional indication to Greek texts.

It was often Greeks coming from poor areas of the Ottoman Empire, especially islanders, that had expectations of being protected by the diplomats of the Greek state, but were perceived from some of them in a way not differing much from the saying of Cromer about “low-class Greeks”, who should “be turned back and baggage” out of the place.⁴⁷ Some diplomats and consular employees received critique for behaving like a tyrant towards a slave, when dealing with Greek citizens in Egypt,⁴⁸ or for being indifferent, especially when it was about Greeks “belonging to the working classes”, those in need of more protection.⁴⁹ A Greek diplomat reported already in 1871 of many Greeks of lower social strata in Port Said, which were not disciplined and were engaged in different – not always legal – activities; as further commented, many of them were people from Ottoman areas who “for better or worse happened to be recognized as our citizens”.⁵⁰ In 1872, a Greek diplomat pointed out that any complications occasionally taking place concerning Greeks in Egypt were caused because of “some people of questionable conduct and questionable nationality”.⁵¹ About ten years later, the Greek consul in Alexandria also mentioned the lower class Greeks that took advantage of the tolerance of Greek consular

⁴² Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, p. 461.

⁴³ Akropolis, 25.04.1895.

⁴⁴ Akropolis, 27.05.1895.

⁴⁵ BNA, FO series 78/2232; BNA, FO series 633/87: Cromer Papers, pp. 828-829; Cromer, the Earl of: *Modern Egypt* – vol. 2, p. 250; Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen: *My diaries*, p. 34; de Guerville, A. B.: *New Egypt*, p. 88.

⁴⁶ Compare to chapter 3.2.

⁴⁷ See chapter 3, footnote 59.

⁴⁸ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, p. 46.

⁴⁹ Empros, 05.05.1907; Empros, 07.02.1909.

⁵⁰ HAMFA 36:1, 1871.

⁵¹ HAMFA 36:1, 1872.

authorities so as to remain unpunished by their illegal activities; some Greek diplomats preferred, because of reactions of local Greeks, to resist to the demands of the Egyptian government and to help Greeks accused for any reason to go away, even though in many cases it was about people who “owed their first registration [as people of Greek nationality] to the tolerance of a consular authority”.⁵² For some Greek diplomats, questionable conduct and questionable nationality were correlated, even if it was about people considered as “omogeneis”.

There are many occasions of protests, petitions and publications in Greek press against Greek diplomats in Egypt, but also cases, when a number of Greek citizens or even Ottoman Greeks protested in a demonstration or signed a petition in order to defend a Greek diplomat against various accusations he faced.⁵³ This was a sign of the importance the diplomatic representation of the Greek state and, consequently, the Greek state itself, gained among a considerable number of people and the broadening of political participation, but it also allowed Greek diplomats to use the ambiguity selectively, in case they wanted to question the legitimacy of the protesters. In 1867, when a group of Greeks signed petitions against a Greek vice-consul in Zagazig, one of the arguments of the supporters of the vice-consul was that the protesters were mainly Ottoman subjects recruited by his enemies, including people which had not contributed economically to the needs of the nation and people of a “weak character” from local Greek coffee-shops, “idle” and “profligate”.⁵⁴ At a similar case of 1880, in Tanta, an accusation for one of the opposing groups was that they were “profligate” people, who did not act on their own initiative, but protested because of having received money and, in some cases, in spite of not being Greek subjects.⁵⁵ At the occasion of an 1888 protest against Greek consular authorities of Cairo, the consular report sent to the minister in Athens described the protesters as “profligate” and “gamblers” led by an Ottoman Greek, running through the streets of Cairo with a Greek flag and instigating local Greeks to protest at the consulate, thus managing to gather many “idle” and “profligate” people.⁵⁶ In 1892, a Greek from Kefallonia was arrested by the Egyptians for “slightly hitting a native child”,

⁵² HAMFA 35:5, 1881.

⁵³ For some examples see: HAMFA 36:1, 1861; HAMFA 36:1, 1867; HAMFA 36:1, 1869; HAMFA 36:1, 1872; HAMFA 36:1, 1880; HAMFA 35:5, 1881; HAMFA Γ42:β, 1888; Tachydromos, 18/30.11.1890; Empros, 22.05.1906.

⁵⁴ HAMFA 36:1, 1867.

⁵⁵ HAMFA 36:1, 1880.

⁵⁶ HAMFA Γ42:β, 1888.

according to the description in Greek press, but the Greek consul did not recognize him as a Greek subject, even though he was recognized as such by the Egyptians. The fact that someone might face such troubles, even when coming from a place belonging since 1864 to the Greek state and recognized as a Greek citizen by the Egyptian authorities, which usually had the mistrust in such cases, indicates the complexity of factors that could have been intertwined with the issue of nationality. The story was accompanied, in the usual, exaggerated style, by a critique to all diplomats sent to Egypt after Diligiannis became prime-minister in Greece.⁵⁷ Profit making, prejudice and attempts to manipulate political opponents were factors co-existing with the priorities of the “Eastern Question” regarding the choices of Greek diplomats in Egypt for giving political rights to migrants, even to people accepted as ethnic Greeks, as “omogeneis”.

8.2 “Just one of many social boundaries”

After an independent Greek state was formed in 1830, the possibilities offered for its citizens grew considerably, limited the initial mistrust of some Greeks to the Greek revolution and turned Greek citizens to a new category of “Franks” in Egypt.⁵⁸ A number of Ottoman subjects, including Syrians or Albanians of Orthodox Christian faith, claimed Greek protection already in the mid-19th century Egypt,⁵⁹ but even as late as in 1946, after these people were more or less excluded from any definition of belonging to the Greek nation,⁶⁰ an author mentioned of “Syrians, Israelis, Albanians, Vlachs” holding Greek nationality in Egypt, groups of contested or non-Greeks, as implied by the comparison to Greeks with a non-Greek citizenship.⁶¹ An early 21st century author argued that Ampet brothers were of Greek rather than Syrian origin,⁶² because they would have asked for the protection of a stronger state than Greece, if they were Syrians and wanted to secure their business.⁶³ Such a view, reproducing the usual Greek tendency to underestimate Greece, presupposes also a direct relation between nationality and national identification, which has not necessarily existed,

⁵⁷ Akropolis, 18.07.1892.

⁵⁸ Hadziiosif, Christos: *La colonie grecque*, pp. 307-335.

⁵⁹ Ebenda, pp. 395-401.

⁶⁰ In more detail about this process see chapter 10.

⁶¹ Tsagkaradas, Kostas: *Ta provlimata tis xeniteias*, pp. 45-46.

⁶² About the issue around the Ampet brothers see chapter 10, footnote 81.

⁶³ Kottis, Spyros: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 109.

even if some Greeks correlated their well-being in Egypt with the fate of Greece. A text sent from Egypt to *Akropolis*, for example, explicated that “Greeks Abroad” were worried about what was going on in Greece also because “the Egyptian appreciates and favours the enslaved Greek thanks to the free one [since the Greek nationality protected] against every violence, injustice, arbitrariness, seizing, disaster of [his] property”.⁶⁴ If civil servants of Greece were not equally positive towards any ethnic Greek wishing to be recognized as a Greek citizen, though, there were also different approaches from the migrants, nationality being just one among many boundaries.

A consul of Greece in the 1850s observed that most of the Greeks in Egypt preferred, if they had the opportunity, to be protected by another state rather than the Greek one, especially by Russia, so as to facilitate their commercial activities.⁶⁵ This was not an uncommon strategy for people in the long 19th century for practical reasons, associated with expectations and opportunities. At the turn of the 20th century, for example, not all people considered as Italians in Egypt were necessarily identified with Italian passport holders,⁶⁶ whereas people under French protection in Egypt included, according to a description, Lebanese, Greeks, Italians or Egyptians.⁶⁷ Critical as usual, Ninet added to the negative characteristics of “Levantine” that they denied their nationality in order to get a protection, becoming a *Heimatlos* English, German, Austrian, Italian, French, or even US-American.⁶⁸ Cromer argued that “the particular Consulate at which the Levantine is inscribed is a mere accident”, to add, however, that the “Levantine” would often “develop a specially ardent degree of patriotism for the country which affords him Consular protection”.⁶⁹ Stefanos Ziziniias was a Chian-born merchant with French citizenship and enterprises in Marseille, serving as a consul of Belgium in Egypt, described therefore as the epitome of “the confusingly nebulous national identities of some cosmopolitan Alexandrians”;⁷⁰ another historian, discussing the fluidity of nationalities and the multiple possibilities of Greeks and other “foreigners” in Egypt, used the expression “ambiguity of loyalties” to describe people like Ziziniias,⁷¹ or Greeks under Russian protection in

⁶⁴ Akropolis, 01.12.1885.

⁶⁵ Cited in: Vogli, Elpida: “Ellines to genos”, p. 264.

⁶⁶ Rainero, Romain H.: *La colonia italiana*, p. 146.

⁶⁷ Ilbert, Robert: *Une certaine citadinité*, p. 21.

⁶⁸ Ninet, John: *Au pays des Khédives*, p. 6.

⁶⁹ Cromer, the Earl of: *Modern Egypt – vol. 2*, pp. 246-247.

⁷⁰ Reid, Donald Malcolm: *Whose Pharaohs*, pp. 150-151.

⁷¹ Ilbert, Robert: *Qui est Grec*, p. 140.

Egypt.⁷² Nonetheless, if some people tried to receive the civil status that they expected to make their lives and activities as easy and profitable as possible, this did not necessarily estrange them from Greek political affairs; even Zizinias had served as president of the Greek Community of Alexandria. This is indicated also at the example of a Greek with an origin from Ottoman areas who had gone to Egypt in 1859, moved to England six years later, was naturalized after three years there and came back to Egypt in 1874. Meanwhile, he had lost his naturalization, as he did not make the necessary procedure in order to keep it when leaving Great Britain but, although he registered himself at the British consulate as a British subject, he retained an intense charity action through the Greek Community of Alexandria. A problem emerged only when he died, in 1906, as his heirs unsuccessfully asserted his British nationality.⁷³ As suggested, to make nationality “the *fundamental* identity mark organizing groups, crowds, and communities” in Alexandria of that period would be “an anachronistic misreading”, since it was “just one of many social boundaries”.⁷⁴ Nationality was not just one of many social boundaries but also a shifting one, since it was possible for people with the right qualifications or connections to change it if conjunctures made it less profitable. This was, for example, the case of a Greek in Egypt, who renounced his Austrian protection because of the problems he faced in his business, caused by the Austrian participation against the British in the First World War.⁷⁵

Wars or changes of rule in the places of origin of migrants caused not only problems of this kind, but also created new possibilities of shifting nationality. In March 1919, a confused British consul in Port Said remarked that he “should be glad to know whether the term ‘Greek’ is held to include such persons”. He was referring to a group of people from Kastellorizo, a small island of the southeastern Aegean taken over by the Italians after the 1911 war against the Ottomans, who arrived in Egypt in 1918 with the goal of moving further to Australia. In this example, it is clear that “Greek” referred to a holder of Greek nationality, but the people in question were ethnic Greeks with permits issued by the French authorities, who had taken the control of the island during the First World War. The puzzled diplomat received and followed instructions and issued visas to those considered as “local subjects” or

⁷² Ilbert, Robert: *Alexandrie, 1830-1930*, p. 91.

⁷³ For this story see: Hanley, Will: *Foreignness and Localness*, pp. 229-230.

⁷⁴ Ebenda, p. 65.

⁷⁵ BNA, FO series 141/467: Sevastopoulo. Nationality and Estate.

possessing French passports, but not to those described as “Hellenic subjects”.⁷⁶ At a period of wars and changes of rule over territories, from the perspective of a bureaucrat and even though it was a time of increasing institutionalization and of attempts to control migration, nationality could be interpreted in different ways. There is to my knowledge no statistic with accurate numbers about how many Greeks claimed of being protected by other countries or were recognized as such. One statistic is giving a piece of information about Egypt in the early 1920s, suggesting that 2422 people “of Greek race” were British subjects and 1625 of them Italian subjects;⁷⁷ probably some of the Italian subjects were people from the Dodecanese Islands, ruled by the Italians after the Italian-Turkish war of 1911. Nevertheless, as suggested by the example of the migrants from Kastellorizo, not all Greeks that could provide papers suggesting protection from a state other than Greece or the Ottoman Empire managed to be protected from that state, especially when they migrated to Egypt or elsewhere.

Stories of Greeks, Ottoman subjects by birth, but naturalized as British subjects, can be found in British archives of Egypt already in the 1860s and 1870s.⁷⁸ Up to the mid-19th century, a main group of Greeks claiming protection by the British authorities in Egypt was that of the Ionian Greeks, as the Ionian Islands were ruled by the British. The possibilities offered by the status of the Ionian Islands actually attracted merchants from the coast opposite to Corfu and the other Ionian Islands; in 1858, the Greek consul in Corfu observed that the local merchants were mostly Jews or Christians that had gone there during 19th century from Ipeiros.⁷⁹ In 1857, the British consul of Alexandria described a case of the representative of a merchant house in Egypt born in an Ionian island, but proved to be a person not entitled to the Ionian protection and not having done the necessary formalities to become one.⁸⁰ British protection was asked from Ionian Greeks in the case of disturbances in the Upper Egypt, as the British Consul explained in 1863.⁸¹ By that year, the Ionian Islands were offered to Greece and an issue emerged about the protection of Ionian Greeks in Egypt, especially those not considered as worth of being further protected: as a British diplomat reported, while some of them, related with merchant houses of

⁷⁶ BNA, FO series 141/486.3: Exclusion of Greeks from Australia.

⁷⁷ Ministère des Finances: *Annuaire Statistique de l' Egypte 1923-1924*, p. 35.

⁷⁸ BNA, FO series 78/1983; BNA, FO series 78/2347; BNA, FO series 78/2349.

⁷⁹ GAK – Corfu: *Elliniko Vasiliko Proxeneio* 22, 2842.

⁸⁰ BNA, FO series 78/1316.

⁸¹ BNA, FO series 78/1754.

London, Liverpool or Manchester, were “men of the highest respectability” and people who “deplore deeply the chance of losing British protection”, a greater number of others was described as “turbulent” people who often brought “discredit to the Consulate”.⁸² Even if Greeks claimed protection from different countries, criteria related to wealth and social status might also enter the game as far as the priorities of the British, for example, were concerned. The frequent complaints of Cypriot Greeks regarding the British protection of Cypriots travelling out of Cyprus, especially to Egypt, with claims that the British were interested more in collecting money than in protecting Cypriots,⁸³ indicate of a similar selective priority regarding the protection provided, at least in as far as the unclear legal situation of the island continued. Only in 1927 was full British citizenship given to Cypriots of Egypt, under specific preconditions, such as a minimum period spent in Cyprus.⁸⁴

Things were made complicated not just because of the shifts of nationality of individuals or of the changes of status in territories controlled by the British, but also because of the addition of some Ottoman territories to the Greek state in 1881, areas from which a large number of migrants in Egypt were coming from, such as Pilon, and the initial unwillingness of the Egyptian authorities to recognize these people as Greek citizens.⁸⁵ An agreement was reached in 1890, when Egyptians accepted as a major criterion for the recognition of Greek citizens as such in Egypt the Greek-Ottoman arrangement of 1869: according to this arrangement, those already possessing Greek nationality would be recognized as such, but since that time no Ottoman subject would be allowed to get another nationality or to be recognized as a holder of a non-Ottoman nationality in the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the discussion about the number of migrants to be recognized continued also after the 1890 agreement, since the Greek and Egyptian lists provided considerably different numbers.⁸⁷ A new decree was issued in June 1900 after negotiations in the 1890s,⁸⁸ but further complications arose in the 1910s, since the expansion of the Greek state

⁸² BNA, FO series 78/1755.

⁸³ Since 1878, Cyprus was ruled from the British, even if the island formally remained Ottoman until the First World War. For some complaints of the kind described see: Salpigx, 30.07.1888; Salpigx, 11.07.1892; Foni tis Kyprou, 29/10.08.1897; Salpigx, 17.05.1907.

⁸⁴ BNA, FO series 141/511.1: Annexation of Cyprus. Nationality and Treatment of Cypriots; Aimilianidis, Achilleas: *To zitima tis ithageneias*.

⁸⁵ Kerkinos, Pantelis E.: *I elliniki ithageneia*, pp. 30-35.

⁸⁶ *Ebenda*, pp. 35-40.

⁸⁷ Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 188.

⁸⁸ Tachydromos, 03/15.02.1895; Scott, James Harry: *The law*, pp. 106-107.

increased the disputed cases and created new lists of recognized Greeks in Egypt to be discussed.⁸⁹ According to the Greek consul in Alexandria in 1913, there were 30.000 Greek citizens not recognized as such by the Egyptian authorities,⁹⁰ whereas British diplomats in Egypt faced questions due to the new change of the Greek borders in 1914.⁹¹ Different issues of disputed citizenship of Greeks originating from ex-Ottoman areas are mentioned as existing as late as in 1930.⁹²

In spite of the importance of Greek nationality or, ideally, of protection from another capitulatory state, there are stories about Greeks who, in order to take advantage from legal loopholes, might even argue that they were Ottoman subjects.⁹³ In some cases, people in Egypt used a possible repudiation from their Greek civil rights as an ultimate means to put pressure to Greek diplomats.⁹⁴ In an 1891 speech in the Greek parliament Georgios Filaretos, a member of the parliament famous for his critic to monarchy, criticized the Greek government for indifference that drove many “*omogeneis*” in Egypt to change their nationality.⁹⁵ For a state, that still strived to convince of being “European” enough and attract “future citizens” to its political projects, such a shift, even if often a legal strategy rather than a political choice, was a serious damage of status.

8.3 Summary

As argued in the present chapter, in spite of the existence of an independent state, which claimed of representing Greeks allover the world, policies of providing nationality were not always based on this perception, but included corruption, prejudice and a mistrust of some diplomats regarding Greek migrants of lower social strata. On the other hand, shifts of nationality were not necessarily correlated with identification to a national ideology, but also with attempts of migrants to take advantage from different possibilities and loopholes. It remains to explore the ways a Greek national community in Egypt was formed, through a unifying and excluding at

⁸⁹ Assabghy, A. + Colombani bey, E.: *Les Questions de Nationalité*, pp. 67-84; Kerkinos, Pantelis E.: *I elliniki ithageneia*, pp. 76-162.

⁹⁰ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, pp. 69-70.

⁹¹ BNA, FO series 141/587.3: *Nationality of natives of Ottoman territories ceded to Greece*.

⁹² Souloyannis, Euthymios: *I thesi*, p. 49.

⁹³ See for example: Akropolis, 18.07.1892; Tilegrafos, 04/16.09.1898; Deschamps, Gaston: *Stous dromous tis Mikrasias*, pp. 64-65; Kulukundis, Elias: *The Feasts of Memory*, pp. 64-67.

⁹⁴ HAMFA 36:1, 1869; HAMFA 36:1, 1862; Afriki, 20.05.1876.

⁹⁵ Filaretos, Georgios N.: *To Aigyptiakon Zitima*, p. 19.

the same time process, both in discourses and social practice, regarding some migrant institutions and cultural expressions increasingly perceived as national.

9. A “Greek Church” in Egypt: religious beliefs and identification to the Greek nation

Ferdinandos Oddis was born in Venice in 1836 and spent his life in Egypt since the late 1860s;¹ he was an author of many texts in Greek language and was included to the Greeks of Egypt with no objection detected in available sources, described by Tsokopoulos as an “Italian in origin and religion”, but a “Greek in language and heart”,² a characterization it seems he accepted himself.³ Having in mind the antagonism of Catholic and Orthodox Christian institutions regarding secular issues and identifications, also in Egypt,⁴ one might be surprised by the case of Oddis, an “Italian in religion” accepted as a Greek. So strong is the identification of Orthodox Christians and Greeks, especially regarding Greek migrant communities, that even at a recent Greek scholar text, “Greek diaspora” was defined as consisting of “the Orthodox Christians living abroad who are considered (or consider themselves) as ‘of Greek descent’”.⁵ The possibility, that non-Orthodox Christians, or even of non-Christians, could also be identified to different definitions of “Greekness”, was hardly questioned. Benedict Anderson suggested in the 1993 edition of his book that “nationalism has to be understood by aligning it, not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which – as well as against which – it came into being”.⁶ In the following paragraphs, it is attempted to examine whether and in which ways the Orthodox Christian religious faith had been a factor regarding the identification of the members of a Greek national community, particularly in the context of migrant communities, during the long 19th century, as also to examine whether people of Jewish faith, for example, could also be considered as part of the Greek national community.

In June 1918, a doctor speaking at the inauguration of the Asia Minor Association of Alexandria stressed that there were even Turkish-speaking, or Catholics and Protestants, among the local “real Greeks”. Even race was not an absolute criterion, it was explained, since no nation was formed by one and only race. According to the speaker, himself originating from a town not far from Izmir, it was

¹ Compare: *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1894, pp. 361-362; Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, p. 351.

² Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: *Aigyptiakai anamniseis*, p. 48.

³ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, p. 96.

⁴ See chapter 5.3.

⁵ Venturas, Lina: “Deterritorializing” the Nation, p. 125.

⁶ Anderson, Benedict: *Imagined Communities*, p. 12.

patriotism that was the decisive criterion for the participation to the nation.⁷ It was not always easy to evaluate “patriotism” but, as often in proclamations promoting “national consciousness” rather than other factors of defining a nation,⁸ this was part of an attempt to include as many people possible in the “future citizens” of the Greek state. Egypt, with a great Muslim population, was a place for which no Greek territorial demands were at stake, but where many people originating from contested provinces had gone during the long 19th century. Much material exists making it possible to explore some of the ways religious faith and national identification were correlated and in how far proclamations of equality of “future citizens”, or even of people already having a Greek nationality, but with a different than Orthodox Christian faith, were reflected in social practice, for example in the participation to common institutions. Orthodox Christian religious faith and Greek national identification are often identified by authors referring to the Greeks of Egypt;⁹ it is not uncommon to read that “differences in religion, tradition and perceptions about civilization” made the assimilation of local Greeks difficult,¹⁰ or impossible because of the “insuperable wall of religion”,¹¹ or even that a distinct “Arab-Muslim world” could not, because of its language and religion, absorb the “[Greek] minority with its own traditions”.¹² An important question in the present chapter is also whether the “wall of religion” was always “insuperable” and, in case it was not so, what the reaction towards those choosing to cross the “wall” could have been.

9.1 The “guardian of religion” and the “guardian of nation”

Whereas the term “community” is often used to describe different kind of institutions or concepts, Greek communal institutions in Egypt should not be confused with the communities functioning as part of the Ottoman administrative and financial system;¹³ in opposition to the later, those in Egypt were responsible only for

⁷ Krendiropoulos, M[iltiadis]: *Patriotismos kai topikismos*, p. 8.

⁸ See for example: Skopetea, Elli: *Oi Ellines kai oi echthroï tous*, p. 13. Compare to the definition of Greeks given by Venizelos, in chapter 1, footnote 53.

⁹ See just some examples: Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias*, p. 159; Souloyannis, Euthymios: *I thesi*, p. 19; Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I Elliniki Koinotita tou Kaïrou*, p. 30; Kottis, Spyros: *I Aigypotos ton Ellinon*, p. 59, footnote 1.

¹⁰ Markantonatos, L[eonidas] G.: *Ta en Aigypoto ellinika ekpaideftiria*, p. 50.

¹¹ Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigypotos ton Ellinon*, p. 388.

¹² Malanos, Timos: *Anamniseis enos Alexandrinou*, p. 360.

¹³ For a historical overview see: Konortas, Paraskevas: *From Tâ'ife to Millet*, pp. 169-179.

organizing educational, religious or charity needs of the migrants and they were institutions of Greek private law, i.e. without a right of the Egyptian authorities to intervene in any communal issue.¹⁴ The Greek Community of Alexandria was formed in 1843 and was initially named Greek-Egyptian or Greek interchangeably;¹⁵ the first regulation was conducted in 1854 and defined its responsibility as regarding “national establishments” such as the church, the hospital and the schools of the “*omogeneis*” of Orthodox faith,¹⁶ with the Greek consul having a jurisdiction and a right of intervention.¹⁷ This right was questioned in the early 1860s, with various testimonies referring to an attempt of the patriarch to profit from communal controversies and gain control over the group of merchants in power in communal affairs; after a period of upheaval, including disputed elections or even marches of men armed with clubs and headed by clericals, the merchants related to the Greek consulate retained the control.¹⁸ At an 1860 report Rizos, the Greek consul in Alexandria, suggested that Greek authorities should not intervene “actively”, but rather “admonish” and exercise a “moral influence”, facilitating a compromise. Rizos expressed the opinion that the communal institutions neither could nor should be subjected under the “local authority”, whereas it would also not serve Greek interests to pose them under the jurisdiction of the Greek state alone; what he proposed was to promote Greek influence and prevent the dangers of an “estrangement” of Orthodox Christians that were not of Greek nationality, but were accepted in communal institutions, preventing a connection of the high clergy to the Russian diplomacy or an intervention by the Egyptian authorities. Having such priorities Rizos, *ex officio* president of the Greek community, argued that the name Greek-Egyptian initially given to it was out of sense, suggesting as a title rather a Community of Christians of the Eastern doctrine which, as he expected, would allow Greek diplomats retain their protecting rights, but would also satisfy the clergy and the local authorities without damaging Greek interests.¹⁹ By 1870, after a further decade of turbulence and when Sofronios became the patriarch, the relations between the patriarchic and communal sides were

¹⁴ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, pp. 16-17; Souloyannis, Euthymios: *I thesi*, pp. 43-44.

¹⁵ Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias*, p. 47.

¹⁶ *Ebenda*, p. 29.

¹⁷ *Ebenda*, p. 33.

¹⁸ *Grafeio tis en Alexandreia Ellinaigyptiakis Koinotitos: Ypomnima peri tis en Alexandreia*; Unknown author: *Ta en Alexandreia*; Kitroeff, Alexander: *The transformation*, pp. 239-242.

¹⁹ HAMFA 76:1α, 1860.

improved.²⁰ In 1888, the Community was called Greek,²¹ the Greek consul of Alexandria always being its honorary president.²² Any people recognized as “*omogeneis*” might become members of the communal institution, without any provision regarding their nationality, until 1919, when Greek nationality was considered necessary for those having the right to vote or to be eligible, whereas it was also clarified that women could vote, but not be elected.²³

In 1856, a Greek-Orthodox Community or Greek Community of Orthodox was formed in Cairo and Orthodox Christian “*omogeneis*” of different nationalities could participate.²⁴ Communal institutions were also formed in other towns of Egypt during the second half of the 19th century and, although Greek authorities often had a decisive role from the beginning, it was usually by the turn of the century that their relation to the Greek state was confirmed through regulations recognized by the Greek state.²⁵ In Mansourah, a community was formed in 1860, but its new regulation was approved by the Greek state in 1892, whereas further reorganization took place after the arrival of Saktouris as vice-consul in the area, in 1901.²⁶ In Tanta, some first forms of communal organization are mentioned in the 1870s and a regulation existed by 1880, but it was only with the modifications of 1905 that the recognition came from the Greek government.²⁷ In Kafr El-Zayyat, a local Community of the Orthodox was formed in 1872, but was recognized with a Greek royal decree in 1901, renamed as Greek Community of the Orthodox.²⁸ In Mahallah El-Kubra, a first regulation of a communal institution was written in 1890, but a version of it was approved by the Greek government only in 1910.²⁹ In Shibin El-Kawm, an Orthodox Greek Community was formed in 1886, accepting as members people described as

²⁰ Kipiadis, Georgios I.: *Anaskevi*; Unknown author: *Ta kata tin A.M. ton Patriarchin Alexandreias*; HAMFA 36:1, 1867; HAMFA 76:1, 1868; HAMFA 36:1, 1868; HAMFA 76:1, 1870; Radopoulos, Rad[os] G.: *Eisagogi*, pp. 32-36; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1*, pp. 248-253; Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias*, pp. 271-273; Lekkou, Pantelis K.: *Alexandria 1858-1870*, pp. 990-1028; Lekkou, Pantelis K.: *O apo Konstantinoupoleos*, pp. 31-49.

²¹ Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias*, p. 47.

²² Ebenda, p. 50.

²³ Ebenda, pp. 58-59.

²⁴ Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I Elliniki Koinotita tou Kaïrou*, pp. 28, 36, 40-55.

²⁵ About the early 20th century changes in the Greek Community of Cairo see chapter 10, footnotes 95-97.

²⁶ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1*, pp. 291-294.

²⁷ Ebenda, pp. 306-310.

²⁸ Diakofotakis, Ioannis: *Istoria tis ellinikis paroikias Kafr El-Zayyat*, pp. 17-20.

²⁹ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1*, pp. 321-322.

“*omogeneis*” and “*omodoxoi*”, i.e. people of the same faith,³⁰ whereas it was also considered necessary that a “Greek in origin” priest would be financed, responsible for religious and national celebrations.³¹ In Zagazig, a Greek Community was formed in 1870, but only in 1905 was its reformed status recognized with a Greek royal decree;³² its regulation considered as potential members all “*omogeneis*” Orthodox Christians of the city and the surrounding villages.³³ In Port Said, a Greek Community was formed in 1865;³⁴ in 1879, both citizens of the Greek state and other Greeks, all Orthodox members of the local community, as explained by the vice-consul, signed in petitions concerning communal issues and, in the communal regulation attached with the petitions, it was explained that members could be those “Greeks in origin” settled in the city except those having a “European nationality”, it was provided, however, that at least 10 among the candidates in the elections should be of Greek nationality.³⁵ Still in 1901, the Greek Orthodox Community in Port Said was consisted by all those accepted as “*omogeneis*” and “*omothriskoi*”, i.e. people of the same religion, if permanently settled in Port Said.³⁶ In Suez, some kind of communal organization of Greeks existed since 1870, but a regulation of a Greek Community was drafted in 1888.³⁷ In Minya, a first regulation of a Greek communal institution was written in 1885, but was approved with a royal degree only in 1893; the institution was posed from the beginning under the protection of the Greek government and under the spiritual jurisdiction of the patriarch, who had also received, approved and validated its regulation,³⁸ whereas the 1894 regulation of the Greek Orthodox Community of Minya provided as possible members “the Orthodox, Greeks in origin, who are settled in Minya”.³⁹ In Asyut, a Greek Community was formed in 1892 and the regulation was immediately approved, since the Greek vice-consul was coordinating the initiative from the beginning.⁴⁰ As south as in Fayyum, the regulation of the local

³⁰ Orthodoxos Elliniki Koinotita en Shubin El-Kawm, Kanonismos, p. 3, article 1.

³¹ Ebenda, p. 11, article 23. The 25th of March, the day the independence of the Greek state is officially celebrated, was mentioned as one such occasion: ebenda, p. 14, article 32.

³² Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, pp. 310-313.

³³ According to article 1 of the 1905 regulation included in: Elliniki en Zagazikio Koinotis: Apologismos.

³⁴ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, pp. 295-302.

³⁵ HAMFA 88:5, 1879.

³⁶ According to article 1 of the regulation published in: Syndesmos, 12/25.03.1901.

³⁷ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, pp. 302-306.

³⁸ Firippidis, Nikolaos S.: Istorikon simeioma, p. 154; Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, pp. 328-333.

³⁹ GCM B', 1894-1935, p. 4, article 1.

⁴⁰ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, pp. 335-337.

Greek Community was recognized by Greek authorities in 1899.⁴¹ Even though Greek Communities in Egypt were supposed of having responsibility only about people of Greek nationality and the specific issue formed part of the complexities between the initial and the approved regulations, the participation of people with another nationality was tolerated by Egyptian authorities even by the beginning of the 20th century.⁴² Religious beliefs, sometimes clearly, sometimes implicitly, were an important criterion for defining potential members, even though the communal institutions were secular.

Besides other criteria of origin and religious faith, social stratification and property were also relevant, especially for the leading positions of communal institutions. In the case of Alexandria, the regulation of 1887 defined as potential members with the right to vote only those paying at least 200 piastres pro year; depending on the sum annually paid, each member might have from two up to four votes, whereas only people paying more than 500 piastres could be elected.⁴³ In Shibin El-Kawm, an 1886 regulation provided for an annual contribution of 12 francs.⁴⁴ In Port Said, only those paying more than 10 francs per year were eligible, according to an 1879 regulation,⁴⁵ while a regulation of 1901 considered as possible members those paying more than 12 francs annually and as eligible those paying more than 24.⁴⁶ In Ismailia, the regulation of 1903 provided that members which would be allowed to vote should offer at least 12 golden francs annually, whereas eligible could be only people of a specific property, education or social status.⁴⁷ Such limitations in the participation at the communities and especially at its direction had as a result a relatively small number of members, especially if the total number of Greeks in each town is concerned. In Cairo, with a Greek population of about 20.000,⁴⁸ the formative assembly of the reformed Greek Community⁴⁹ in 1904 had about 500 participants⁵⁰

⁴¹ Ebenda, pp. 337-340.

⁴² Mavris, G[eorgios] N.: *Ypomnima*, p. 3.

⁴³ Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias*, pp. 51-53.

⁴⁴ *Orthodoxos Elliniki Koinotita en Shibin El-Kawm, Kanonismos*, p. 3, article 1.

⁴⁵ *HAMFA* 88:5, 1879.

⁴⁶ A copy of the regulation with the specific provisions mentioned in article 8 and 14 was published in: *Syndesmos*, 12/25.03.1901 and *Syndesmos*, 15/28.03.1901.

⁴⁷ A copy of the regulation was found in: *HAMFA* 57:8, 1913. For the provisions mentioned here see articles 14 and 15.

⁴⁸ The number is mentioned in: Politi, Villy N.: *Elliniki Koinotita*, p. 22. Compare also to the numbers of different estimations mentioned in chapter 4, footnotes 15-25.

⁴⁹ See chapter 10, footnotes 95-97.

⁵⁰ *GCC Praktika Genikon Synelefsion* Z1, 23.03.1903-5.07.1932, p. 47.

and only 658 Greeks were members of the Greek Community in 1905,⁵¹ whereas the Greek consul presiding a meeting of 1910 expressed his regret for the presence of not more than 30 or 40 of the members in the assemblies, with the exception of elections, when usually more than half appeared.⁵² Even in Alexandria, the communal institution was founded by just 38 persons in 1843⁵³ and, later on, when the number of Greeks in Alexandria increased considerably, in spite of demands of broadening the participation in communal institutions,⁵⁴ very few could afford paying the contribution, as Politis commented, giving a number of 296 members.⁵⁵ Other aspects could also play a role, at least in theory, but having some property, being of Orthodox Christian religious faith and considered as an “*omogenis*” were the *sine qua non* conditions for male migrants to become a member of Greek communal institutions in late 19th and early 20th century Egypt. Religious faith was therefore considered as a criterion of identification to the nation and its institutions, as communal institutions were perceived by that time.

Writing in 1996 about a “Balkan mentality”, Kitromilides argued that national confrontations entered church affairs only in the 19th century, but that “the official church never could have conceived of such a programme because this was entirely beyond its own theological and canonical terms of reference”.⁵⁶ Leaving for the moment aside the question of how much the official church was involved in national confrontations of the long 19th century, it should be pointed that, during a triumphant period for the “principle of nationalities” in the Balkans, the 1910s decade of wars and population exchanges, the ideas about “nationally homogenous” states were supposed to be applied by a compulsory exchange of population based predominantly on religious criteria: it was “Turkish nationals of the Greek Orthodox religion established in Turkish territory” as well as “Greek nationals of the Moslem religion established in Greek territory” that were forced to move from the one state to the

⁵¹ Politis, Villy N.: *Elliniki Koinotita*, p. 22.

⁵² GCC *Praktika Genikon Synelefseon* Z1, 23.03.1903-5.07.1932, pp. 84-86.

⁵³ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 238.

⁵⁴ The number of Greeks in Alexandria at the beginning of the 20th century might have exceeded the 20.000. Compare: chapter 4, footnotes 14-23. About the attempts made to broaden participation in the Greek Community of Alexandria see chapter 12.3.

⁵⁵ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 354.

⁵⁶ Kitromilides, Paschalis M.: ‘Balkan mentality’, p. 181. Compare to an earlier version of Kitromilides writing about an antinomy and different confrontations between Orthodoxy and nationalism in: Kitromilides, Paschalis M.: “Imagined Communities”. On a critical account of the tendency, from a variant point of view, to argue about an antinomy between different 19th century policies of Orthodox Christian institutions and national ideologies see: Matalas, Paraskeuas: *Ethnos kai Orthodoxia*, pp. 1-6.

other.⁵⁷ In the long 19th century, a religious definition of community was still important for many people and, if Turkish-speaking as well as Greek-speaking Christians in the late Ottoman Empire might insist describing themselves as “Christians” when asked “what they were”,⁵⁸ late 19th century British observers would point that “those [in the “Levant”] would be vulgarly called Greeks who profess the Oriental Church”,⁵⁹ or that people in Cyprus were called “in common speech” as Greeks, Turks or “*linovamvakoi*”,⁶⁰ depending on their ritual and dress, a criterion overwhelming “any physical sign of difference”.⁶¹ The steadily broader use of the term “Greek” or other terms perceived as exclusive categories of nationhood was associated also with religious categories. In the period of Greek Enlightenment, even many critics of religion preferred silence than confrontation to religious institutions, having other priorities and considering the possibility to address a greater audience more important for their actual political goals;⁶² as has been argued, Greek nationalists of that time had to draw “on the ‘sacred’ motifs, symbols, and rituals of the culturally designated population”, so as to communicate their message widely and effectively.⁶³ Even in the early years of the revolution, it was possible that Greeks would be identified to “those inhabitants of Greece that were believing in Christ”,⁶⁴ whereas in 1833, the Greek state forged the creation of a Church of Greece with the king as its political leader, so as to diminish the intervention of Ottoman Orthodox Christian institutions.⁶⁵ Muslims living in the territory of the new state would remain more easily there, had they turn to Christian faith,⁶⁶ not to mention those who shifted to Christianity during the revolution years in order to avoid reprisal.⁶⁷ It has been claimed that it was an “irony” that the newly-born Greek nation state, after centuries of Ottoman domination, retained a characteristic of the Ottoman time, the correlation of personal identification and participation in a religious community,⁶⁸ but the

⁵⁷ Pentzopoulos, Dimitri: *The Balkan Exchange*, p. 67; Konortas, Paraskevas: *Nationalisms vs Millets*, p. 180.

⁵⁸ Mentioned in: Clogg, Richard: *A Millet Within a Millet*, p. 117.

⁵⁹ Colquhoun, Patrick: *The Modern Greeks*, pp. 458-459.

⁶⁰ “*Linovamvakoi*”, i.e. “from both linen and cotton”, is a metaphor used in Cyprus to describe Muslims with Christian religious practices.

⁶¹ Dixon, Hepworth W.: *British Cyprus*, pp. 19-20, 25, 28-29.

⁶² See for example: Iliou, Philippos: *I siopi gia ton Christodoulo Pampleki*.

⁶³ Hatzopoulos, Marios: *From resurrection to insurrection*, p. 82.

⁶⁴ Vogli, Elpida: “Ellines to genos”, p. 46.

⁶⁵ Ebenda, pp. 181-191.

⁶⁶ Ebenda, pp. 200-201.

⁶⁷ Ebenda, p. 53.

⁶⁸ Hirschon, Renée: ‘Eisagmena atoma kai gigeni prosopa’, p. 216.

political importance of religion was not exclusively an “Ottoman”, i.e. “Oriental” or “pre-modern” remnant; the example of “secular-catholic conflict” is not just an indication of the conflicts caused about the place of religion in the specific context of central and western Europe even during the 19th century, but also a reminder that “religious conflicts still troubling so many of the world’s societies are less exotic to modern ‘western’ political culture than we are often encouraged to believe”.⁶⁹ Arguably, the Greek case is not an exceptional one to a supposedly absolutely secular Europe and, besides existing particularities, there are also parallel developments between the Greek and other European cases.⁷⁰

Skopetea observed that in the Greek long 19th century, “depending on the viewpoint, nation could be praised as the guardian of religion or religion as the guardian of nation”.⁷¹ From the perspective of the Greek nation, the Orthodox Christian institutions were increasingly considered as potential tools of Greek national projects, especially since the great fear of many Greek nationalists, the Russian-led “Panslavism”, was suspect for using religious sentiments and clergy institutions for antagonistic to the Greek goals. Already in the 1850s, in the aftermath of the Crimean War, when Typaldos visited an Orthodox monastery in Egypt, the monks were surprised that a Greek citizen and furthermore civil servant went there, since they believed that piety was absent in Greece; even though Typaldos tried to convince the monks that such a perception was the result of the “much skilful Catholic propaganda in the Orient”, he wrote in his impressions that there was a negligence from the Greek state, which did not practice its “legitimate influence to the Eastern Orthodox”.⁷² Typaldos, praising how efficient the “Catholic propaganda” was, if compared to the futility and needless disputes of Orthodox zealots, also commented that the religious leadership had a responsibility for the Greek nation, especially regarding its future “in the East”.⁷³ At the monastery of Agios Savvas, Typaldos listened to everyone speaking in Greek, but saw many Russian icons and luxurious vessels and, when he asked a monk about them, he received the answer that Russians were also Greeks; this might be an indication of the still blur delimitation of religious and national

⁶⁹ Clark, Christopher + Kaiser, Wolfram, Introduction, p. 10.

⁷⁰ For an attempt to examine critically the “Greek exceptionalism” on religious issues see: Fokas, Effie: Religion in the Greek Public Sphere.

⁷¹ Skopetea, Elli: To “protypo vasileio”, p. 123.

⁷² Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): Anatolikai Epistolai, pp. 21-23.

⁷³ Ebenda, pp. 86-88.

identifications at that time, but Typaldos could also reconfirm his fears about a growing Russian influence and a Greek indifference in the “East”.⁷⁴

In 1873, after the number of Greek migrants in Egypt was considerably increased,⁷⁵ the first issue of a Greek edition in Cairo would emphasize that the religious sentiment was loose in Egypt, even though “Orthodox faith” and “Hellenism” ought to be inseparably associated,⁷⁶ a correlation made often in the last decades of the 19th century. Pinelopi Delta wrote that her father, Emmanouil Benakis, did not frequent religious ceremonies unless when he was obliged to during his service as president of the Greek Community of Alexandria and did not like priests either; not even his wife, described by their daughter as a “pious woman”, trusted priests much or went to church every week. As Pinelopi Delta explained, however, her father would discuss “national issues” with priests and, although he “did not need religion”, he considered it a “spiritual necessity” for “the man in the street”.⁷⁷ Lampridis criticized the priests in Egypt for not having a level that would make them respected by the Greek migrants,⁷⁸ a critique he repeated a few years later, arguing that the level of clergy was a factor removing people of higher social strata from religion, whereas Greeks of lower social strata used priests only for their necessary religious needs; the conclusion was that no “national education” was obtained, even though that ought to be the mission of the priests, especially since religious institutions formed one of the two “invincible guardians of the racial autonomy of Hellenism”.⁷⁹ A similar mix of a “national role” ascribed and of a critique for failing in that role was common among turn-of-the-century Greek nationalist authors and activists referring to ecclesiastical issues, also in Egypt and other eastern Mediterranean places. In 1904, Ionas Dragoumis considered the high clergy as consisted by mere opportunists trying, depending on juncture, to profit either from the Greek or from the Russian state, even describing them as being “Christians, not Greeks”; four years later, however, Dragoumis expressed his admiration for the “14 Greek bishops” who “govern thousands of Syrians”, something indicating for

⁷⁴ Ebenda, pp. 114-115.

⁷⁵ See chapter 1, footnotes 16-17.

⁷⁶ Kairon, 17.12.1873.

⁷⁷ Zannas, P. A. (ed.): Delta, P[inelopi] S.: *Protes enthymiseis*, pp. 148, 225-227.

⁷⁸ Lampridis, Ioannis: *Ai ellinikai apoikia*, pp. 95-96.

⁷⁹ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 50, 62-63. The other “invincible guardian” Lampridis referred to was education.

Dragoumis the superiority of the Greek race and the ability of Greeks to govern.⁸⁰ In 1901, the president of the “Hellenism” Society, Neoklis Kazazis, gave a speech at the University of Athens about the ecclesiastic evolutions in the “distant and forgotten Greek countries”, i.e. the districts of the Patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria. Kazazis spoke about a “Greek Church” that had to organize a “national struggle” and was “as much national, precious and necessary, as the homeland”, since “the [Orthodox Christian] religious idea and the [Greek] political interest coincide”.⁸¹

The values summed up by the slogan “homeland, religion, family”, better-known for its proclamation in the mid-20th century Greece, were expressed already from turn-of-the-century theologians in Greece.⁸² An identification of Orthodox Christian faith to the Greek nation was, more or less directly, made already since the end of the 19th century from the ecclesiastical side also in Egypt. The possibility of revenues drawn from monasteries in Romania and Russia, which were offered to the Patriarchate by the czar, was limited after their confiscation in the mid-19th century,⁸³ the influence, however, of Russian diplomacy remained strong and, in spite of some possible exaggerations, there is evidence of Russian interventions to ecclesiastical affairs in Egypt.⁸⁴ In spite of that, the Patriarchate was often described as the “Greek Church” and ecclesiastical issues were correlated to Greek issues even from the most prominent theologians, directors of patriarchic journals or other authors with key positions in the Patriarchate, from Kipiadis and Papamichail to Galanos and Michailidis.⁸⁵ As evident in stories, such as one about the dead body of a murdered spy,⁸⁶ choices concerning ecclesiastical issues were steadily more influenced by Greek “national issues”. In 1892, Kipiadis acknowledged the bad management of the wealth of religious institutions, something that limited the possibilities of it being

⁸⁰ Dragoumis, Ionas: *O ellinismos mou kai oi Ellines*, pp. 34-35, 127-128.

⁸¹ Kazazis, Neoklis: *To dinarion tis Orthodoxias*.

⁸² Gazi, Efi: “*Patris, thriskeia, oikogeneia*”.

⁸³ Papadopoulos, Chrysostomos: *Istoria tis Ekklisias Ierosolymon*, pp. 720-733; Papadopoulos, Chrysostomos: *Istoria tis Ekklisias Alexandreias*, pp. 838-839; Stamatopoulos, Dimitrios: *Metarrythmisi kai ekkosmikefsi*, pp. 368-369.

⁸⁴ Papamichail, Grigorios: *Apokalypseis*, Papadopoulos, Chrysostomos: *Istoria tis Ekklisias Ierosolymon*, pp. 699-712, 745-747; Papadopoulos, Chrysostomos: *Istoria tis Ekklisias Alexandreias*, pp. 821-822, 833; Stamatopoulos, Dimitrios: *Metarrythmisi kai ekkosmikefsi*, pp. 119-121; Lekkou, Pantelis K.: *Alexandreia 1858-1870*, pp. 971, 987.

⁸⁵ See respectively: Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: *Ellines en Aigypto*, pp. 20-22; Wright, Arnold + Cartwright, H. A. (eds.): *Twentieth Century Impressions*, pp. 206-208; Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandreia*, p. 61; Michailidis, Evgenios: *O aigyptiotis ellinismos*, p. 17.

⁸⁶ See chapter 1, footnote 3.

used “for the welfare of the nation”,⁸⁷ whereas he actually demanded a better educated clergy, one that would attract the necessary respect of the flock,⁸⁸ something indicating how people related to Orthodox institutions also used a “national” argumentation by the end of the 19th century.

By an 1888 visit to Egypt, Alexandros Ragkavis visited the patriarch before meeting the consul of Greece and heard from the former that “our national revival and progress depends on the strengthening of religious feelings and the support to the public education based on Christian moral”;⁸⁹ at another occasion a few years later the same patriarch, Sofronios, mentioned that Orthodox clergy had played a decisive role for both the Greek state and “Alexandrian Hellenism”, before adding some complaints about the tightness of the Patriarchate.⁹⁰ Claiming a role for the Greek nation might be correlated with an expectation of economic aid, even if Russian support remained important, causing troubles to the “national role” stressed by Orthodox religious leaders, but perhaps also functioning as a way of putting pressure on the Greek state to provide more aid. In 1899 and speaking to Paraskevopoulos, Sofronios not only complained once again of being neglected by the Greek state, which had stopped to give an annual aid of 10.000 francs, but added, perhaps to further motivate those Greeks fearing of “Panslavism” to contribute, that the only income of the Patriarchate was the annual economic aid of 150.000 francs from the czar.⁹¹ Sofronios referred also to the dangers for both religion and the [Greek] nation due to a “frigidity” towards the faith “of our fathers”,⁹² whereas his successor, Fotios, also complained about the indifference and “frigidity” of Alexandrians towards the church, accusing Alexandrian Greeks for speaking about their warm love towards their nation and at the same time leaving the churches almost empty on Sunday mornings, whereas the countryside and casinos were by the afternoon full of Greeks of every age.⁹³ There is not a source allowing an exact estimation and control of whether such complaints of religious leaders might have been exaggerated so as to convince, with “national” arguments, more Greeks to go to church, but “frigidity” might have other grounds in

⁸⁷ Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: *Ellines en Aigypto*, pp. 69-71.

⁸⁸ *Ebenda*, p. 82.

⁸⁹ *Estia Eikonografimeni*, 14.08.1888, p. 513.

⁹⁰ *Akropolis*, 25.04.1895. About the complaints of the patriarch for not being financed sufficiently by the Greek government see also: *Akropolis*, 27.05.1895.

⁹¹ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, p. 404.

⁹² Sofronios: *Egkyklios epistoli*, pp. 5, 21.

⁹³ *Omonoia*, 23/05.08.1901.

some occasions, including the involvement of religious leaders in political affairs. Some opponents of Fotios even demanded the intervention of the Greek government, in 1904, so as to make Fotios abdicate,⁹⁴ whereas in the period of “National Schism”, Fotios criticized the politics of Venizelos in spite of recommendation by the Greek consul, Saktouris, who had received reactions by the flock in the church;⁹⁵ after Fotios started to make political statements against Venizelos, the church of *Evangelismos* lost much of its public.⁹⁶

9.2 “Descendants of the prophets and citizens of our nation”

If Greek communal institutions were largely associated with Orthodox Christian faith and if Greek politics were present even at the liturgy, it ought to be remembered that not all Greek citizens, not to mention the expected “future citizens”, were Christians. Moysis Bourlas was born in Cairo in 1918, his parents originating from Volos and Chios. When his father lost much in gambling, with the aid of both the Jewish and the Greek communities, the family went to Thessaloniki, where Moysis attended a Greek school. When he grew up, Moysis Bourlas was involved in Greek politics, something that caused the loss of his Greek nationality, a common experience of left-wing holders of Greek nationality in the period after the 1940s and the Greek Civil War experience; during the years he spent in Israel, from 1951 to 1967, he was called “Moses the Greek”. In his autobiography, where all the abovementioned are presented in detail, Bourlas described himself as “Greek, Jewish and left-wing”,⁹⁷ terms not mutually exclusive in his understanding. For some Greeks, however, the possibility of such combinations was far from self-evident.

The limited data of the Greek 1889 census in Egypt detected a number of 19.984 Orthodox Christian Greek citizens, but also of 170 Catholics, of 8 Protestants, of 7 “Ottomans”, i.e. Muslims and of 237 “Israelites”, i.e. Jews.⁹⁸ It must be taken into account that some of the Jews coming from Greece, for example from Corfu,

⁹⁴ Pyrros, 24.04.1904.

⁹⁵ HAMFA B/35 (2), 1918.

⁹⁶ This information given by Saktouris is cited in: Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): Dragoumis, Filippos Stef.: Imerologio, p. 61.

⁹⁷ Bourlas, Moysis: Ellinas, Evraios kai aristeros.

⁹⁸ Ypourgeion Esoterikon: Statistiki tis Ellados, p. 93. About the difficulties of the specific census see chapter 1, footnote 11.

might have another than the Greek nationality,⁹⁹ but also that places such as Ioannina, where some Jews were identified with Greek projects, were part of the Ottoman Empire. According to a diplomatic report of 1906, the Jewish population considered as Italian in Egypt was settled for many generations in Egypt;¹⁰⁰ in opposition to these people, many of the Greeks of Jewish faith in Egypt were newcomers and retained more or less direct bonds with the Greek state. The question is whether combinations of identifications of the same kind Bourlas mentioned in his life story were common in the long 19th century and if having a religious faith, if any, other than that of an Orthodox Christian would be incompatible with all definitions of being a Greek in colonial Egypt.

A scholar observed that up to the beginning of the 19th century, any definition of “Greekness” not equated with Orthodoxy was inconceivable and that during the first century of existence of a Greek state there was not “any such thing as a Greek Jew”, but simply “Ottoman Jews of various backgrounds who had yet to negotiate a space for themselves in the new nationalized space within which they found themselves”,¹⁰¹ a statement which resulted from a narrow understanding of “Greek Jewry, in the modern sense of the term – that is, Jewish citizens of the Greek nation-state”.¹⁰² Nevertheless, there were Jews in the long 19th century with a possible place in the Greek national community, such as those in Ioannina, described as living in “enviable concord” with Greeks and maintaining schools with Greek teachers, having rejected “eminent” schools of the “foreign propagandas”;¹⁰³ in the Greek state, there were examples such as the Romaniotes Jews of Corfu, mentioned also by Fleming as having lived for centuries in isolation from the “broader Jewish world”, finding thus “the process of becoming Greek a somewhat less difficult one”.¹⁰⁴ In 1880 Thomas Paschidis, a journalist engaged in some federalist groupings of that period,¹⁰⁵ wrote a text about the “Israelis in Hellenism”, in which he mentioned of Greek favourable policies towards the “Israelis” since the antiquity and praised the extent of “Hellenization” many of them had in different towns of the Ottoman Balkans, such as

⁹⁹ About the nationality of people from the Ionian Islands in particular compare chapter 8, footnotes 79-82.

¹⁰⁰ Ministero Degli Affari Esteri: Emigrazione e Colonie, p. 203.

¹⁰¹ Fleming, K[atherine] E.: Greece. A Jewish History, p. 18.

¹⁰² Ebenda, p. 51.

¹⁰³ Akropolis, 20.07.1904.

¹⁰⁴ Fleming, K[atherine] E.: Greece. A Jewish History, p. 44.

¹⁰⁵ Chasiotis, Loukianos: “I Anatoliki Omospondia”, pp. 29, 87.

Ioannina, where Paschidis was born, as well as in Corfu, a part of the Greek state since 1864. Paschidis stressed that the Greeks had never excluded “Israelis” like other European countries had done, whereas Jews were a part of his optimistic project of “Eastern people”.¹⁰⁶ This mixture of expectations and promises was not uncommon, as evident at a ceremony in a synagogue of Istanbul on the occasion of the inclusion of the Ionian Islands to the Greek state, when a Greek diplomat declared that “Israelis” were not “a foreign and unknown people to us [Greeks]”, promised them the same rights every other citizen of the Greek state had and concluded by declaring that “we by Acropolis in Athens will remember nothing but that you [Israelis] are descendants of the prophets and citizens of our nation”.¹⁰⁷ At the joyful atmosphere of the ceremony, where even an Orthodox archimandrite participated,¹⁰⁸ among other speeches in more or less the same line of argumentation, a representative of the “Ionian Jews” emphasized the juridical equality of all Greek citizens and that the “Israelites” could at the same time love and serve their homeland and keep their faith to their religious affairs.¹⁰⁹ In 1888, a ceremony taking place in an Orthodox Christian church of Corfu celebrated the 25 years George was a king of the Greeks, with many Corfu Jews, “characterized, as known, for their national Greek beliefs and their pure patriotism”, as a columnist of *Akropolis* explained, rushing in the doxology as well.¹¹⁰

Assurances for legal equality and loyalty to the institutions were exchanged from both sides in different occasions, even if national ceremonies might take place in places of worship, but promises of civil servants and idealizing descriptions should be questioned together with problems in the practice of co-existence. Part of the problem in the case of Jews was a preexisting religious prejudice, sometimes contributing to violent incidents. One such case was when, at Eastern of 1872, a bloody conflict took place in Ioannina, with local Christians beating Jews and demolishing their houses, whereas disturbances continued in the next months.¹¹¹ On the coast opposite from Ioannina, in Corfu, the involvement and participation of Jews in public life after the island became part of the Greek state was significant and not all of them were involved in money lending, financing and banking, the usual activities making them

¹⁰⁶ Paschidis, Th[omas] A.: *Oi anatolikoi laoi*, pp. 1-13.

¹⁰⁷ Palamas, Grigorios: *Ta kata tin teletin*, p. 15.

¹⁰⁸ Ebenda, pp. 3-4.

¹⁰⁹ Ebenda, p. 13.

¹¹⁰ *Akropolis*, 20.10.1888.

¹¹¹ Dalven, Rae: *The Jews of Ioannina*, p. 32.

unpopular,¹¹² but especially since the mid-1880s and in spite of common strategies of disassociating Greek attitudes from those of the “other Europeans”, an anti-Semitic discourse developed there as well.¹¹³ In 1891, when an eight years old girl was murdered, rumors connected the crime to Jewish rituals and people believing that the girl, later proved to be Jewish, was a Christian, held anti-Jewish demonstrations, plundered Jewish shops and killed about 20 Jews.¹¹⁴ A great part of the 5000 Corfu Jews left the island, mainly going to places where they had relatives and networks, such as Italy or Egypt.¹¹⁵

During the 1891 bloody events in Corfu, the Alexandrian Greek *Metarrythmisis* had a special correspondence from Corfu about the fanaticism against Jews.¹¹⁶ After a few days the same newspaper, in an interesting variation of the “other Europeans” theme, justified European anti-Semitism due to stereotypic characteristics ascribed to Jews such as wealth, socialism, different manners, spirit and political beliefs, but explained that Greeks lived in harmony and enjoyed equal rights with their Jewish “co-citizens” and that what happened in Corfu was nothing but the outcome of religious prejudice.¹¹⁷ An inclusive orientation towards Jews in Greece or in those Ottoman places expected to become part of the Greek state, such as in Ioannina, was advocated and, when the brother of a Jewish merchant in Cairo offered an amount in Ioannina in order to create a school for the local Jews, in which they would also be taught of the Greek language, *Metarrythmisis* criticized the prejudice keeping Jews out of the schools the Christians attended.¹¹⁸ It was the same newspaper, however, that reproduced the ideas that Jews dominated the world either with their

¹¹² Gekas, Sakis: *The Port Jews of Corfu*, pp. 177-184.

¹¹³ Ebenda, pp. 187-190.

¹¹⁴ Preschel, Pearl L.: *The Jews of Corfu*, pp. 87-115; Pierron, Bernard: *Evraioi kai Christianoi*, pp. 48-52; Liata, Eftychia D.: *I Kerkyra kai i Zakynthos*; Fleming, K[atherine] E.: *Greece. A Jewish History*, p. 35.

¹¹⁵ *Tachydromos*, 02/14.06.1891; *Metarrythmisis*, 28/10.07.1891; *Tilegrafos*, 09/21.08.1891; Pierron, Bernard: *Evraioi kai Christianoi*, p. 51; Dafnis, Konstantinos: *Oi Israilites tis Kerkyras*, p. 29; Preschel, Pearl L.: *The Jews of Corfu*, p. 91. Already in the 1860s, a considerable number of the people from Corfu irrespective of religious faith were supplied with a permit to visit and stay in Egypt, as evident at the collection of passports kept in the archives in Corfu: GAK – Corfu: *Diavatiria [passports]*. Jews originating from Ioannina and maintaining relations with other Jews there were also living in Egypt: Dalven, Rae: *The Jews of Ioannina*, pp. 31-32. Many of these Jews from Ioannina were practicing commerce in Corfu and later, having acquired the status of the Ionian, also in Egypt: GAK – Corfu, *Archeio Ioniou Gerousias*, 1580; GAK – Corfu, *Elliniko Vasiliko Proxeneio*, 22:2842.

¹¹⁶ *Metarrythmisis*, 30/12.05.1891.

¹¹⁷ *Metarrythmisis*, 08/20.05.1891. About a similar comparison of Greek and non-Greek European attitudes towards Jews in the Egyptian Greek press already in 1881 see: Hadziiosif, Christos: *Pascha stin Alexandria*, pp. 129-130.

¹¹⁸ *Metarrythmisis*, 16/28.11.1888.

wealth or with fashion shops directed by their women, with pubs and through “ill-famed houses” full of Jewish women, which were “ceaselessly touring and robbing all around the world”.¹¹⁹ Even when prejudice and violence were rejected in the name of civic rights assured or promised to Jews of Corfu or Ioannina or due to a difference of “our Jews” from the Jews in Europe, negative stereotypes common in European anti-Semitic literatures were not missing. A girl of a wealthy, educated and not extremely religious Christian family,¹²⁰ Pinelopi Delta, recalled that at her childhood in the late 19th century she was said that Jews had the devil in them,¹²¹ whereas the daughter of another well-to-do family was also told similar things about Jews in her childhood in early 20th century Egypt.¹²² According to a person claiming of having spoken to Averoff about it, the famous Greek merchant felt he had saved the “Greek church of Alexandria”, *Evangelismos*, from confiscation “from the Jews”, since the church was mortgaged to a wealthy Jew banker, de Menasce.¹²³ Averoff was, among many other institutions, the honorary president also of a local Greek Philharmonic and reacted when asked about the possibility of a participation of a Jew to its board, on the argumentation that only Greek subjects should participate to Greek clubs,¹²⁴ it is however not clear if the problem was just nationality, since this was mostly not an obstacle in the late 19th century for people to participate in Greek institutions in Egypt.¹²⁵

In 1899, Paraskevopoulos mentioned the need for a reaction of Greeks “against the dreadful wave of Israelis [in Egypt] fighting to replace us wherever we managed to advance”.¹²⁶ Competition to major Greek economic activities was part of the explanation for Greek hostile attitudes towards Greek and non-Greek Jews in Egypt.¹²⁷ The Italian consul in Alexandria observed in 1881 that “rascals, amongst which are a number of jobless Greek smugglers”, people “ready to fish in troubled waters”, might have played a role in violent incidents that took place against Jews,¹²⁸

¹¹⁹ Metarrythmisis, 21/03.07.1891.

¹²⁰ See footnote 77.

¹²¹ Zannas, P. A. (ed.): Delta, P[inelopi] S.: Protes enthymiseis, pp. 79-80.

¹²² Palaiologou-Petronda, Evgenia: Ston kairo tou Pappou mou, p. 111.

¹²³ Empros, 17.07.1899.

¹²⁴ Ebenda.

¹²⁵ See footnote 42.

¹²⁶ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: I Megali Ellas, p. 449.

¹²⁷ Ninet, John: Lettres d' Egypte, p. 128; Landau, Jacob M.: Jews in Nineteenth-century Egypt, p. 125; Hadziiosif, Christos: Pascha stin Alexandria, pp. 127-130, 135-138.

¹²⁸ About the specific incidence see footnotes 140-141.

the accusation of ritual murder being just a pretext;¹²⁹ the Greek consul is reported of having admitted to his colleague that even the family of the dead boy in the specific occasion was trying to take advantage from the whole situation.¹³⁰ A factor that might have further increased mistrust was the possibility of a Jewish settlement of Cyprus, a broadly discussed issue in turn-of-the-century Greek public;¹³¹ it should not be forgotten that an important part of Greek migrants in Egypt and Sudan, ranging between 20.000 and 25.000 at the turn of the 20th century,¹³² originated from Cyprus and wrote in or read the Cypriot Greek press.¹³³ A newspaper in Cyprus argued in July 1891 that Jews and Cyprus were “two things not at all reconcilable, neither historically, nor religiously, nor ethnologically, nor politically, not even geologically”, adding that even if rumors about the murder of Christian children were untenable, something for which the author was apparently not convinced, it was “undoubted” that the Jews had murdered 240.000 of Greeks in Salamis;¹³⁴ the position of Cyprus, near Palestine, led to a further danger of Greeks being “overrun” by a massive Jewish settlement, concluded the author of that article.¹³⁵ Even though Jews in Greece denied having asked to be allowed to move to Cyprus,¹³⁶ rumors about a Jewish massive settlement continued to be published in Greek newspapers in Athens¹³⁷ as well as in Cyprus,¹³⁸ or to be reproduced in Greek press of Egypt.¹³⁹

The existence of many Greeks that were probably not willing to share the proclamations of federalists and diplomats was related also to accusations on ritual

¹²⁹ Miccoli, Dario: *Moving Histories*.

¹³⁰ Ebenda.

¹³¹ Although Theodor Herzl seemed of having considered Cyprus as one among different places of possible Jewish settlement, the Cyprus plan was not more seriously discussed than a great number of other possible destinations all over the world. For the part Cyprus played in turn of the century discussions see: Richter, Heinz A.: *Istoria tis Kyprou*, pp. 136-144; Ben-Artzi, Yossi: *Jewish rural settlement in Cyprus*, pp. 361-362. For the few, short-lived attempts of a Jewish settlement in late 19th and early 20th century Cyprus see: Ben-Artzi, Yossi: *Jewish rural settlement in Cyprus*.

¹³² Theocharidis, Ioannis: *I symvoli*, pp. 482-483. The sources compared by Theocharidis are confirmed by one additional reference to the number of 25.000 (*Foni tis Kyprou*, 21/02.11.1899), but also from a petition of the Brotherhood of Cypriots in Egypt and a speech of its president (BNA, FO series 141/511.1: *Annexation of Cyprus. Nationality and Treatment of Cypriots; Elliniki Adelfotis ton en Aigypto Kyprion: Lefkoma*, p. 17). About the total number of Greeks in Egypt compare chapter 1, footnotes 12-25.

¹³³ See chapter 11.3.

¹³⁴ The author of this text referred to a revolt of Jews in Cyprus, which took place in the years 116-117 against the Romans and ended up with the expulsion of Jews from Cyprus.

¹³⁵ *Salpigx*, 13.07.1891.

¹³⁶ *Empros*, 16.01.1903.

¹³⁷ *Empros*, 30.11.1899; *Empros*, 09.12.1899; *Empros*, 14.12.1899; *Pyrros*, 15.02.1904; *Empros*, 02.10.1904.

¹³⁸ *Alitheia*, 19.11.1904; *Alitheia*, 07.04.1906.

¹³⁹ *Omonoia*, 27/14.04.1906.

murders, whereas the burning of an effigy of Judas remained an occasion for violent incidents against Jews especially from people of lower social strata in different places in Egypt. One of the cases that raised harsher discussions and reactions took place in 1881 Alexandria, after a nine year-old Christian boy from Crete was found dead in the port. The boy was seen for the last time at a house of a Jewish family and, although the body did not seem to have any signs of violent act, some Christian Greeks in Alexandria proceeded to violence against Jews; the case was even more complicated since the Jewish family accused had Greek citizenship, whereas the victim was a Greek boy from a family of Ottoman subjects.¹⁴⁰ The trial was transferred in Corfu, where the accused Jews came from, confirming the initial judgement of Egypt that the child probably died accidentally and, even in case it was murdered, there was no proof that the accused Jewish family had something to do with it.¹⁴¹

An Orthodox priest was accused by an Italian Egyptian journal of having spoken from his pulpit about criminal Jewish customs, advising his flock not to leave their children unattended,¹⁴² something that was denied with the counter-accusation against Franciscan priests as attacking with their hatred-speeches the Orthodox Christians in their churches.¹⁴³ A further argument was that one of the protagonists at the “sad events”, when a Jew was beaten in Port Said, was an Italian, whereas many Italians and “natives” participated together with local Greeks at the attack against the synagogue; not only was responsibility thus shared, in a common defensive mode applied by Greek press in Egypt on various issues, but it was even mentioned that many Jews and Jewish shops were saved from the fury of the crowd by Greek “*omogeneis*”.¹⁴⁴ Violence of this kind could be explained also by writing about an “illiterate fanatic”, who started to insult a “miserable Jew” in Tanta, before giving him also “some flaps”; as commented in *Imerisia Nea*, incidents of this kind were very common, but the fears expressed by Jews were nothing but a “long-established” policy of “presenting themselves as innocent victims”. A similar incidence took place in Mahallah El-Kubra and the same newspaper commented the “exaggerated reactions” of Jews, who had expressed fears about a revolt of Christians against Jews; Greeks were advised to show the contempt that “suited this detestable race” rather

¹⁴⁰ Landau, Jacob M.: Jews in Nineteenth-century Egypt, pp. 215-217.

¹⁴¹ Zavitzianos, G[eorgios] A.: Aktis fotos, pp. 51-53, 229-256.

¹⁴² Omonoia, 20/02.04.1903.

¹⁴³ Omonoia, 22/04.04.1903.

¹⁴⁴ Ebenda.

than taking part in further turbulences.¹⁴⁵ According to a text of the same newspaper just a couple of days later, the “European press” of Egypt described Greeks as fanatic and intolerant people, accusations to which the response was that Greeks just demanded the punishment of the murderers of a young child and some of them, “in a moment of upset and fair fury”, slapped or pushed one or two Jews.¹⁴⁶

If such incidents were downplayed in this way from a non-Jewish Greek point of view, there were also events that definitely did not take place “in a moment of upset and fair fury”. In 1877, for example, rumors denied in Greek press referred to shooting against the doors of Jewish houses in Port Said, but the burning of the effigy of Judas was certainly not avoided, in spite of warnings by the Greek consul.¹⁴⁷ In 1883, fully armed Greeks of Port Said, mainly people of lower social strata,¹⁴⁸ attempted to burn an effigy of Judas, which they shot furiously, although the Jewish community there had asked them to avoid this practice; the clashes which followed, where Greeks were assisted by a “native crowd”, according to Greek descriptions, ended with one officer and one civilian of Syrian origin dead and many injured persons on both sides.¹⁴⁹ In 1878, a group of Greek youth in Port Said attempted to destroy the Jewish synagogue with stones or even clubs and was punished by their teachers and parents because of demonstrating their patriotism in the wrong way, disturbing order.¹⁵⁰ In 1892, when a crowd of Greeks in Port Said gathered on the occasion of a missing child to beat almost to death a Jew they suspected, a Greek newspaper of Alexandria reported the “maltreatment” of another four Jews, one of whom even lost his eye, commenting that such reactions were unjustified, especially since most of the times they derived from accidental incidents.¹⁵¹ A desecration of a synagogue in Port Said is mentioned in 1902,¹⁵² whereas another incident took place in Port Said during 1903, as one of the 500 Jews of the town was beaten up, again after a rumor of a child kidnapped by Jews to be ritually sacrificed; the Greek crowd was accompanied by Egyptians and people of every other origin, while other Jews

¹⁴⁵ *Imerisia Nea*, 27/08.04.1881.

¹⁴⁶ *Imerisia Nea*, 30/11.04.1881.

¹⁴⁷ *Afriki*, 20.04.1877.

¹⁴⁸ About the composition of the Greek population in Port Said see chapter 4, footnotes 40-51.

¹⁴⁹ *Imerologion ton Dodeka* 1936, pp. 200-202; Chaldoupis, Dimitrios K.: *Anamniseis kai chronika Port-Said*, pp. 30-32; Landau, Jacob M.: *Jews in Nineteenth-century Egypt*, pp. 225-226.

¹⁵⁰ Chaldoupis, Dimitrios K.: *Anamniseis kai chronika Port-Said*, pp. 19-21.

¹⁵¹ *Tilegrafos*, 06/18.03.1892.

¹⁵² Landau, Jacob M.: *Jews in Nineteenth-century Egypt*, p. 35.

that were just passing by were also beaten up and some children caused every sort of damage to the synagogue.¹⁵³

All these examples show that generalized religious prejudice, even if other causes might co-exist as well, was still an important factor expressed in different, even violent ways. Nevertheless, some Jews from Corfu were organized in a brotherhood on the model of many Greek brotherhoods in Egypt;¹⁵⁴ Politis included it to a list of such brotherhoods he mentioned, without giving more details,¹⁵⁵ whereas, according to a 1927 description, it included “Corfu’s Israelites, Greeks in nationality, language, manners and customs”, having merchants, bankers and lawyers as its members, “Greeks both in feelings and language”, as further explained.¹⁵⁶ If no more information has been detected on such groups, signs of participation of Jews together with non-Jewish Greeks in ceremonies and institutions in Egypt have been detected, also regarding an earlier period. A committee representing the Corfu Jews in Alexandria went to an 1880 ceremony honoring the king of the Greeks, George, expressing their “noble sentiments”.¹⁵⁷ In 1889, on the occasion of the 25 years after the inclusion of Ionian Islands to Greece, some Corfu Jews participated at a celebration in Alexandria, concluded with a doxology at *Evangelismos*, the church Averoff was mentioned as having saved from confiscation “from the Jews”.¹⁵⁸ The speakers stressed that all the inhabitants of the islands of any religion had always been Greeks and that Corfu Jews particularly shared the ideas of all Greeks for a “model kingdom”.¹⁵⁹ Having in mind the mistrust already described and the prejudice shared by many non-Jewish Greeks, one perhaps should read such statements as a need of some non-Jewish Greeks to show their positive feelings, having perhaps in mind the Ottoman Jews that might become the “future citizens” of Greece, or as an attempt by Greek Jews, in Egypt as also in Corfu,¹⁶⁰ to prove their loyalty exactly in order to secure an equal – or at least safe – place in the Greek national community.

¹⁵³ Syndesmos, 13/26.03.1903; Tachydromos, 14/27.03.1903; Landau, Jacob M.: Jews in Nineteenth-century Egypt, pp. 298-299.

¹⁵⁴ See chapter 10.4.

¹⁵⁵ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, p. 460.

¹⁵⁶ Lachanokardis, Iraklis: Palaia kai nea Alexandria, pp. 298, 326.

¹⁵⁷ Antologia Israelitica, June 1880, p. 217.

¹⁵⁸ See footnote 123.

¹⁵⁹ Ton en Alexandria Eptanision: Enthymion tou eortasmou, pp. 3, 34-35.

¹⁶⁰ See footnote 110.

There were “Israelites” which, accused for stealing or murder, were sent to be trialed by Greek authorities.¹⁶¹ In the Greek schools of towns around the Suez Channel, for example, 7 from a total of 84 pupils in the school-year 1888-1889 or 5 from 64 during 1891-1892 were of Jewish faith,¹⁶² although Greek citizens of Jewish faith tended to send their children to Austrian schools.¹⁶³ These signs of participation to common institutions were not self-evident, though, as indicated by the example of a benevolent society of Greek ladies at Zagazig, which allowed as regular members only Orthodox Greek women, something provoking a comment of a Greek visitor to the town claiming that Greek women of Catholic or Jewish faith ought to be considered “perfect Greeks” and “*omoethneis*”, members of the same nation, since, after all, in the Greek state they also paid taxes or sent their children to war.¹⁶⁴ If such an understanding of a national community based on civic rights and duties also existed, as late as in 1919, after Thessaloniki with an even greater Jewish community was already part of the Greek state, a scholarship was offered by the Greek Community of Alexandria on the condition that the candidates were “children of Greeks in race and Orthodox in religious faith”.¹⁶⁵ Also in 1919, it was necessary to be confirmed whether a person who was “Jew in religion, Greek citizen” could be registered as a member of the Greek Community of Cairo;¹⁶⁶ the fact that such a question was for some bureaucrats still not clear by that time indicates that, even if in theory Greek citizens had the same rights irrespective of religious faith, that was not always a given in social practice. The reasons were mainly different sort of prejudice and antagonism, hardly including the questioning of loyalty to another than the Greek nation; Zionist projects involved just a small portion of – mainly Ashkenazi – Jews in Egypt until the first decades of the 20th century.¹⁶⁷ In spite of experiencing discrimination, prejudice or even violence by an important part of the non-Jewish Greeks, also in Egypt, it seems that some Jews formed part of the local Greek cultural and occupational networks and appealed to political rights related to Greek institutions. For some Jews, but also for some non-Jewish Greeks, it was possible to

¹⁶¹ Tilegrafos, 31/12.08.1891; Omonoia, 13/25.12.1897. Compare also to footnote 141.

¹⁶² GCC: Mathitologion tis Ellinikis Astikis Scholis Suez, scholiko etos 1888-1889 eos 1900-1901 [School register of the Greek Urban School of Suez, school year 1888-1889 until 1900-1901].

¹⁶³ Tsolekidis, Nikolaos T.: I dimosia ekpaidefsis en Aigypto, p. 47.

¹⁶⁴ Tilegrafos, 01/14.07.1905.

¹⁶⁵ Cited in: Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias, p. 187.

¹⁶⁶ GCC A21/4:24, 1919, memorandum n. 329.

¹⁶⁷ Landau, Jacob M.: Jews in Nineteenth-century Egypt, pp. 22-26, 115-124; Kitroeff, Alexander: The Greeks in Egypt, pp. 22-23; Krämer, Gudrun: The Jews in Modern Egypt, pp. 8-67, 205.

be a Greek and a Jewish at the same time, in spite of the close relation the identification to the Greek nation and the Orthodox Christian faith acquired in the meantime. Being a Greek and a Muslim or, even worse, shifting from Christian to Muslim faith, was on the other hand an issue with much more complications, not just due to antagonisms and prejudice, but associated also with colonial hierarchies and antagonisms of the period of the “Eastern Question”.

9.3 Choosing to “change worlds”

At a study on Greeks in Odessa, one can read that even though “endogamy” was still the rule, “intermarriage” was also existent because of religious affinity, a trend juxtaposed to the much less “porous and open to the surrounding world” society of Greeks of Alexandria in Egypt, “a Muslim country”.¹⁶⁸ Even if Egypt has been considered as an example opposed to porosity and openness to the surrounding world, cases of marriage with non-Orthodox Christians, but even relations to Muslims, did exist among Orthodox Christian Greek migrants in Egypt, even if the later had some extra peculiarities and might result even the exclusion from the Greek national community. Christians in the Balkans kept calling the Muslims as Turks in a “continuous and indiscriminate” way,¹⁶⁹ a phenomenon described as “Ottoman thinking” and evident even in late 20th century Greece popular parlance, where the verb “*tourkevo*”, literary meaning “becoming a Turk”, might be still used to describe people that became Muslims;¹⁷⁰ even in Germany, “the most established center [...] of the new Europe”, as a scholar described it, government officials and the public media turned against the few ethnic Germans that shifted to Islam as “defying the new boundaries now conceived between new political alliances, cultures and civilizations”.¹⁷¹ In the late 19th and early 20th century Ottoman context, conversion was a possibility, provided the religious authority of the convert was present at the conversion and the parents or next of kin were in attendance. Reactions of the community claiming some irregularity in the process often made conversions of Christians difficult, whereas cases even of young girls declaring their intention to shift to Islam “as a fully conscious adult person and not as the result of threats or fear of

¹⁶⁸ Herlihy, Patricia: *The Greek Community in Odessa*, p. 247.

¹⁶⁹ Todorova, Maria: *The Ottoman Legacy*, p. 68.

¹⁷⁰ Hirschon, Renée: *Identity and the Greek State*, p. 171.

¹⁷¹ Özyürek, Esra: *Convert Alert*.

anybody”, as they declared, might be smuggled out after the community was warned and mobilized. On the other hand, in spite – or actually because – of warnings repeated from the Ottoman authorities instructing the provincial authorities to prevent the use of force in conversion, the prevalence of coercion and the “undercurrent of distrust and fear” seems evident, perhaps an outcome of panic by Muslims feeling of losing their dominant position in the new atmosphere of mid-19th century religious freedom proclaimed by Ottoman reform edicts. As a scholar dealing with conversions in that period concluded, at the second half of the 19th century they were not an issue of religion, but of sovereignty and prestige for both Ottomans and the “Western Powers”.¹⁷²

Normally, the public and private space of Ottoman Christians and Muslims was strictly segregated, especially regarding women. Some Muslims might participate in Christian religious ceremonies but, irrespective if that might be perceived as an indication of common origin or just as a sign of respect for a Christian saint, this was in any case possible only for a Muslim and not for a Christian, who would hardly risk entering a Muslim place of worship during a ceremony.¹⁷³ A case of 1875 and the whole argumentation about it indicate that a love affair between a Christian girl and a Muslim man could be an issue putting in danger the peaceful yet separate conviviality of the two religious communities in the Ottoman Empire, making the presentation of the case as a rape for both sides preferable to a relation based on free will.¹⁷⁴ One might expect that the growing human mobility in the mid-19th century would threaten this set of social relations, or at least create more opportunities to escape social control, but a case of the 1860s indicates that social as well as legal boundaries existed in love affairs between people of different religion also in mid-19th century Egypt, formally still an Ottoman province. It was a case where a Muslim Egyptian accused a Christian Ottoman Greek of having seduced his sister, which he claimed to be in her late teens. When the case went to court, under the pressure of the circumstances, the accused tobacco merchant declared his intention to shift to Islam, something that might have affected his business seriously, as Peters commented, or even result his expulsion from his community, without making things easier by a juristic point of view. The punishment of both protagonists at the end of the story

¹⁷² Deringil, Selim: “There Is No Compulsion in Religion”.

¹⁷³ Hadziiosif, Christos: Synasos, pp. 40-43.

¹⁷⁴ Ebenda, pp. 71-74.

suggests that sexual relations of people of a different religion were doubly forbidden, as they took place outside of a lawful marriage and also because they could not be regularized due to the existence of a religious obstacle, the later considered as even more disturbing than the former in the specific social context.¹⁷⁵

Love was not necessarily the only or decisive reason for a religious shift. Deringil mentioned of a great range of different cases in the long 19th century, “from the proverbial ‘conversion at the point of the sword’, to the completely sincere and intellectually committed acts”, including even “cases that verge on the comic” such as a case of a French doctor, who converted to escape his gambling debts.¹⁷⁶ At a 1904 incident, a 30 years old Ottoman Greek from Mytilini was reported to shift to Islam in Egypt, as he not only failed getting a divorce from his wife, which he accused as unfaithful, but was moreover obliged to pay her ten pounds monthly; the protagonist of the story seems of having changed religion in order to escape this arrangement.¹⁷⁷ Another Greek in Egypt, a doctor and landowner, was recorded of abandoning his wife and children and going to Istanbul, where he changed religion and got married with an Ottoman lady, to whom he was said of owing a great sum of money; the reporter wrote that he had no other choice in order to escape a persecution and a confiscation of his property.¹⁷⁸ Similar to those of nationality,¹⁷⁹ religious shifts could be providing additional possibilities to different agents, something that could be the case also for people shifting to Christian faith. An Egyptian, for example, applied to the patriarch, expressing his wish for both joining the Orthodox faith and for getting a Greek citizenship; as he said, he had worked with Greeks for many years and he was convinced about the correctness of Orthodox Christian faith.¹⁸⁰ Even if the applicant might have been honest regarding the religious aspect, the fact that he applied also for a citizenship suggests that he might have had the intention to profit from the civic rights of a capitulatory state as well.

Incidents of religious shift, especially to Islam, were rather unwelcome by most Greeks and Greek institutions in Egypt. As a young housemaid from Limnos was about to marry a “native” shoe-maker, two men from her island went to the Patriarchate for assistance and, according to information published in press, were

¹⁷⁵ Peters, Rudolph: The infatuated Greek.

¹⁷⁶ Deringil, Selim: “There Is No Compulsion in Religion”, p. 547.

¹⁷⁷ Empros, 17.08.1904.

¹⁷⁸ Empros, 20.09.1903.

¹⁷⁹ See chapter 8.

¹⁸⁰ APA – ELIA 484, 1916.

advised to bring her to the Patriarchate, something that, as explained, might demand “her abduction with violence or trickery” from the place she was working.¹⁸¹ When a young boy from Cyprus serving at a “native” shoe-maker in Alexandria was convinced to shift to Islam, he faced the reaction of his family and also of local Cypriot Greeks, which pressured the Patriarchate to proceed to action; the guard of the Patriarchate who tried to bring the young boy away from the “natives” had to threaten them with his revolver and it was the contribution of the local police which finally, in spite of the “anger” of the “natives”, made the delivery of the boy to its family possible.¹⁸² In another case, a Greek man proceeded to the police with the intention of shifting to Islam, but was sent to the Greek consulate under the pressure of local Greeks, one of which “beat lavishly” the “renegade”.¹⁸³ Besides violent acts as such, however, the usual way to deal with cases of Orthodox migrants shifting to Islam in Egypt was to diminish morally the protagonist of such acts – *a posteriori*. At the case of a man from Peloponnisos expressing a wish to become a Muslim, the explanation of a columnist of an Alexandrian Greek newspaper was that “he was not a person with correct conduct”.¹⁸⁴ At the case of a sergeant who deserted from the Greek army, went to Egypt and expressed a similar intention, his mental balance was put in question; to a comment that his conduct “did not honour the nation he belonged to”, the Greek consul Skotidis added that “it would be good if the [Greek] nation got rid of such creatures through the loss of their religion”, statements indicating of a perception of collective responsibility and of an identification of religious faith and national identification.¹⁸⁵ According to a correspondent from Mansourah, a person from Leros should “got rid as a dog” because he “traded” religion, whereas he was described as nothing but a “profligate” young man.¹⁸⁶ In 1891, a Greek in Suhaj tried to change religion, to “*tourkepsei*”, i.e. to “become a Turk”, as was written, because of a love affair with a “*fellah*” woman, a “monster” and a “monkey” according to Greek reportage. Without any sign of surprise or disapproval, the reporter mentioned even menaces by the local Greeks, but it was the Greek consul who, while traveling to Asyut, happened to pass by and managed to dissuade his shift which, as the reporter

¹⁸¹ Tilegrafos, 21/03.06.1904.

¹⁸² Empros, 21.07.1907.

¹⁸³ Tilegrafos, 04/17.06.1902.

¹⁸⁴ Metarrythmisis, 12/24.01.1894.

¹⁸⁵ Tachydromos, 02/14.09.1897.

¹⁸⁶ Tachydromos, 15/28.11.1903.

explained, would damage the whole local Greek community.¹⁸⁷ At an 1892 case of a Greek widow in Damanhur, which decided to shift to Islam because of a love affair, the local Greeks pressed Greek consular authorities to demand her delivery to them, since she was a Greek citizen. The case was a difficult one since the woman was an adult but, as commented at *Metarrythmisis*, such incidents might become “disastrous examples”, it was therefore demanded that the woman returned to Christian faith “at all costs”, even if “exemplary measures” to prevent “the diffusion of the infection” had to be taken.¹⁸⁸ A few days later, it was reported that the woman was led to the *kadi* for catechism and, whereas the local Greeks were irritated, the “natives” expressed their joy “in a noisy way” for the apostasy of the “infamous woman”, as the Greek reporter described her. Nevertheless, it was commented that such a great attention should not be paid for a woman who, “motivated by her bestial desires”, denied her religion; as further argued, the local community of Greeks should not depend its “honour” from the deeds of a “profligate”.¹⁸⁹ The other day, depreciatory comments were repeated about the woman, who had given “her religion and national essence” in order to satisfy her passion, “which only the robust fellah could satisfy”.¹⁹⁰

Infants might well have been abandoned to the communal institutions by poor Greek families, even if not many such cases have been detected by my research. At one such case, however, a note was left with the baby, expressing a worry about the religious feelings of it, since it was explained that it was “unbaptized”.¹⁹¹ When an orphan was posed under the protection of the Greek Community of Cairo and, in the absence of another institution, was introduced to an orphanage directed by Catholic nuns, attempts were made to find a place where the young boy would be raised with “*ellinikotata*”, i.e. extremely Greek, sentiments and “solid religious beliefs”, for example in Athens.¹⁹² If even the specific Christian faith might be associated with a way of being raised as a “Greek”, another story further suggests of the importance of the Christian-Muslim boundary for many migrants. A poor woman in Alexandria gave her son to a wealthier one, who took the child to an Egyptian hospital; when the real mother learned that her son was made a Muslim called Mehmed, she notified the

¹⁸⁷ *Metarrythmisis*, 30/12.05.1891.

¹⁸⁸ *Metarrythmisis*, 03/15.06.1892.

¹⁸⁹ *Metarrythmisis*, 08/20.06.1892.

¹⁹⁰ *Metarrythmisis*, 09/21.06.1892.

¹⁹¹ GCC A17/4:4, 1906-1907, report n. 736.

¹⁹² GCC A45/2:9, 1912-1913, letter n. 1051; GCC A44/4:7, 1910-1911, letter n. 359.

Patriarchate and it was managed to take charge of the baby and give it the Christian name Pantelis instead.¹⁹³ A young orphan girl raised by a “fanatical Ottoman [= Muslim] woman” in Alexandria was actually kidnapped by a Greek Ladies Association and, with the aid of the Greek consul, was put enclosed in a school since, according to the consular authorities, treating her as if she was one of her real daughters could be nothing but a “strategic plan” of her step-mother so as to make her a Muslim. The girl started to feel confined after some time and her step-mother, which according to the version of the story circulating in the Greek press was watching for the right time, convinced her to leave the school. The Greek Ladies Association found her again and brought her back to the school, from which she escaped after a few days. When she was once more detected, she was already preparing herself to shift to Islam, but the intervention of the Greek consul had as a result her delivery to a captain who brought her to Athens so as to be given to a “good family”, with the mediation of the police.¹⁹⁴

Not all young women involved in such stories had to be sent away, since pressure, not necessarily including corporal violence, might cause hesitations. A young housemaid from the Ottoman island of Chios fell in love with a “native” servant, provoking a great upset to her family and co-islanders. Whereas the girl initially insisted she would become a “*Tourkala*”, a “Turkish woman”, the reporter described how she felt embarrassed at the end, when she agreed to enter the church for a kowtow. She was described by the reporter not as a “monster” and a “monkey” this time,¹⁹⁵ but as a “blond, white, a true type of a beauty”, maybe because good and virtuous women in folk tales with happy end are supposed to look like that, and she got married with a gardener from her island, a “brave” and “religious” man, who volunteered to marry her so that she wouldn’t feel ashamed.¹⁹⁶ At an 1876 case in Tanta, according to the description of a Greek newspaper of Cairo, a woman of lower social strata and Greek nationality followed her lover to his village, only to find out that he was not a Copt, as he had initially told her, but an “Ottoman”, i.e. a Muslim, who demanded her to shift to Islam. The woman asked for the assistance of the Greek vice-consul through her father and the insistence of the vice-consul was the reason, according to the story published, for achieving the delivery of the young woman to

¹⁹³ Syndesmos, 26/08.09.1902.

¹⁹⁴ The original story, which was republished in Egyptian Greek press, was issued in: Asty, 11.02.1904.

¹⁹⁵ Compare to footnote 187.

¹⁹⁶ Alitheia, 03/15.11.1895.

the Greek consular authorities and from there to her father. As further pointed out, although Tanta was considered as a place famous for having fanatic Muslims, the good intentions of both the governor of the province and the Greek diplomat led to its solution without any turbulence.¹⁹⁷ A young girl in Damietta, who was working at a “natives” tailor’s shop and was about to shift to Islam in order to marry a young “native”, was finally convinced not to do so by the local priest.¹⁹⁸

Stories of successful catechism preventing a shift to Islam would be praised by the patriarchic journal and other newspapers as exemplary for their efficiency;¹⁹⁹ at a case, when a priest “saved” a young Orthodox Christian girl from shifting to Islam, a correlation was made by *Pantainos* with slave trade of women.²⁰⁰ It is not clear if the motivation was just the preventing of trafficking or abuse of young women. Greek consular authorities could be mobilized when young girls escaped for any reason from their parents, only to be arrested and sent away,²⁰¹ a method usually applied for the goal of protecting young girls from prostitution networks, but also for sending away migrants with activities not corresponding to the dominant perceptions of “Europeanness”.²⁰² According to a Cypriot newspaper, a young woman from Cyprus left her husband in Ismailia in order to satisfy her love feelings for a “native” in Port Said, deciding also to shift to Islam, whatever measures would be taken against her;²⁰³ this woman was finally sent to Cyprus and delivered to a local bishopric by a Greek Lady’s Association of Port Said, who was informed about the case and advised to do so by the Brotherhood of Cypriots in Cairo, the later adding that the woman had shown a “reprehensible conduct” also in past.²⁰⁴ Similarly, a young Greek woman was prevented from marrying a “native” in 1901 and was about to be sent, as reported in press, to her parents and the Greek authorities.²⁰⁵ When a 15 years old Greek housemaid from Andros was “seduced”, according to Greek reporters, from a *bey* in Alexandria, taking the decision to shift to Islam, she was finally taken by the Greek consul and sent to the Greek police, in Piraeus, so as to be delivered to her parents.²⁰⁶

¹⁹⁷ Kaïron, 08/20.05.1876.

¹⁹⁸ Tachydromos, 15/28.12.1903.

¹⁹⁹ Omonoia, 14/27.03.1903; *Pantainos* 1908-1909, pp. 601-602; *Pantainos* 1909-1910, p. 153.

²⁰⁰ *Pantainos* 1908-1909, p. 198. About human trafficking see chapter 4, footnotes 105-109.

²⁰¹ Tachydromos, 21/03.12.1894; Tachydromos, 02/15.02.1902.

²⁰² See chapter 4.

²⁰³ Foni tis Kyprou, 03/16.09.1911.

²⁰⁴ Foni tis Kyprou, 10/23.09.1911.

²⁰⁵ Tilegrafos, 13/26.07.1901.

²⁰⁶ Akropolis, 30.01.1894.

A Cypriot woman working at the house of a European family fall in love with a “native” gardener and decided to marry him, but her relatives managed, after a fight with her and her lover, to bring her to the Patriarchate.²⁰⁷ The sensibilities of the period of the “Eastern Question” and the overturning of the colonial “hierarchies” were some reasons explaining the intensity of reactions by people of the same origin and of Greek institutions, but the role of the “future Greek mothers”²⁰⁸ for the reproduction of the nation, associated with Orthodox Christian faith, was also important, as evident by similar reactions detected regarding Greek girls attending Catholic nun schools and being ready to shift to Catholicism.²⁰⁹ The way some cases of young boys were presented is an indication, nevertheless, also of the common in the colonial time fear of “going native”. A juvenile from Crete was described as being associated with “*agyiopaidēs*”, i.e. “kids of the street”, having therefore decided to shift to Islam, an “abjuration” to which priests immediately reacted by trying to convince him to keep his Orthodox Christian faith.²¹⁰ Another young boy from Limnos was also mentioned as socializing with “natives” in “their” coffee-shops, in Port Said, the town structured in a way intending to keep Greeks and other “Europeans” separated from the Egyptian population.²¹¹ The boy was working at a Greek tobacco-shop there and, when arrested on demand of the Greek consul, responded “insolently”, according to the reporter, that he was a Muslim; even though the boy claimed of having regretted the consul, apparently not convinced, decided to send him to Limnos.²¹²

A few cases, where intentions to shift to Islam were expressed by a larger group of people, have also been detected. One such case involved a 16 years old Cypriot of Greek-Catholic faith who expressed an intention to shift to Islam for himself and his six sisters as well; the boy claimed of having a promise by an *omda* to marry his daughter, but as the *omda* disappeared, the “unwise young boy” regretting, according to the descriptions of the reporter drawing a didactic conclusion, due to the advices he received from an Orthodox priest.²¹³ At a case of a group of nine Cypriots reported of having expressed a similar intention in a small town near Zifta, four of

²⁰⁷ Foni tis Kyprou, 02/15.05.1909.

²⁰⁸ See chapter 5, footnote 107.

²⁰⁹ Omonoia, 01/13.02.1892; Empros, 27.11.1906; Empros, 29.11.1906.

²¹⁰ Pantainos 1912, p. 669.

²¹¹ See chapter 4, footnote 38.

²¹² Tilegrafos, 02/15.10.1908.

²¹³ Tachydromos, 13/26.03.1903.

them were children, all of them wore “Arabic clothes” and stayed at the house of a rich “native” who was supposed to marry one of the women of the group and collect a dowry, so that the other women among them could get married as well. The women told the Greek reporter that they proceeded to such an “*aponenoimeno diavima*”, a “desperate action”, an expression usually reserved for people committing suicide, in order to save themselves and their children from starvation and, as the reporter could not convince them not proceeding, he expressed his hope that the ecclesiastical authorities in Egypt would manage to do something before the day of the “abjuration”, in order to avoid an event which would be “a shame and a stigma for the Hellenism in Egypt”.²¹⁴ Having in mind the usual reactions to religious shifts, especially to Islam, it is interesting that the women involved would speak to reporters. The expectation of some economic assistance was a possibility implied by a suspicious author of about the same period, pointing out that many cases had taken place at that time and that the people involved were mostly trying to get public attention and, therefore, money or protection by sensitive wealthy Greeks in Egypt.²¹⁵ Sensibilities were addressed at a case in Tanta, as a poor Ottoman Greek asked the wealthy Greek merchants of that town for money in order to eat something and return to the island of his origin, adding that he would otherwise shift to Islam. He did not manage to convince all of the Greek merchants there and some of them were accused by a reporter covering the story for spending their money in luxurious gifts to local prostitutes instead; it was those described as the Greek “scientists” of the town that managed to get the poor guy away.²¹⁶

Besides people choosing to “change worlds”,²¹⁷ there had been also people of Muslim faith in Egypt originating either from the Greek state or from other places, considered though by Greek projects of the second half of the 19th and the early 20th century as “future citizens” of the Greek state and, in some cases already claiming the civic rights of Greek citizens.²¹⁸ The addition of some provinces in 1881 had as result the increase of Muslim inhabitants in the Greek state, similarly to the period from 1912 to 1922, when the Greek state was about doubled in size.²¹⁹ Muslims originating

²¹⁴ Omonoia, 10/23.02.1903.

²¹⁵ Omonoia, 14/27.03.1903.

²¹⁶ Empros, 23.10.1897.

²¹⁷ Deringil, Selim: “There Is No Compulsion in Religion”, p. 547.

²¹⁸ See for example: Omonoia, 04/16.01.1899.

²¹⁹ For the variant perceptions about the new Muslim population of the Greek state in the 1910s see: Glavinas, Giannis: O mousoulmanos ypikoos.

from the newly possessed territories were included in the lists of people with Greek nationality, approved by Egyptian authorities in 1918 and 1921.²²⁰ The extent, however, of the success of Greek mid-19th century federalist plans, promising equality irrespective of religious faith and also to Muslims, with a focus mainly on Albanians,²²¹ should be seen in a critical way, taking into account the distance between proclamations and prejudice, similar to the case of Jews.²²² Typaldos, for example, was optimistic that all “races” of the “Eastern world” would consider the appearance of the Greek flag as a liberating sign, even those Muslims not being of Turkish “race”,²²³ but it was the same author that would ironically describe a *sheikh* in Egypt as “a born stupid and drunkard man, who is much respected by Muslims exactly because of these ‘advantages’”.²²⁴ Many Albanians of Muslim faith feared they would be discriminated in a Greek state,²²⁵ in spite of the existence, according to Greek press, also of Muslim Albanians wishing to be included at the Greek state.²²⁶ By the turn of the century, Bérard mentioned of many Albanians, including Muslims, who were speaking Greek and had a “Greek consciousness”, so that at the second generation no difference was evident from an inhabitant of the Greek state;²²⁷ there were Albanians in Athens, including Ismail Hakki, who had been active in Cairo as well,²²⁸ suggesting that “Ottoman”, i.e. Muslim, as also Christian Albanians “were one” with the Greeks.²²⁹ Even if – or because of – comments totally hostile to Albanians, especially to those of Muslim faith, occasionally published in Egyptian Greek press,²³⁰ a study written by Mekios and promoted by the Ipeiros Brotherhood of Egypt did not omit to refer to the superficial shifting to Islam of many people in Ipeiros,²³¹ a usual argument applied in order to facilitate a broader participation to the Greek national project. Having in mind the prejudices against Albanians irrespective of religious faith, as also the way ideas of a close Greek-Albanian relation failed by

²²⁰ Kerkinos, Pantelis E.: *I elliniki ithageneia*, pp. 162-163.

²²¹ See for example the texts of Paschidis in: Paschidis, Th[omas] A.: *Oi Alvanoï*, p. 7 and Paschidis, Th[omas] A.: *Oi anatolikoi laoi*, pp. 34-48.

²²² See chapter 9.2.

²²³ Typaldos, Georgios K. (*yios*): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, pp. 88-89.

²²⁴ Ebenda, p. 33.

²²⁵ Skendi, Stavro: *The Albanian National Awakening*, pp. 83-86, 175.

²²⁶ Skoulidas, Elias G.: *Oi scheseis Ellinon kai Alvanon*, p. 194.

²²⁷ Bérard, Victor: *Tourkia kai Ellinismos*, p. 130.

²²⁸ Skendi, Stavro: *The Albanian National Awakening*, p. 153.

²²⁹ Betis, Stefanos: *Ipeirotikos Adelfotites*, pp. 278-279.

²³⁰ *Metarrythmisis*, 31/12.11.1895; *Syndesmos*, 01/14.07.1903.

²³¹ Mekios, Konstantinos M.: *Istoria tis Ipeirou*, p. ε'. About the Ipeiros Brotherhood and the specific contest see chapter 10, footnote 139.

the turn of the 20th century,²³² it is doubtful if such arguments had any considerable appeal and in any case, no such signs were detected in Egypt.

In the case of Cretans of Muslim faith in Egypt, the terms “Turk” and “Muslim” were used as interchangeable,²³³ whereas they often appeared in Greek texts as being united to the Egyptians, such as in the 1882 revolt,²³⁴ or mobilized against Greeks, as in later events in the Balkans.²³⁵ Rare exceptions were also found, such as an enthusiastic description of the 1915 visit of the Greek prime-minister Venizelos, himself originating from Crete, when some “*Tourkokritikoi*”, “Turkish Cretans”, as Cretans of Muslim faith were described in Greek texts of that time, were mentioned among the crowd that welcomed Venizelos with enthusiasm.²³⁶ Some Greek texts referred to Muslim Cretans of that time having nostalgic feelings to the island,²³⁷ speaking Greek very well and sympathizing Greeks,²³⁸ or even admitting, just before dying, of having a Christian origin,²³⁹ but the identification of “Muslims” with “Turks” was evident in the prejudice of people: a Christian Cretan in a novel of Tsirkas considered all Muslims, even Egyptians, as “Turks”.²⁴⁰ A Muslim Cretan went to Egypt in 1925 and described how local Greeks did not believe him when he assured them about his positive feelings towards Greeks, attitudes he interpreted with his general impression about Alexandrian society lacking trustworthiness and honesty. Hasan Sourourjade initially stressed of having no difficulty in his settlement, staying in a hotel room rented by a Greek family from Cyprus and visiting the restaurant of a person from Thessalia frequented by “*Tourkokritikous*” and other Greek youth, as he explained. After the initial enthusiasm was followed by difficulties, however, he concluded that “not knowing the place, nor its language, not considered as a Greek by Greeks, as a Turk by Turks, as an Arab by Arabs”, it was not as easy to make a career as a lawyer in Egypt, as he hoped.²⁴¹ His case is indicating of how, in spite of proclamations, even a well-educated person with a good knowledge of the Greek

²³² See chapter 10.3.

²³³ Tachydromos, 25/06.08.1896; Empros, 06.06.1910.

²³⁴ Alitheia, 05/17.06.1882.

²³⁵ Tachydromos, 25/06.08.1896; Empros, 16.03.1897; Empros, 24.03.1897; Tachydromos, 24/05.04.1897.

²³⁶ Slip: O Eleftherios Venizelos.

²³⁷ Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 73.

²³⁸ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, p. 475; Empros, 22.11.1904.

²³⁹ Chaldoupis, Dimitrios K.: *Anamniseis kai chronika Port-Said*, pp. 124-125.

²⁴⁰ Tsirkas, Stratis: *Nourentin Bompa*, p. 21.

²⁴¹ Ampatzis – ELIA.

language and social relations with non-Muslim Greeks as well might confront difficulties in being accepted as a Greek, because of his Muslim faith.

9.4 Summary

The present chapter examined how Greek national identification was associated with Orthodox Christian religious faith in the long 19th century. In theory, non-Orthodox Christians, or even non-Christians, could be included to the Greek national community, but in practice, different difficulties arose, associated with various prejudices, antagonisms and hierarchies of the colonial period. The cases of shifting to Islam in particular were considered not just as damaging the prestige of Greeks and as challenging the colonial hierarchies, but also as signifying the “loss” of a member of the Greek nation.

10. A “convenient amnesia”: the Egyptian experience and the delimitation of the Greek “*omogeneis*”

A specific Greek “national self-awareness”, which disdained difference, was dominant, at least before a late 20th century reverse of the tendency.¹ Kitromilides argued that after 1923 Greece managed to have “a resolutely uniform national culture [that] stamped out regional variation, local peculiarities and different ethnographic traditions”.² Even if the extent regional variation was stamped out could be questioned, Mavrogordatos was right in arguing that the Greek state acquired an “enviable homogeneity” in the interwar period,³ especially if compared to other European states of that period; according to an estimation, if the Greek state after the 1920 treaty of Sèvres contained 23% of “heterogeneous elements”, however defined as such, after the population exchange of 1923 there were “minorities” of just 6%, a small number compared to the 28,3% of Romania, to the 32,6% of Czechoslovakia and to the 15,1% of Yugoslavia.⁴ Underpinning in much of the debate about the recent wave of migration to Italy on all sides of the political spectrum has been “the sense that, prior to incoming migration, Italy had been a monocultural society without significant internal divisions”, a “convenient amnesia”, as explained, that part of the research into the Italian colonial experience wanted to challenge by showing “the extensive nature of Italy’s contact with other cultures, and the ways in which this contact has shaped Italy itself”.⁵ Similar questions could be posed also regarding the Greek experience, in Greece, Egypt or elsewhere, especially about the period before 1923.

Kitroeff summarized four factors allowing the Greeks settling in Egypt in the 19th century to retain their ethnic character: “the growth of the Greek entity [...] the concentration of the population in urban centres, and of foreigners more so [...] the differences in language and religion which set the Greeks culturally apart from all other ethnic groups [and] their civil status under the Capitulations”.⁶ Leaving aside that a considerable number of ethnic Greeks did not live in Egyptian urban centers and that civil status was not always related to ethnic character,⁷ a further hypothesis is

¹ Papataxiarchis, Evthymios: *Eisagogi*, pp. 70-71.

² Kitromilides, Paschalis M.: “Imagined Communities”, pp. 176-177.

³ Mavrogordatos, G[eorge] Th.: *Oi ethnikes meionotites*, pp. 9-35.

⁴ Dakin, Douglas: *The Unification of Greece*, p. 269.

⁵ Andall, Jacqueline: *Italian Colonialism*, p. 370.

⁶ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 11.

⁷ See in particular chapters 3 and 8 respectively.

that, more than a preexisting condition allowing a group of migrants to “retain” an ethnic character, the question could be reframed as to how the migrants sharing some common cultural characteristics, such as the Greek language or the Orthodox Christian faith, came – or did not come – to form a part of a Greek national community in Egypt. It is the process of negotiating the delimitation of the “*omogeneis*”, a negotiation taking place constantly between agents with diverse priorities and prejudices and also among migrant communities, which is discussed in the present chapter. The following paragraphs are an attempt to suggest some factors explaining why some groups of the Orthodox, besides the non-Orthodox Christians,⁸ were – or were not – included to the Greek national project. After presenting the framework of a Greek homogenizing process during the long 19th century, the focus is turned to the Egyptian experience, since migrants there often had the opportunity to participate in institutions and networks defined as Greek; nevertheless, the opportunity of testing a common experience as “future citizens” of Greece, as was often assumed for Orthodox Christian migrants in various proclamations, faced problems, which sometimes threatened these expectations.

10.1 A Greek homogenizing process in the long 19th century

An Albanian, a Chian, a Cypriot, an Anatolian, a Cretan and a Peloponnesian, each one speaking his idiom, met at an inn in 1827 and started celebrations, after being informed about a victory of the Greek revolutionaries. A misunderstanding because of a word having a different meaning in their respective idioms was the cause for a fight between the two – stereotypically represented as irritable – mountaineers, the Albanian and the Cretan, even though the idiom of the “*logiotatos*”, the learned man, speaking in a form of “*katharevousa*”, a “purist” form of Greek, as also of the policeman, who came after the fight and mixed many terms of bureaucracy originating from languages such as the Italian, were even less understood from all the other protagonists of the story. This was the plot of an 1836 comedy,⁹ indicating of the cultural diversity at the time an independent Greek state was formed by revolutionaries defining themselves as Greeks. The Albanian language could be heard

⁸ About non-Orthodox – or even non-Christian – migrants in Egypt being contested or excluded in the Greek national project see chapter 9.

⁹ Vyzantios, D[imitrios] K.: *I Vavylonia*.

in Athenian neighborhoods of the late 1860s, something interpreted in a Greek journal as an indication of the insufficient spreading of education;¹⁰ as late as in 1885, it was still mentioned as one of the “Greek languages” to be used in many places of the Greek state.¹¹ The spread of a specific, monocultural education had an impact so that Tassos Neroutsos, a doctor and scholar of Albanian origin, as described in Greek press,¹² would estimate at an 1888 brief from Egypt, where he spent most of his life, to Gustav Meyer, a scholar dealing with Albanians, that from about 260.000 people speaking Albanian and living in the Greek state of 1833, only 58.000 could still speak Albanian by 1879;¹³ as Neroutsos, himself coming from Athens, further explained, those living in islands, Peloponnisos or Sicily called themselves “*Arbërë*” or “*Arbënorë*” and did not even know the descriptions “*Shqypetar*”, “*Shqyperi*” και “*shqipë*”.¹⁴ Taking into account the declining tendency of those speaking an Albanian linguistic variety, estimations of about 300.000 or 400.000 people described as Albanians in early 20th century Greece,¹⁵ seem exaggerated, even if there was definitely a considerable number of people defined so. A reason for the decrease was also that, as Neroutsos pointed out, those speaking Albanian in the Greek state were considered as people from the lowest ranks of the Greek society, i.e. peasants and seamen, whereas people speaking Greek, even when evidently having an Albanian or Slavic origin, would be regarded as real descendants of the ancient Greeks.¹⁶ At the turn of the 20th century, the Greek description for “Albanian”, i.e. “*Alvanos*”, was often used without the distinction to the “*Arvanitis*”,¹⁷ a distinction problematic to the extent it precluded the possible existence of people described both as Greeks and Albanians, applied mainly later in the 20th century and depending on whether somebody originated from the Albanian state or was considered as a loyal Greek citizen, without the “stigma” Greek negative generalizations on Albanians implied. Until then, it was mostly assumed that Ottoman Albanians would become “future citizens” of Greece as well.

¹⁰ Cited in: Skopetea, Elli: To “protypo vaseileo”, p. 148.

¹¹ Ebenda, p. 116.

¹² Tilegrafos, 10/22.08.1892.

¹³ Neroutsos-Hartinger, Helga: Der Briefwechsel, pp. 130-131.

¹⁴ Jochalas, Titos P.: Albanologische Nachrichten, pp. 207-208, 211-212.

¹⁵ Tachydromos, 22/04.01.1904; Federal Writers’ Project, The Albanian Struggle, p. 12.

¹⁶ Jochalas, Titos P.: Albanologische Nachrichten, pp. 208-209, 213; Neroutsos-Hartinger, Helga: Der Briefwechsel, pp. 128-129.

¹⁷ See chapter 10.3.

Along with different inhabitants of the newly formed Greek state, there had been an important number of migrants of different type to the Greek state during the long 19th century. Many of them were people considered, with more or less difficulties and in spite of various stereotypes, as Greek “*omogeneis*”, forming perhaps even one third of the total population of the Greek state, as estimated in some – probably exaggerated – calculations.¹⁸ Some of these people were Cretans, coming *en masse* in Athens or Piraeus in different occasions in the second half of the 19th century, when violence erupted in Crete.¹⁹ Others were people experiencing various pressures in non-Ottoman states neighboring to the Greek one such as Bulgaria,²⁰ already 5000 at an estimation of 1906,²¹ about 14.000 at a 1907 one,²² not to mention of more exaggerated calculations.²³ It was estimated that more than 300.000 Greek people of Orthodox Christian faith had left the Ottoman Empire and went to Greece in the early 20th century, already before the 1923 population exchange.²⁴ These people might claim of being – and might have been accepted as – “*omogeneis*”, even if this did not always assure an absolute cultural uniformity or the absence of problems for people accepted as Greeks by local population of turn-of-the-century Athens and Piraeus, also due to reactions by workers settled there earlier and seeing the newcomers as potential strikebreakers and a threat for being used as cheap labor.²⁵ In addition to these people, there was a great range of migrants for economic and / or political reasons not claiming of being “*omogeneis*” and staying for shorter or longer time in the long 19th century Greek state: ex-fighters of the 1820s,²⁶ Germans accompanying king Otto,²⁷ but also all sort of aliens working in the young state’s mechanism, making its capital similar to the “biblical Babylon”, according to a description,²⁸ European romantic and other intellectuals that rushed in the young

¹⁸ Skopetea, Elli: To “*protypo vaseileo*”, pp. 41-63; Vogli, Elpida: “*Ellines to genos*”, pp. 83-120.

¹⁹ Skopetea, Elli: To “*protypo vaseileo*”, p. 297; Giannitsiotis, Giannis: *I koinoniki istoria tou Peiraia*, pp. 292-293.

²⁰ Katsapis, Kostas: *I apokatastasi ton prosfygon*, p. 19.

²¹ Akropolis, 19.11.1906.

²² Tilegrafos, 16/29.05.1907.

²³ See for example: Empros, 04.05.1907.

²⁴ Protonotarios, Athanasios V.: *To prosfygikon provlima*, p. 10.

²⁵ Potamianos, Nikos: “*Ntopio prama!*”.

²⁶ Vogli mentioned even of the demand for a massive naturalization of some “*Thrako-Bulgaro-Serbian*” veterans in 1838, that would have been made possible if they came to settle in the Greek state, as the Greek minister of foreign affairs explained: Vogli, Elpida: “*Ellines to genos*”, pp. 156-157.

²⁷ Koliopoulos, John S. + Veremis, Thanos M.: *Greece. The Modern Sequel*, p. 201.

²⁸ Vogli, Elpida: “*Ellines to genos*”, p. 238.

Greek state,²⁹ Polish, Romanians or Italians seeking political refuge and / or coming as volunteers to Greek wars and revolts,³⁰ students from different Balkan countries, even though considerably fewer than expectations by those proclaiming a role of the University of Athens for a Greek “civilizing mission” in the “East”,³¹ builders and craftsmen, not always claiming a Greek origin, working in Athens in the first half of the 19th century,³² Italian, Montenegrin, Albanian, Armenian and other workers, mainly in the public works of the late 19th century,³³ or even Persian shoe-shiners mentioned even in the center of Athens,³⁴ are all tracks of a human mobility of different types, in any case greater than one might expect having in mind the poor literature on this issue,³⁵ as also the usual descriptions of the Greek state, especially when compared to the “cosmopolitan” cities of the “Greek East”.³⁶ It is not known in how far some of these groups stayed in Greece just for a short period; a 1907 official statistic estimated that about 2% of the inhabitants of the Greek state were people without a Greek nationality,³⁷ some of these people might have been of Greek origin, but, newcomers or not, the inhabitants of the Greek state were largely part of a homogenization process.

A homogenization was considered necessary also about the potential “future citizens” of Greece, with different kind of “federalist” ideas circulating among Greeks in the Greek state as well as out of it in the second half of the 19th century.³⁸ If it was questioned whether idioms such as the Albanian were distinct from the Greek language,³⁹ another strategy was the application of the term of “non-Greek-speaking Greeks”, people which did not speak Greek because of an “historical accident”, a term

²⁹ Ebenda, p. 252.

³⁰ Foerster, Robert F.: The Italian Emigration, p. 207; Liakos, Antonis: I italiki enopoiisi, pp. 55-56; Pécout, Gilles: Philhellenism in Italy, pp. 405-427.

³¹ Lappas, Kostas: Panepistimio kai foitites, pp. 339-346.

³² Fatsea, Irene: Migrant builders and craftsmen, pp. 190-217.

³³ Akropolis, 01.12.1885; Metarrythmisis, 01/13.04.1887; Parnassos 13:14, 1890, p. 217; Omonoia, 20/02.04.1902; Lykoudis, Emmanouil: Oi metanastai, pp. 14, 17-18; Foerster, Robert F.: The Italian Emigration, p. 207; Papagiannopoulou, Evi: I dioryga tis Korinthou, pp. 82-83; Potamianos, Nikos: “Ntopio prama!”, p. 292, footnote 29.

³⁴ Akropolis, 11.03.1891; Akropolis, 18.01.1894; Potamianos, Nikos: “Ntopio prama!”, p. 292, footnote 29.

³⁵ A first to my knowledge attempt to organize material about migrants in the late 19th and early 20th century Greek state, including people not claiming of being and not considered as “*omogeneis*”, as also about protests – especially in periods of crisis – against the consequences of migration in the labour market or even about a correlation of its limitation with a decrease of Greek transatlantic migration see: Potamianos, Nikos: “Ntopio prama!”, especially pp. 288, 293-294.

³⁶ See chapter 2.2.

³⁷ Potamianos, Nikos: “Ntopio prama!”, p. 292.

³⁸ See some versions in: Chasiotis, Loukianos: “I Anatoliki Omospondia”.

³⁹ Gounaris, Vasilis K.: Elliniki valkaniognosia, pp. 252-253.

describing in different occasions various Slavic-, Vlach-, Albanian-, Turkish- or Arabic-speaking people potentially included to the Greek nation.⁴⁰ In the 1850s and on his way to Egypt, Typaldos visited Izmir and described some of its inhabitants as belonging to the Greek nation even if being “of other race” because they, “local Smyrniots, Armenians, Jews and Franks”, even if having a different religion than the Greek one, were Greek-speaking and imitated Greeks “in all sorts of way”.⁴¹ Writing in the aftermath of the Crimean War, Typaldos predicted a great “Greek future” in Egypt and the “East”, starting with commerce but including a “political future” and a possible “Hellenization” of the “Eastern nations” since, as he was sure about, if the Greek flag appeared in the “East”, only the “proper Turks” would fight against it.⁴² A couple of decades after Typaldos, Krumbacher observed the demographic spread of Greek population and property in Izmir, writing about a “peaceful conquest” that would lead to the assimilation of the “Levantine” by the Greek way of life and thought since, even if they might use the French language during their promenade, they used the Greek language at home and at work.⁴³ Similar were the estimations of other German and British observers of that period,⁴⁴ predicting even that Slavs and Turks would soon be assimilated by Greeks,⁴⁵ whereas an 1880 booklet of Paschidis, explaining how the “Eastern people”, i.e. Jews, Armenians and Muslims, would form part of “Hellenism”, had as frontispiece a famous Isocratian saying of the 4th century BCE, by which those participating in Greek culture were included to Greeks;⁴⁶ by choosing this phrase as his starting point, Paschidis indicated that “Eastern” people should be united against the “Slavic threat”, a common argument of Greek federalists in the aftermath of the 1877-78 war. Even if bonds and relations of the Ottoman Orthodox Christian Greek population to Istanbul still existed throughout the end of the 19th century, especially as much as someone moved away from the Aegean provinces, contacts with the Greek state had considerably increased because of a growing human mobility and the promotion of a Greek education system connected not just with a possible change of the borders of the Greek state, but also with the

⁴⁰ Exertzoglou, Haris: *Shifting boundaries*, pp. 77-85.

⁴¹ Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, p. 8.

⁴² Ebenda, pp. 35, 43, 52-53, 88-89.

⁴³ Enepekidis, Polychronis K.: *I Ellada, ta nisia kai i Mikra Asia*, p. 193.

⁴⁴ *Estia Eikonografimeni*, 04.10.1881, p. 636.

⁴⁵ *Estia Eikonografimeni*, 23.01.1883, pp. 58-59.

⁴⁶ Paschidis, Th[omas] A.: *Oi anatolikoi laoi*.

socialization of pupils and the possibility of entering large occupational networks.⁴⁷ The expansion of Greek education in Istanbul corresponded to growing migration and, as pointed, “Hellenization went hand-in-hand with access to the city’s facilities”, regarding for example also children of Albanian migrants.⁴⁸ Migration to various Ottoman places, already before the 19th century,⁴⁹ but especially in the course of it,⁵⁰ through participation in different networks and institutions, facilitated a potential homogenization of different people as Greeks, even if certainly not in a linear way, especially since not every kind of participation to some form of Greek culture had the political consequences some Greek or other observers expected or wished.

Dealing with 18th century Balkans, Svoronos described Greeks as a “Balkan bourgeoisie” inhabiting islets of Greek population in towns that were centres of commerce, surrounded by a non-Greek population of the countryside;⁵¹ a few years later, Stoianovich wrote about the “conquering Balkan Orthodox merchant” and a process of “Hellenization” regarding part of the Balkan Orthodox merchants of the 18th century, a period when becoming a “Greek” signified higher social status.⁵² The process was nonetheless not confined in provinces of Greece or the Ottoman Empire. By the end of the 19th century, according to a French observer, Vlach-speaking people “did nothing else daily than becoming more Greek and spreading around them the Greek faith”, especially the wealthy merchants and bankers of Vienna, Odessa, Alexandria and Marseille, who had financed a Greek-speaking educational network,⁵³ as the same author commented, there were Vlachs speaking Greek “for which even an Athenian would be jealous”, in spite of a tendency by some of them to distance themselves from Greeks.⁵⁴ Greek education and bourgeois culture were important for the socially rising families of mid-19th century Plovdiv;⁵⁵ Greek education influenced also some of the Bulgarians which reacted to Greek nationalism, even if still feeling

⁴⁷ Hadziiosif, Christos: Synasos.

⁴⁸ Anastasiadou, Méropi: Greek Orthodox immigrants, p. 162.

⁴⁹ About the late 18th century migrants from Peloponnisos and the Aegean to various Black Sea destinations see: Kardasis, Vasilis + Harlaftis, Gelina: Anazitontas tis chores tis epangelias, pp. 57-58. About the 18th and 19th century migrants from the Balkans to the opposite coast of the Aegean see: Tsoukalas, Konstantinos: Exartisi kai anaparagogi, pp. 107-108; Anagnostopoulou, Sia: Mikra Asia, pp. 110-111; Siamakis, Konstantinos: Prosfyges, pp. 112-123.

⁵⁰ About migration to mid-19th century Istanbul see: Hadziiosif, Christos: Synasos, pp. 65-69; Anastasiadou, Méropi: Greek Orthodox immigrants, pp. 151-167.

⁵¹ Svoronos, Nikos G.: To emporio, pp. 389-390.

⁵² Stoianovich, Traian: The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant, pp. 310-311.

⁵³ Bérard, Victor: Tourkia kai Ellinismos, pp. 300-301.

⁵⁴ Ebenda, pp. 171-172.

⁵⁵ Lymperatos, Andreas: Oikonomia, pp. 214-215.

comfortable to communicate with each other by using the Greek language.⁵⁶ Hadziiosif proposed that the concept of Greek “nation-class” could be applied also in Egypt and the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the 20th century, in order to interpret the rise of Egyptian and Turkish nationalism against Greeks.⁵⁷ The question is, however, why people involved in the same cultural and occupational networks were in some cases more or less successfully included as a part of the Greek national community and in other cases formed an autonomous, when not also antagonistic one.

The late *Tanzimat* period of reforms was marked by attempts to shape different Ottoman “potential fellow citizens”, especially among people of Muslim faith, but the arguments about Muslims “as fellow victims of European intrigue and imperialism” did not suffice, since many Muslims in the provinces were regarded “as backward and as not-yet-Ottoman, as hindrances to as well as objects of imperial reform”.⁵⁸ The challenge for the late Ottoman state, as further argued, “was not how to exclude Arab subjects (as many Arab historians have claimed and many Turkish historians have denied) but how to *include* them in this modernity”,⁵⁹ often by a “civilizing mission” resembling to “a colonial stance toward the peoples of the periphery of their empire”, as Deringil added to the same line of argumentation.⁶⁰ The long 19th century Greek attempts to homogenize people as members of a Greek national community was oriented not only towards the inhabitants of the existing Greek nation-state in its respective at each time borders, but also towards its potential “future citizens” among the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire and other places. Skopetea suggested that projects like these sometimes implied a “Hellenization” rather than a federation of equals,⁶¹ whereas it is also questionable if such plans, in spite of what their supporters hoped, had any noteworthy support, especially in the 1910s.⁶² The crucial question, similar to that referring to Ottoman attempts addressing a population of an already existing state, is not if, but rather how some Greeks attempted to include “contested” groups of people in their ambitious projects and how some among the later, especially those closer to forms of Greek culture and

⁵⁶ Todorova, Maria: Language as Cultural Unifier; Matalas, Paraskeuas: Ethnos kai Orthodoxia, pp. 192-200.

⁵⁷ Hadziiosif, Christos: I belle époque tou kefalaiou, p. 341.

⁵⁸ Makdissi, Ussama: Ottoman Orientalism, p. 770.

⁵⁹ Ebenda, p. 793.

⁶⁰ Deringil, Selim: “They live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery”, pp. 311-342.

⁶¹ Skopetea, Elli: Oi Ellines kai oi echthroi tous, p. 13.

⁶² Hadziiosif, Christos: I exostrefeia, p. 160.

sometimes even positively disposed to Greek political ideas, understood the Greek calls for equality.

10.2 “Sacrificing” the “Arabic-speaking Greeks” for tobacco

Syrians, especially those of Christian faith, were sometimes described as “intruders” by Egyptian nationalists, facing for their economic activities in Egypt generalizations similar to those existing for the Greeks.⁶³ There was a considerable number of Syrians in Egypt, including many of the 6000 Arabic-speaking Orthodox Christians Typaldos estimated as living there already in the late 1850s;⁶⁴ according to different early 20th century sources, Syrians of Orthodox Christian faith were estimated as numbering about 12.000 to 15.000 among a flock of 150.000 in Egypt.⁶⁵ Many of these people were merchants or employees that migrated to Egypt since the mid-19th century because of new opportunities and / or due to religious-based conflicts in their places of origin.⁶⁶ Some of them were correlated with Greek networks and institutions; for example, mid-19th century Greek consular authorities tended to hire Syrians as translators, since Greek diplomats complained that it was not easy to find Greeks with a sufficient knowledge of Arabic.⁶⁷ In 1878, a young Syrian of Orthodox Christian faith and with an extra knowledge of the Greek and the Turkish language might intend to go to Egypt with a letter of recommendation by a bishop in Syria, asking the patriarch of Alexandria for support in order to get a position at a good merchant establishment,⁶⁸ most probably a Greek one.

Even if the knowledge of the Greek language did not assure loyalty to the Greek nation,⁶⁹ a Greek strategy was to claim that people, for example in Macedonia, did not use the same Bulgarian idiom spoken in Sofia, but were actually Greeks needed to be sent teachers so as to be instructed “their” language which, as stressed,

⁶³ Wendell, Charles: *The Evolution*, pp. 248-249, 259-260; Philipp, Thomas: *The Syrians in Egypt*, p. 108; Gershoni, Israel + Jankowski, James P.: *Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs*, pp. 13-14; Cole, Juan R. I.: *Colonialism and Revolution*, pp. 140-148, 271.

⁶⁴ Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, pp. 34-35.

⁶⁵ Compare the calculations of: Unknown author: *To zitima ton Syrorthodoxon*, p. 8; Avramidis, Aristarchos A.: *Ellas-Aigyptos*, pp. 14-15.

⁶⁶ Philipp, Thomas: *The Syrians in Egypt*.

⁶⁷ *HAMFA* 36:1, 1858; *HAMFA* 36:1, 1859.

⁶⁸ *APA - ELIA* 158, 1881-1887 + 1896.

⁶⁹ See footnote 56.

“the raids had once corrupted”;⁷⁰ similar ideas were expressed also among Greeks in Egypt, such as at an early 20th century study published by Boukouvalas, being at that period the director of the *Ampet School* in Cairo.⁷¹ Syria did not have a similar to Macedonia priority in the Greek turn-of-the-century projects, nevertheless Typaldos wrote in the 1850s about the “pure Syrians” of Egypt who respected Greeks “to excess” and could be “easily Hellenized”, if only “proper action” was taken;⁷² after visiting Jerusalem, Typaldos criticized religious leaders for spending money to luxurious buildings instead of investing it in the education of Arabs in Greece and in a Greek educational network in Palestine, Egypt, Syria and everywhere in the “East” where “*omogeneis*” or “*omodoxoi*”, i.e. people of the same faith, existed.⁷³ An 1886 letter from Syria published in *Metarrythmisis* insisted on the responsibilities of the Greek government, diplomats and clergy, which did not show any interest for Greek schools and the diffusion of the Greek language in Syria; according to the author of the letter, even the Greek consul in Damascus, a Syrian merchant who did not speak a word of Greek, cared about nothing more than his individual interests and was looking for Russian favour, being in fact the leader of the local Greek haters.⁷⁴ By the end of the century, Greek nationalist activists like Neoklis Kazazis would consider the inhabitants of places like Palestine as Arabic-speaking Greeks with a Greek origin since the antiquity,⁷⁵ whereas the historian Pavlos Karolidis published a study suggesting a Greek origin of Syrian and Palestinian Arabic-speaking Orthodox Christians and comparing their case to that of the Bulgarians where, as further explained, the “half barbarian spoken by the folk” was the pretext of “Panslavism” to encourage people with a Greek “national consciousness” to demand a different than the Greek national identification.⁷⁶

It was questionable whether the teaching of the Greek language to the “Arab-speaking Greeks” was the strategy needed, but also alternatives could face some practical difficulties. In 1861, the Greek Community of Alexandria approved the instruction of the Arabic language to a communal school, trying to serve the children

⁷⁰ See for example: Karavas, Spyros: “Makaríoi oi katechontes tin gin”, pp. 23-24.

⁷¹ Boukouvalas, G[eorgios]: I glossa.

⁷² Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, pp. 34-35.

⁷³ Ebenda, pp. 128-135.

⁷⁴ *Metarrythmisis*, 27/08.11.1886.

⁷⁵ Kazazis, Neoklis: *To dinarion tis Orthodoxias*, pp. 37-40.

⁷⁶ Karolidis, Pavlos: *Peri tis ethníkis katagógis*. For a critical approach to the federalist ideas of Karolidis see: Skopetea, Elli: *Oi Ellines kai oi echthroí tous*, pp. 12-13.

of Syrians and “local Arabs”,⁷⁷ but soon the president of the community, even though finding it good to appoint a teacher of Arabic so as to overcome the difficulties in communication of Greeks and Syrians and help poor Syrian families, which did not want to send their children to other schools and perhaps risk their religious beliefs, suggested that a teacher of Arabic for two hours per day would be hired only if there were more than 20-25 Syrian pupils.⁷⁸ On the other hand, in small towns such as Damietta the local priest, serving in the late 1880s as a teacher at the school maintained with the expenses of the Patriarchate, commented that the school was to be closed, since there were only a few Greeks and the “Niggers”, the local Arabs, mainly Copts, as explained, did not mean to learn Greek.⁷⁹ In Cairo, a reporter visited the 1895 annual exams of the *Ampet School*, which included 250 Orthodox among a total of 550 pupils and where Greek was a major subject together with French and Arabic language; according to his descriptions, Arab students made the audience laugh with their pronunciation of some Greek words, something that made the reporter comment that their teacher was trying to make all the “Niggers” Greeks.⁸⁰ Teaching Greek was not necessarily associated with “making” Greeks, but also with increasing the chances in labour market, but in the context of the specific school it could be loaded with more meanings than that. The status of the *Ampet School* had been a major issue of Greek-Syrian antagonism starting from different theories regarding the origin of the Ampet brothers. What is clear is that the Ampet brothers settled in Egypt possessing British, Russian and Greek passports and, although Rafaíl Ampet could speak good Arabic and only “stutter” a few words in Greek, he and his brothers gave money in 1860 to make a school in Cairo, where Greek was the main language of instruction.⁸¹ Russian intervention under the coordination of Smyrnof was intensive in the management of the school, especially in the beginning of the 20th century;⁸² according to both reportage and a text of Karolidis, that was part of the Panslavist policy to organize Arabic-speaking Christians in Egypt and repeat what was already made in the Patriarchate of Antioch or in Bulgaria, but Karolidis

⁷⁷ GCA 3, 1858-1868, pp. 40-41.

⁷⁸ Ebenda, pp. 62-63, 67.

⁷⁹ Akropolis Filologiki 7, 13.03.1888, p. 98.

⁸⁰ Metarrythmisis, 13/25.06.1895.

⁸¹ Pandora 14:324, 1863, pp. 308-309; Metarrythmisis, 18/30.07.1891; Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: Ellines en Aigypto, pp. 44-46; Michailidis, M[ichail] G.: Syntomos Istoría, pp. 5-9; Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigypthos – vol. 1, pp. 390-423; Amantos, Konst[antinos] I.: Mikra meletimata, pp. 283-287; Tomara-Sideris, Matoula: Evergetismos kai prosopikotita – vol. 2, pp. 21-58.

⁸² Fysentzidis, N[earchos]: Ypomnima, pp. 4-7.

reminded also that in both cases it was Greek-speaking people which caused more damage and that behaving to these people as if they were foreigners would push them further to ally to Panslavism.⁸³ Even though Russian agents like Uspenski or Ignatiev had a significant role regarding Arab Orthodox Christian demands in the eastern Mediterranean,⁸⁴ as a correspondent of *Tachydromos* from Syria complained, Russian activity in Syria was combined with Greek inactivity, having as a result the “loss” of people with Greek origin.⁸⁵ In any case, attempts to attract Syrian children to Greek schools in Egypt had limited success.

Common faith was a factor making a potential identification of some Syrians to Greeks easier. Until the turn of the 20th century, Greeks and Syrians of Orthodox faith were frequenting the same churches in Zagazig,⁸⁶ whereas the mess in Mahallah El-Kubra was made both in Greek and in Arabic because of the existence of Arabic-speaking Orthodox Christians.⁸⁷ The Greek Community of Alexandria hired two Arabic-speaking priests in 1856,⁸⁸ but even as late as in the late 19th century there were not many Arabic-speaking Orthodox priests in Egypt besides rare cases, such as that of Nikolaos Gattas, whose removal to Tanta had been asked in 1894 exactly because of that.⁸⁹ The antagonism of other Christian faiths was a factor that, according to information that could not be crosschecked elsewhere, made the patriarch demand the edition of a Greek-Arabic religious paper every Sunday, fearing that he might lose the Arabic-speaking part of his flock.⁹⁰ Even if such attempts existed, the Orthodox Syrians of Egypt felt aggrieved and, after the death of Sofronios in 1899, a major claim of them was a renegotiation of their participation in the elections for a new patriarch, applying to the Ottoman status of Egypt. The Ottoman involvement regarding the candidates was interpreted by Greek newspapers as a potential loss of the authority and independence of the Patriarchate of Alexandria,⁹¹ whereas Syrian texts demanding that the new patriarch should be an Ottoman subject, supported by the Egyptian authorities demanding the validation of the election of a patriarch only if he was born in the Ottoman state, had Ottoman parents and never

⁸³ Akropolis, 28.06.1906; Akropolis, 31.07.1906.

⁸⁴ Hopwood, Derek: *The Russian Presence*.

⁸⁵ *Tachydromos*, 29/11.02.1902.

⁸⁶ *Imerisia Nea*, 21/02.09.1876.

⁸⁷ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, pp. 428-429.

⁸⁸ Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias*, p. 235.

⁸⁹ *GCM* 4, 1892-1928.

⁹⁰ Akropolis, 07.04.1891.

⁹¹ *Empros*, 09.09.1899.

acquired Greek nationality, were translated in Greek.⁹² When Fotios was elected, there were rumors concerning the reading of the sultan's *berat* during his enthronement, something considered in *Tilegrafos* as equivalent of becoming the "sultan's subjects".⁹³

Many Syrians participated in the same communal institutions with Greeks in Egypt during the second half of the 19th century, sometimes even in leading positions or with a considerable material contribution,⁹⁴ but this co-existence was also questioned by the turn of the 20th century. In April 1902, a demonstration of Greeks asked for the completion of the building of a church for Cairo Greeks and the voting of a new regulation for the local community, matters which patriarch Fotios was accused of obstructing, as also the better management of communal property which was threatened, according to the protestors, by Fotios and the Syrians; the local Syrians, who had already created their own communal institution, would be allowed back, as also any Orthodox Christian, "even a Kaffir", as emphatically stressed, but only if they contributed as many benefactors as the Greeks had done and definitely not as a result of violence or pleas. The speaker, Emmanouil Chatziparaschis, who had been the secretary of the previous patriarch, argued also that money should not be cut from medical care, assistance to widows and orphans or the education of children.⁹⁵ In March 1903, a communal general assembly with the participation of the patriarch discussed whether the term "*omogenis*" would be enough to define its members but, after voting, the additional description "Orthodox" was not omitted for the members of the "Greek Community of the Orthodox of Cairo", as the title was, bearing this name also in Arabic language in its seal.⁹⁶ In 1904, a regulation of a "Greek Community of Cairo" was finally submitted and approved by the king of the Greeks, having a bust of goddess Athena as its seal, accepting as possible members all "*omogeneis*" who could afford the annual contribution and with the consul of Greece

⁹² *Tilegrafos*, 09/21.09.1899.

⁹³ *Tilegrafos*, 06/19.09.1900.

⁹⁴ Compare: GCC A3/Praktika, 1871-1885; Orthodoxos Elliniki Koinotita en Shibin El-Kawm, Kanonismos, p. 18; Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, pp. 293-294, 302; Lampros, Apostolos: Chronika Ellinismou Mansouras, p. 11; Diakofotakis, Ioannis: Istoría tis ellinikis paroikias Kafr El-Zayyat, p. 17-18, 118; Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: I Elliniki Koinotita tou Kaïrou, pp. 62-68.

⁹⁵ *Tilegrafos*, 22/05.05.1902; *Tilegrafos*, 20/02.06.1902; Unknown author: I Koinotis Kaïrou; Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: I Elliniki Koinotita tou Kaïrou, pp. 70-71.

⁹⁶ GCC Z1, 1903-1932.

in Cairo as its president,⁹⁷ an evolution comparable to what was had happened in many other cases at that period.⁹⁸ Unfortunately, not much has been detected regarding the secession of Syrians preceding the 1902 protests and the 1904 new regulation, even though in his memoirs Saktouris mentioned that one of his first missions as a diplomat in Egypt, more specifically in Tanta, was to contribute to the restoration of communal peace in 1899, after threats by Syrians to secede from the local Community;⁹⁹ in 1903, however, the Syrians were reported of collecting money in order to build their own church there,¹⁰⁰ apparently the local Arabic-speaking church inaugurated in 1914.¹⁰¹ At the same year, a reporter of *Empros* in Cairo mentioned that a Syrian Community was formed in Cairo and that the Syrians inaugurated their own church at the same day Greeks inaugurated a new church in the city, the reporter blaming the activity of Russians for that.¹⁰² Troubles regarding the way Syrians might be involved in the local Greek institutions came up also in Mahallah El-Kubra at that period.¹⁰³ According to the Greek vice-consul of Tanta, an intervention in Mahallah El-Kubra was demanded by 76 local Greeks and conciliatory proposals were made by him, including a right to vote for everyone paying a contribution for the communal institution; the Syrians, on the other hand, demanded that the regulation should provide for the election of some Syrians, since otherwise they feared that the Greek members, which were about four times more than the Syrians, would vote no Syrian, as also the renaming of the Greek Community to a Greek-Syrian one, the writing of its regulation in both Greek and Arabic and that the Greek diplomats would have no right to intervene in communal affairs. Since people were irritated, the vice-consul advised Greeks to behave well to Syrians, which they “hosted” in the church for so many years, as he explained, a verb indicating exactly of a major Greek perception that the Syrians feared. In any case, the local Syrians were not satisfied by the proposals they received, claiming that they deserved more participation, since some of them had also contributed financially. As further reported, texts in the Egyptian Greek press accused the patriarch for being pro-Syrian and responsible for the Greek-Syrian disputes and claimed that a patriarch could be acting

⁹⁷ Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I Elliniki Koinotita tou Kaïrou*, p. 95.

⁹⁸ See chapter 9.1.

⁹⁹ Saktouris, Antonios A.: *Anamniseis*, p. 103.

¹⁰⁰ *Tachydromos*, 28/10.02.1903.

¹⁰¹ Pantainos 1914, pp. 269-270.

¹⁰² *Empros*, 29.05.1914.

¹⁰³ *Akropolis*, 25.03.1914.

either as a “Greek clergyman” or as a “partner of Syrians”, since it was not possible anymore for the clergy to remain out of “the struggle of nations in the East”,¹⁰⁴ texts probably known to Syrians through those among them speaking Greek.

In 1926, a patriarchic edition assured that the Patriarchate always had an understanding according to which “all believers of the Eastern Orthodox doctrine living in the district of the Patriarchate, of any language or nationality or skin-colour or other secular difference”, were its flock “with equal rights and equal duties”;¹⁰⁵ to accusations of Syrians that the Patriarchate supported only Greeks, it was mentioned that three Arabic-speaking churches existed in Alexandria, two in Tanta and one in Port Said, not to mention of Arabic-speaking priests in Mansourah and Cairo.¹⁰⁶ Syrians formed their own, separate, Arabic-speaking churches in different towns of Egypt,¹⁰⁷ using an ecclesiastical language described by a Greek observer as a mixture of the Egyptian and Greek languages, with some Greek words “corrupted in a funny way”.¹⁰⁸ If the Patriarchate attempted to be convincing to Syrians and keep unity, the high clergy was accused by Greeks as pro-Syrian and probably had to express an opinion as a Greek Church when talking to Greek diplomats so as to reconfirm a national role. In 1914, at a report of the Greek consul in Beirut, it was argued that giving money to Greek schools in Syria and Palestine might well not suffice, since Syrian priests with a Greek education often became the most fanatic opponents of the Greek state, just as it had happened in Bulgaria or Serbia. Commenting this report, patriarch Fotios suggested that the financing of Greek schools should actually be promoted in order to avoid a further “alienation” of Syrians, which were actually Arabic-speaking Greeks; according to the report of a Greek diplomat, Fotios argued that the Greek authorities, together with religious institutions, should do their best to achieve a “return” of Syrians to their “real origin”, with Greek education being “the most powerful and appropriate way”.¹⁰⁹ After meeting Fotios, in 1916, a diplomat with federalist ideas like Filippos Dragoumis commented that Fotios was an intelligent man, who understood that permitting the use of the Arabic language in the churches would not be, as some Greeks feared, the reason for a “loss” of the churches

¹⁰⁴ HAMFA Γ/175, 1914.

¹⁰⁵ Unknown author: *To zitima ton Syrorthodoxon*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁶ *Ebenda*, pp. 19-20.

¹⁰⁷ Meinardus, Otto F. A.: *Christian Egypt*, p. 552; Philipp, Thomas: *The Syrians in Egypt*, p. 129.

¹⁰⁸ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: *Aigyptiakai anamniseis*, p. 84.

¹⁰⁹ HAMFA B/35, 1914.

for the Greeks, but would rather help maintaining unity and prevent a Syrian ecclesiastical autonomy.¹¹⁰

Even if the ecclesiastical leadership tried to maintain a unity including “Arabic-speaking Greeks” and although the case of Syrians was compared to major in the period of the “Eastern Question” regions in the Ottoman Balkans, the fears of some Greek authors came true and a reason was also that Syrians were not a high priority for the Greek state. Cases of Syrians might be tried – and acquitted – in the Greek Consular Court of Alexandria,¹¹¹ but the legal status of Syrians claiming Greek protection in Egypt, similarly to what happened in the case of many non-Syrians there,¹¹² was often disputed. In the negotiations of the early 1890s, the Greek side, in exchange to better terms regarding the exports of tobacco to Egypt, had to make some steps back regarding the rights of the local Syrians it protected; according to *Akropolis*, the Greek state compromised the honour and reputation of the Greek migrant community of Egypt for just a minimal profit.¹¹³ In 1903, the Greek government accepted that no Syrian would be protected by the Greek state in Egypt with an exception of 44 families, a settlement made in exchange to the import of tobacco from Greece without the extra tax imposed by the Egyptian authorities to other countries.¹¹⁴ A few weeks later, the number of Syrian families was raised to 56, but still did not include many of the people described by *Tachydromos* as having “affiliations of love, cooperation and brotherhood since a very long time”; if these people were “sacrificed”, went on the argument, that would provoke more than just a “moral damage” for Greeks,¹¹⁵ since it was about “losing” some hundreds of “fellow-citizens”, as written in another Alexandrian Greek newspaper, “in clear conscience” and just for the sake of tobacco exports.¹¹⁶ A Greek newspaper of Port Said described the agreement as an “abandonment of Syrians”, making a comparison to politics in Macedonia and adding that, “if we [the Greeks] care, whenever we hear that Bulgarian-speaking Greeks of Macedonia turn to Bulgarians”, “what should we [the Greeks] say about the abandonment of so many subjects by those responsible for the

¹¹⁰ Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): Dragoumis, Filippos Stef.: *Imerologio*, p. 60.

¹¹¹ *Tachydromos*, 23/06.07.1900.

¹¹² See chapter 8.

¹¹³ *Akropolis*, 01.01.1894.

¹¹⁴ *Tachydromos*, 28/10.06.1903; *Tachydromos*, 29/11.06.1903; Kerkinos, Pantelis E.: *I elliniki ithageneia*, pp. 43, 64-69.

¹¹⁵ *Tachydromos*, 07/20.07.1903.

¹¹⁶ *Omonoia*, 05/18.07.1903.

future of our nation”, of people that, as argued with some exaggeration, mostly considered themselves as Greeks.¹¹⁷ At the same period, negotiations regarding the commerce of tobacco in Egypt and pressures on behalf of the Egyptians regarding the issue of Greek hashish trade led to massive demonstrations headed by local politicians in areas with a considerable production of hashish, such as the region of Mantinea in Peloponnisos, whereas the Greek government was pressured also from massive demonstrations in tobacco producing areas such as Agrinio or places in Thessalia, by tobacco exporters or even by journalists arguing that supporting hashish just because of the profit of voters of specific areas was damaging the Greek name abroad.¹¹⁸ In May 1906, in spite of reactions by some members of the Greek parliament, describing hashish as harmless and making comparisons with the intervention of the British regarding the opium in China,¹¹⁹ a new treaty was signed. If negotiations and pressures from different regions already forming part of the Greek state might influence political decisions and priorities, the Syrian “fellow-citizens”, considered by some as an important issue for the Greek nation comparable even to that of Macedonia, could be “sacrificed” in exchange for the commercial interests of some Greeks, not so surprisingly, if one takes into account how profitable activities of whole regions in the existing borders of the Greek state were also “sacrificed”.

Nation, in spite of proclamations as being a “deep, horizontal comradeship”, did not in fact overcome the actual inequality of its members.¹²⁰ The “Arab-speaking Greeks” of Syria were apparently not the first priority for decision takers in the Greek state, in spite of the expectations of some Greeks. If some were writing against the “sacrificing” of Syrians, however, it was not just decisions taken in the Greek state that mattered. Syrians in Egypt were often engaged in activities similar to those of many local Greeks and in some cases, as for example was reported from Egypt during a period of economic crisis, might have been considered even as the major antagonists of Greeks in Egypt.¹²¹ In 1914, a Syrian lawyer explained at an interview to *Tachydromos* that the recent incidents in Cairo, Tanta and Mahallah El-Kubra regarding the local communal institutions were exaggerated and that Syrians not only had no problem with Greeks, but actually considered them as their “brothers”, shared

¹¹⁷ Syndesmos, 07/20.07.1903.

¹¹⁸ Lampridis, I[Ioannis]: O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos, pp. 36-37; Empros, 18.08.1904; Empros, 24-30.10.1905.

¹¹⁹ Empros, 08.06.1906.

¹²⁰ Anderson, Benedict: Imagined Communities, p. 7.

¹²¹ Empros, 07.01.1908. About the 1908 crisis see in more detail chapter 12.3.

not only religion but also origin with them and had even supported Greece in recent wars. What Syrians wanted, according to the same person, was just to make their own communities, having Greeks as their example and not as their opponent, whereas all troubles were caused not by the priests or the “educated class” of Greeks, but by the mistrust of “the lower class of Hellenism in Egypt”. The proposal made was that the Greek press should be moderate, that Arabic-speaking priests should be increased in Orthodox churches of Egypt and that Greeks should not be “actuated by nationalistic sentiments in ecclesiastical matters”.¹²² In the same newspaper and a few weeks later, a Greek lawyer not only referred to Greek-Syrian antagonisms since the antiquity, with only few Syrians maintaining “honest” feelings of friendship towards Greeks since then, but also blamed personal ambitions, individual interests and foreign influences as explaining their “betrayal” to the “general interest of the [Greek] race”. The conclusion was that the definite division of Greeks and Syrians would be the best solution, so that “Hellenism would remain peaceful and concentrated to its national activity”.¹²³ The process of including “Arabic-speaking Greeks” to the Greek nation failed to a great part, even though this had not been a self-evident result; the interest of the Greek state was too weak and came too late to achieve anything more than a friendship and cooperation of two nations, whereas most Syrians, even those more positively disposed to Greek affairs, were already attached to a Syrian community perceived in terms of exclusivity. At the case of Albanians, for which more information has been detected, comparable failures emerged at the same period. Egypt was a place where a considerable Albanian presence and interrelation with Greek networks and institutions posed similar questions, their case being however higher in the list of Greek priorities and with a greater number of Albanians being related to the Greek state or thinking of a relation to it.

10.3 From “brotherly races” to neighbors “beyond comparison inferior”

Albanians comprised probably the most contested example of the long 19th century regarding the possible limits of the Greek nation, partly sharing different cultural and political elements with other people defining themselves or defined by others as Greeks at that time. Already in the 1840s, ideas about Albanians as one of

¹²² Tachydromos, 06/19.05.1914.

¹²³ Tachydromos, 26/09.07.1914; Tachydromos, 28/11.07.1914.

the tribes that contributed to the creation of a Greek nation were published in Athenian press;¹²⁴ a major romanticist historian of that period, Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos, wrote about Albanians and Greeks as the two races of the Greek nation.¹²⁵ According to another Greek mid-19th century text, without the Albanians, who were also Greeks, “there would have been no free Greece”,¹²⁶ whereas Albanians supporting some form of cooperation with Greeks also used the argument of the Albanian participation with the Greeks fighting for an independent state in the 1820s.¹²⁷ In the aftermath of a Russo-Turkish war in the 1870s Paschidis, an Ipeiroi journalist involved in different federalist organizations of late 19th century,¹²⁸ used arguments such as that of a common Pelasgian origin and a shared fear to Panslavism, but also argued that civic rights should be assured by “genuine Greeks” to all Albanians irrespective of religion or different customs, if they were included to a Greek state.¹²⁹ A text published in the journal of the “Hellenism Society” suggested the unification with the “brothers”, the “*Arvanites*” of the “*Arvanitia*”, to a common kingdom similarly to the Austrian-Hungarian or the Swedish-Norwegian models of that time, an argument based, however, on the premise that Greeks were the “civilized” form of “*Arvanites*”.¹³⁰ The president of that society, Neoklis Kazazis, in texts of 1878 as well as of 1907, repeated arguments of this kind and accused “foreigners” for propagating to Albanians, also to those in Egypt, ideas against Greeks; Kazazis suggested that Greeks were already leading the “economic struggle of Asia Minor and Egypt”, an argument supposed to further attract Ottoman Albanians to a federal model like that of Switzerland or Belgium.¹³¹

Versions of Greek-Albanian projects or arguments of a Pelasgian origin were discussed by migrants in Egypt during the second half of the 19th century.¹³² A letter, its author presenting himself as a merchant “in Albania and other Greek places”, was published in *Kaïron* in 1883, assuring that at least the Orthodox Christians and the

¹²⁴ Skoulidas, Elias G.: The perception of the Albanians, p. 179.

¹²⁵ Skopetea, Elli: To “protypo vaseio”, pp. 187-189.

¹²⁶ Cited in: Liakos, Antonis: I italiki enopoiisi, p. 245, footnote 30.

¹²⁷ Prantis, Efthimios St.: Alvanika parapon, p. 61.

¹²⁸ Chasiotis, Loukianos: “I Anatoliki Omospondia”, pp. 29, 87.

¹²⁹ Paschidis, Th[omas] A.: Oi Alvanoï.

¹³⁰ O Ellinismos, May 1899, p. 200.

¹³¹ Kazazis, N[eoklis]: Ellinoalvaniki synennoisis, especially pp. 29-30, 48-49.

¹³² Pandora 10:219, 1859, pp. 69-70; Pandora 10:235, 1860, pp. 447-450; Imerisia Nea, 22/03.06.1878; Imerisia Nea, 30/11.06.1878; Imerisia Nea, 31/12.06.1878; Elpis, 23/04-30/11.06.1878; Skendi, Stavro: The Albanian National Awakening, pp. 83-86, 175; Skoulidas, Elias G.: Oi scheseis Ellinon kai Alvanon, p. 167.

Muslims among Albanians knew that their race was part of the Greek nation and that their interests were common, something making the model of Austria-Hungary appropriate and demanding the teaching of the Albanian language together with the Greek one.¹³³ In early 1887, a suggestion was made to form an Ipeiros-Albanian Brotherhood to finance Greek schools in Albania, but the participation of Albanians, who would not agree in the existing Ipeiros Brotherhood, was met with reactions by many local Ipeiros due to their hatred to Albanians, according to correspondence of those involved in the initiative.¹³⁴ An Ipeiros Association is mentioned in February 1887 as promising the promotion of charity and education in Ipeiros and Albania;¹³⁵ shortly afterwards, a regulation of an Ipeiros-Albanian Brotherhood, with the wealthy Ipeiros Georgios Averoff as its honorary president and similar goals, would accept any “Ipeiros-Albanian” or other “*omogeneis*” as possible members.¹³⁶ Blood, manners and customs were named as a common factor by an Alexandrian Greek newspaper of 1896, describing Albania as “another glorious daughter of Greece” after Crete and Macedonia, assuring that even Muslim Albanians wanted to be included to Greece and blaming the leaders of Greece for “unforgivable negligence” due to ignorance.¹³⁷ At about the same time Georgios Gousios, president of the Alexandrian department of the “National Society”, expressed the opinion of a co-operation with Albanians, admitting however that their “Hellenization” could only be a medium-term goal.¹³⁸ An Ipeiros Brotherhood was formed in Cairo in 1903 and, in opposition to former ones, developed great activity including the proclamation of a contest on geography and history of Ipeiros, with a board consisting of professors Nikolaos Politis and Spyridon Lampros and by Ioannis Lampridis, the aim defined as a study about the “Greek sentiments” of Vlachs and Albanians.¹³⁹ In early 1908, the Alexandrian *Omonoia* republished texts from the Athenian *Akropolis* claiming how Albanians were “pure Greeks”; the author was Loukas Bellos, a doctor from Thiva and member of the Greek parliament with the Liberals, who was earlier in Egypt working as the doctor of Georgios Averoff.¹⁴⁰ Greek diplomats often reported the activities of

¹³³ *Kaïron*, 22.10.1883.

¹³⁴ Cited in: Skoulidas, Elias G.: *Oi scheseis Ellinon kai Alvanon*, pp. 255, 295-297.

¹³⁵ *Metarrythmisis*, 30/11.02.1887.

¹³⁶ *Metarrythmisis*, 23/07.03.1887.

¹³⁷ *Tachydromos*, 23/04.08.1896.

¹³⁸ Gianouloupoulos, Giannis: “*I evgenis mas tyflosis*”, pp. 73-75.

¹³⁹ Mekios, Konstantinos M.: *Istoria tis Ipeirou*; Betis, Stefanos: *Ipeirosikes Adelfotites*, pp. 314-317; <http://www.panipirotikos-kairou.org/greek/history03.php>.

¹⁴⁰ Oddis, Ferdinando F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, p. 363; Gounaris, Vasilis K.: *Synoikoi*, p. 40.

“*voulgarizontes*”, people positively disposed to Bulgarian political ideas, who turned migrants with “Greek sentiments” into Bulgarians in the United States of America, something that could have an influence in their places of origin as well; as one Greek diplomat pointed in March 1910, a similar process was taking place with Albanian-speaking people not only in the United States of America, but also in Romania or Egypt, places with the most bitter “*misellinas alvanistas*”, people with an Albanian orientation and a hatred to Greeks.¹⁴¹ If a Greek text on transatlantic migrants from Korçë mentioned how some, ignorant as they had been, were misguided by Albanian nationalists acting as agents of “foreign propagandas” against Greece,¹⁴² from an Albanian perspective the experience of migration was one that transformed a person who did not care about “the politics of his native land” to an Albanian “fully conscious of his national identity”.¹⁴³ Influential merchants and authors lived in Egypt as also in Romania, Italy or the United States of America;¹⁴⁴ as reported in 1912, even if with some exaggeration, it was “there by Nile” that all trends and political aspirations of contemporary Albanians developed.¹⁴⁵

Already by his visit in mid-19th century Egypt, Typaldos mentioned the existence of about a thousand Albanians of Orthodox faith only in Cairo, mainly tailors, shoemakers, retailers and guards, which all “boasted of their Greekness”, as also of a thousand “*kath’ eafto*”, i.e. “genuine”, Greeks; the difference between the two groups was not nationality, since Typaldos estimated that about 400 of the later group were protected by other states than the Greek.¹⁴⁶ In Shibin El-Kawm, Spyros Din was described as “originating from Albania” and being an “extremely patriotic” merchant working for the welfare of the “local Hellenism”.¹⁴⁷ Petro Mili was a Korçë-born Albanian merchant which attended Greek schools in Cairo and Athens, before settling in Minya and getting involved in the formation of the local Greek Community, in 1862.¹⁴⁸ Konstantinos Naoum, also a merchant from Korçë, was described as an example of “honourable citizen” who had served as president of the

¹⁴¹ HAMFA B/44, 1910.

¹⁴² Andreadis, Andr[eas] Mich[ail] (ed.): *I elliniki metanastefsis*, pp. 377-378.

¹⁴³ Federal Writers’ Project, *The Albanian Struggle*, pp. 33, 36-39.

¹⁴⁴ Skendi, Stavro: *The Albanian National Awakening*, pp. 145-164.

¹⁴⁵ Akropolis, 28.07.1912.

¹⁴⁶ Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, pp. 35, 82-83.

¹⁴⁷ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, p. 378.

¹⁴⁸ Firippidis, Nikolaos S.: *Istorikon simeioma*, p. 187; Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, pp. 359-360.

Greek Community of Minya,¹⁴⁹ where Leonidas Logoris, another person of Albanian origin, as mentioned, was involved in communal affairs.¹⁵⁰ In 1899 and perhaps with some unjustified optimism, Paraskevopoulos assured that many Albano-Macedonians with Greek sentiments were cooperating with other Greeks in communal affairs in places like Shibin El-Kawm or Bani Suwayf;¹⁵¹ especially in the later, these “Greek sentiments” of Albanians were particularly questioned in the 1890s.

It was in Bani Suwayf, a small town south of Cairo, that since 1889 and on the initiative of Vyzantios, the Greek vice-consul of Asyut, a Greek-Albanian institution was formed so as to collect money for building a church and other welfare institutions.¹⁵² In 1894, Vatikiotis replaced Vyzantios as the vice-consul of Greece and, having an experience in Tanta and Asyut, tried to “adjust” the regulations of Bani Suwayf to the concept of a Greek national institution,¹⁵³ an attempt that was faced by different reactions and ended with the division of the common institution.¹⁵⁴ In a manuscript of the new regulation detected in the receiving patriarchic correspondence, the description “Greek Orthodox” or “Greek” was used interchangeably for the communal institution and all “*omogeneis*” who could afford contribution were considered as potential members, whereas it was subjected under the spiritual authority of the patriarch and the political jurisdiction of Greek diplomats in Egypt.¹⁵⁵ The Albanians that reacted formed an Albanian Brotherhood and published a regulation written in Greek language; the vice-president of the previously common institution, Baklavas, signed this regulation as a president of the new Brotherhood in May 1894. The regulation provided the participation of all Albanians settled in Egypt irrespective of religion and, although it was stressed that the Brotherhood had no political goal, it was also declared that the support to the perfection of Albanian language in Albania and Egypt was a major goal; furthermore, it was pointed that its name could never change in any way, whereas the institution was posed under Egyptian jurisdiction irrespective of the nationality of its members.¹⁵⁶

¹⁴⁹ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, p. 320.

¹⁵⁰ Firippidis, Nikolaos S.: *Istorikon simeioma*, p. 188.

¹⁵¹ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, pp. 428, 452.

¹⁵² Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sychronos Ellinismos*, p. 136; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 333.

¹⁵³ About these “readjustments” see chapter 9.1.

¹⁵⁴ *Metarrythmisis*, 26/06.04.1894; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, pp. 334-335.

¹⁵⁵ APA - ELIA 261, 1894-1897.

¹⁵⁶ *Alvaniki Adelfotita: Kanonismos*.

With his initiative and its failure, Vatikiotis became the black sheep for many Ipeiros and “Ipeiros-Albanians”, demanding his removal to another post at any place no “Albanian-Macedonian-Ipeiros” had been living, as was emphatically stressed in Ipeiros Greek press;¹⁵⁷ a few years later, in 1907, an Alexandrian Greek newspaper commenting the diffusion of “*albanist*” ideas, i.e. of Albanian nationalism, recalled of 1894 as a time when Greek diplomats tried to force Albanians to change the name of the community of Bani Suwayf, since they were “mised” by Oikonomou, then a president of the Community.¹⁵⁸ Gryparis, the Greek consul in Alexandria reporting to Athens in the aftermath of those events, explained that as soon as he was informed he wrote a long brief to Oikonomou, arguing about the “absurd and damaging consequences such struggles and divisions” might have and asking him to avoid any further act that might make things worse.¹⁵⁹ Greek diplomats were mostly worried about the possible impact to Greek politics in Ottoman Macedonia. Already in 1893, in discussions preceding the division of the community, an Albanian Committee from Bani Suwayf had expressed hopes for a mutually acceptable solution so that “personal interests” would not lead the two “Greek tribes” to a division, one that might be transmitted to Ipeiros and Albania, as they pointed out at *Tilegrafos*.¹⁶⁰ If this warning might well have been a way to pressure things, the reporter of another Alexandrian Greek newspaper mentioned already in January of 1894 that just after the communal division in Bani Suwayf, many dissatisfied Albanians were sending their complaints to Albania, Romania and Macedonia.¹⁶¹ The successor of Vatikiotis, describing the 1894 story two years later, explained in a report to Athens his worries about the Albanians, originating mainly from Korçë, who had left the community and might influence the Albanians at their places of origin,¹⁶² a fear often expressed by diplomats, even if also in order to make their own role seem greater; different reservations regarding the importance of warnings and fears of that kind should not lead, on the other hand, to an underestimation of the contact between migrant communities and their places of origin and of the impact of the former to the later.

Oikonomou, the leader of the reformers, explained in a letter to the patriarch that he had no intention of pushing Albanians aside, but wanted only to be fair

¹⁵⁷ Mentioned in: Betis, Stefanos: *Ipeiritikes Adelfotites*, p. 321.

¹⁵⁸ *Tilegrafos*, 19/02.07.1907.

¹⁵⁹ HAMFA αακ/Ε:δ, 1894.

¹⁶⁰ *Tilegrafos*, 23/04.04.1893.

¹⁶¹ *Omonoia*, 05/17.01.1894.

¹⁶² HAMFA αακ:γ', 1896.

towards all other tribes such as the Thessalians, the Macedonians, the Islanders, the Anatolians and the Peloponnisians, who contributed much more than the 20% of the capital provided by the Albanians.¹⁶³ A further argument of Oikonomou that the title was shortened just as a matter of easiness, since Albanians were just one of all the Greek tribes, was also repeated in Egyptian Greek press,¹⁶⁴ but did not convince all Albanians, as evident by the authors of two letters in *Tilegrafos*. The one was by an Albanian living in Maghaghah who, after repeating the argument of the danger regarding Macedonia, commented that Syrians and Anatolians and even Chinese ought to be able to participate in communal institutions, on the precondition only that they were Orthodox Christians. It was not an issue of secular elections, but a religious one, went on the argument, its author using however a less religious argument as he complained about the maltreatment and prejudice of Greeks towards Albanians, treated as if they were not “Albanian Greeks born and bred as brothers” and always contributing for Greece, but slaves from Sudan or Abyssinia.¹⁶⁵ Another letter in the same edition was signed by four Bani Suwayf Albanians, explaining that it was the Albanian-speaking members of the initially united institution that asked for a Greek consular intervention at the first place due to suspicions for economic irregularities at the treasury; according to this version of the story, the whole issue was an act of revenge against those who raised the issue of controlling the handling of the communal property, since they were Albanian-speaking and it was because of this that they were accused for having hidden political goals against the Greek nation, something that the Greek vice-consul believed with extreme *naiveté*. The letter ended with an appeal to the “national interests and the honour of the nation”, for which the concord of the two “brother people” was needed.¹⁶⁶ Some Albanians protested to the Greek consul in Alexandria demanding the restoration of the “Greek-Albanian” title, if worse consequences were to be avoided,¹⁶⁷ whereas a group of 50 Albanians from Bani Suwayf sent a protest to the patriarch with a similar argumentation in February of 1894, demanding from him, having a “spiritual jurisdiction”, to take care of their religious duties, since they had decided to abstain from their contribution to the erection of a church until their demand for the restoration of the initial, common title

¹⁶³ APA - ELIA 261, 1894-1897.

¹⁶⁴ *Tilegrafos*, 08/20.01.1894.

¹⁶⁵ *Tilegrafos*, 24/05.02.1894.

¹⁶⁶ *Ebenda*.

¹⁶⁷ HAMFA *αακ*/E:δ, 1894.

of the community would be satisfied.¹⁶⁸ At one Alexandrian Greek newspaper, news from Bani Suwayf were commented by suggesting that all “*omogeneis*”, a description including Albanians, should be equal, since discriminations “bring about racial disputes and cause much evil harm”, whereas even the maintenance of the name “Greek-Albanian” was accepted.¹⁶⁹ The editor of another Alexandrian Greek newspaper decided that by not publishing some of the letters he received on the Bani Suwayf dispute, he would avoid stirring the fire of “*ethnoktones*”, i.e. disastrous for the nation, disputes.¹⁷⁰ The ex-treasurer, who was initially accused as an embezzler, wrote that everything happened because the secretary wanted to divide the two “*omaimonas*”, i.e. of the same blood, as also “brotherly” races; according to the same person, “our brothers” should be “completely” satisfied, since they had “obvious Greek sentiments”, as evident at an incidence he mentioned, with about 40 Bani Suwayf Albanians acclaiming the “Greek homeland” and its king with tears in their eyes.¹⁷¹ Meanwhile, *Metarrythmisis* criticized some comments of *Tilegrafos* as “*misellinika*”, i.e. Greek-hating, explaining the issue as caused by “a handful of suspect people”, reacting against the honour made to them by being called “Greeks”; “every honest Albanian, having in veins the same blood running through the veins of those fighting for Greek liberation”, was juxtaposed to those Albanians “worth of honour and respect”.¹⁷²

A theologian argued that the problem was that the power and management of affairs was delegated to Greek citizens until 1889, whereas a contribution for the conservation of the church was demanded by all Orthodox people;¹⁷³ the ambiguity regarding the character of communal institutions and the intermingling of national and religious identifications indeed was a cause of many perplexities in communal institutions in Egypt,¹⁷⁴ but Greek nationality was not necessarily identified to people of “Greek sentiments” or “*omogeneis*”,¹⁷⁵ even if it could serve as a pretext in cases, such as the Bani Suwayf dispute. According to Oikonomou, it was just four or five “*misellines*”, i.e. Greek-haters, as also “foreign subjects”, two qualities identified in

¹⁶⁸ APA - ELIA 261, 1894-1897. A possible response of Sofronios was not detected in any source available during research.

¹⁶⁹ Omonoia, 05/17.01.1894.

¹⁷⁰ Metarrythmisis, 31/12.02.1894.

¹⁷¹ Metarrythmisis, 02/14.02.1894.

¹⁷² Metarrythmisis, 30/11.04.1894.

¹⁷³ Firippidis, Nikolaos S.: *Istorikon simeioma*, pp. 189-191.

¹⁷⁴ See chapter 9.1.

¹⁷⁵ See chapter 8.

this understanding, which were to blame for Albanian reactions.¹⁷⁶ A comment in *Omonoia* stressed that Albanians, “brothers” and “*omaimones*”, i.e. people with the same blood, reacted not to the posing of the Community under the protection of the Greek authorities, but rather to the exclusion of non-Greek citizens from eligible positions.¹⁷⁷ Some Albanians were elected in the years preceding 1894, according to a Greek reporter “as a matter of courtesy” by the Greek majority, the problem being the insistence of two Albanians of Romanian and Italian nationality, as stressed, not leaving any possibility for a compromise.¹⁷⁸ At one Alexandrian Greek newspaper, it was suggested that five among 37 Albanians participating in the community were not Greek subjects and they were blamed for causing the whole issue and inciting the rest of the Albanians;¹⁷⁹ a report of another Alexandrian Greek newspaper mentioned the existence of 35 Albanian members of the Community, with eight of them not possessing a Greek nationality, something explained by their hatred against Greeks.¹⁸⁰ Not only was it unclear who exactly was an Albanian and who was of Greek nationality, the later perceived as a proof of identification with a national project, but this understanding facilitated the promotion of “foreign interventions”, a usual *passé-partout* explanation regarding Greek-Albanian relations at that time.¹⁸¹ A series of 1895 texts in Alexandrian Greek press considered Turks as responsible for the “*Albanists*”, as people close to an autonomous Albanian political project were called, including Albanian merchants in Egypt and Romania supporting schools in Korçë which promoted the hatred against Greeks and “*Ellinizontes*”, i.e. people related to Greek culture.¹⁸² By 1914, a reporter of *Empros* would argue that foreign influences played a role for Albanians as well as for Syrians in Egypt, turning them against the “Greek Church”, something that had to be faced with good Greek diplomats and a patriarch that would be “*Ellinofronas*”, i.e. with Greek beliefs, before one would think of the possibility of using violence.¹⁸³ Such views not only downplayed Greek prejudices and their blame for the whole issue, but also underestimated the emergence of any autonomous Albanian or Syrian discourses.

¹⁷⁶ APA - ELIA 261, 1894-1897.

¹⁷⁷ *Omonoia*, 11/23.01.1894.

¹⁷⁸ *Metarrythmisis*, 25/06.04.1894.

¹⁷⁹ *Tilegrafos*, 31/12.04.1893.

¹⁸⁰ *Metarrythmisis*, 30/11.04.1894.

¹⁸¹ Skopetea, Elli: *Oi Ellines kai oi echthroï tous*, p. 22; Gounaris, Vasilis K.: *Synoikoi*, pp. 47-48.

¹⁸² *Tilegrafos*, 27/08.11.1895; *Tilegrafos*, 30/11.11.1895.

¹⁸³ *Empros*, 29.05.1914.

Skopetea observed that during the revolt leading to a Greek independent state, the co-existence of Greek and Albanian languages did not create any communication or other problems, but just a few years later there was the opinion that the existence of idioms other than the Greek in Greece made necessary the unification and systemization of a Greek language.¹⁸⁴ On the other hand, Greek language was not necessarily unknown even among Albanians living in Ottoman provinces: in Korçë, a town from which many migrants to Egypt originated, it is reported that all 9000 Christian among a total of 12.000 of its inhabitants in 1877 were able to write in Greek.¹⁸⁵ In the abovementioned¹⁸⁶ study of Mekios, it was explained that everyone among the educated Albanians in Ipeiros had some knowledge of the Greek language and culture, whereas even illiterate Albanians could speak some Greek and all of them were loyal to Greek [political] ideas.¹⁸⁷ By the 1894 dispute of Bani Suwayf, Oikonomou explained in a letter written on the 12th of February that “Greek” was a term fair enough to include “all those who had Orthodoxy as their religion and Greek as their written language”,¹⁸⁸ an approach suggesting of the importance of Greek education for a definition of someone, perhaps even of Orthodox Christian Albanians, as a Greek; Loukas Mpellos even expressed the opinion that Albanians were “pure Greeks” as much as Cretans or Cypriots, with the particularity only of using “their own dialect at home”.¹⁸⁹ Either by reducing the Albanian language to a dialect or by correlating the possibility of being a Greek to the ability to speak or write Greek, the obstacle of language could be overcome from a Greek point of view.

From an Albanian point of view, the search for a proper alphabet was an issue for both supporters and opponents of plans close to Greek projects. In 1882 and after returning from the United States of America to Athens, one Albanian issued a book promoting the “awakening” of Albanians as a nation through the development of their language, suggesting a new alphabet based on the ancient Phoenician and adjusted to the needs of the Albanian speech.¹⁹⁰ As Koulouriotis explained in the introduction, his goal was not to provoke the division of the Greek state but, on the contrary, to support

¹⁸⁴ Skopetea, Elli: To “protypo vasileio”, pp. 116-117. About the Albanian spoken in the Greek state during the 19th century see footnotes 10-16.

¹⁸⁵ Cited in: Skoulidas, Elias G.: *Oi scheseis Ellinon kai Alvanon*, p. 81.

¹⁸⁶ See footnote 139.

¹⁸⁷ Mekios, Konstantinos M.: *Istoria tis Ipeirou*, appendix, pp. ε’-ζ’.

¹⁸⁸ APA - ELIA 261, 1894-1897.

¹⁸⁹ Cited in: Gounaris, Vasilis K.: *Synoikoi*, p. 40. About Bellos, see footnote 140.

¹⁹⁰ Koulouriotis, Anastasios: *Alvanikon Alfavitariou*, pp. στ’-θ’.

and strengthen it by aiding Albanians to identify their interests with those of Greece and assure political and religious freedom, as in the example of the United States of America, which he juxtaposed to the “collapsing Turkey”.¹⁹¹ The ideas of Koulouriotis were however not always welcome by Greeks, especially as he tried to diffuse them in western Balkan Ottoman provinces.¹⁹² Thimi Mitkou was an Albanian originating from Korçë who carried out a merchant enterprise in Egypt for many decades.¹⁹³ In 1878, he published a folklore study supported by people such as Georgios Averoff or Tassos Neroutsos, where he expressed his wish to rescue Albanian texts and traditions for the next generations with the goal of encouraging Albanians to the study of their mother tongue and hereby join their “Greek speaking brothers”; as he argued, it would be a mistake to suppress the Albanian language, using the example of the Greek policy towards Bulgarians as one to be avoided, whereas it was pointed that the Greek culture might easily access the few educated Albanians, but the “Greek ideas” would enter the greater mass of Albanian population and strengthen the “Greek patriotism and self-consciousness” among them only by the use of the Albanian language.¹⁹⁴ Two years later another Albanian merchant from Korçë who resided in Minya published a book suggesting the need of Albanians to take care of their language and arguing that Greeks should support them in order to get rid of the accusations of illiteracy; if this happened, the Greek language and culture might also be spread broadly among Albanians of all classes,¹⁹⁵ whereas Prantis assured that the Albanians were not “Scythes and Bulgarians” to follow Russian propaganda, but rather the “loyal children of Greece”.¹⁹⁶ Prantis mentioned of different incidents at which Albanians faced prejudice by Greeks in Egypt, the later regarding the former as illiterate and able to do only the “dirty work”, enabling Greeks to make a career in commerce.¹⁹⁷ A story of an Albanian from Korça was indicating: educated in Athens, he followed a usual at that time route towards Egypt, working as an employee at one of the best-known Greek merchant establishments. His Greek boss did not consider that Albanians were able for merchant activities and the

¹⁹¹ Ebenda, pp. ιβ’-ιε’.

¹⁹² Skendi, Stavro: *The Albanian National Awakening*, pp. 126-127.

¹⁹³ Jochalas, Titos P.: *Albanologische Nachrichten*, p. 200; Neroutsos-Hartinger, Helga: *Der Briefwechsel*, p. 119, footnote 95.

¹⁹⁴ Mitkou, E[thimi]: *Alvaniki melissa*, pp. γ’-ε’.

¹⁹⁵ Prantis, Efthimios St.: *Alvanika parapona*, pp. ιγ’-ιδ’.

¹⁹⁶ Ebenda, p. κστ’.

¹⁹⁷ Ebenda, pp. 58-62.

protagonist of the story, not standing the complaints of his boss, went to work to a Swiss antagonist where, according to Prantis, he had great success. Perhaps more interesting, however, is that when the specific person made some money, he invested it to make his own industry in clothing not somewhere in Egypt or in Korçë, but in Piraeus. Prantis took the opportunity from this story to make a prediction about the future possibilities of broadening equality in all aspects of life of people irrespective of origin.¹⁹⁸

Such expectations proved optimistic, however, since Greek prejudice was still evident by the end of the century, despite various proclamations, whereas on the other hand a generation of well-educated Albanians, including people with a Greek education, started to react with a greater intensity to Greek prejudice. A 1900 text suggesting the introduction of the Albanian language to Greek schools and military academies in the Greek state against the objections of some people with “incurable prejudices” was republished in Egypt; the main argument was that, if the Albanians were alienated from their own language, they would be lost for the Greeks just like it already happened in the case of northern Macedonia.¹⁹⁹ A 1904 letter from a subscriber of *Tachydromos*, even though still referring to Greek-speaking and Albanian-speaking Ipeirots having without exception a “high [Greek] national sentiment”, expressed pessimistic predictions about the later, since the opposition of the Greek state to the Albanian language was making easier even in the Greek state the plans of the “*Alvanistes*”, i.e. the Albanian nationalists; clergymen were also blamed, as often in texts of that time, for not being worth of their mission to Albanians, the “first cousins” of Greeks.²⁰⁰ A 1907 analysis published in *Omonoia* suggested that a Greek support to an Albanian independent state might have been a possibility, since the later was preferable at the Greek borders than Austria or Italy, potentially serving as a “bastion of Hellenism against the dangers coming from north or west”.²⁰¹ Together with such worries and alternative plans at the beginning of the 20th century *Pyrrros*, a newspaper in Athens with the explicate goal of serving a Greek-Albanian understanding, as perceived from a Greek point of view,²⁰² published a letter from Egypt sent on the request of many local Albanians, as mentioned,

¹⁹⁸ Ebenda, p. 64.

¹⁹⁹ *Tachydromos*, 13/26.12.1900.

²⁰⁰ *Tachydromos*, 22/04.01.1904.

²⁰¹ *Omonoia*, 20/02.11.1907.

²⁰² See in particular the explanations given in: *Pyrrros*, 11.05.1903.

arguing for the need of them to have a knowledge of the Greek besides the Albanian language.²⁰³ Even if some Albanians and Greeks might have such ideas, a growing tendency was going rather to the direction of forming two exclusive communities. A person choosing to sign as “Pyrros”, the same Ipeirot king of the antiquity selected for the name of the abovementioned newspaper, argued in a 1903 Greek newspaper of Port Said against the “half-barbarian and gibberish Albanian dialect” in the mess.²⁰⁴ In 1905 Aristeidis Foutridis, the later scholar of the Yale University, at that time still working in Egypt,²⁰⁵ mentioned the reactions of the Albanians of Shubin El-Kawm to the ideas of a local Ipeirot doctor with Greek education, claiming of being himself an Albanian; always according to Foutridis, the doctor criticized that many Albanians of Egypt attended Greek schools where they “wasted their time in vain”, suggesting also that wealthy local Albanians should not finance a church, which would soon be posed under Greek control.²⁰⁶ Indicating is also the early 20th century story of Fan S. Noli, initially having the Greek name Theofanis Mavrommatis, who had a Greek education and worked in the Greek communal schools of Bani Suwayf and Shubin El-Kawm, in the later succeeding Foutridis. As Mavrommatis was accused of teaching Albanian songs, he lost his job but, being already in contact with Albanian merchants of Egypt which supported him financially, he went to the United States of America and became a priest with a “national mission” regarding Albanian migrants there, as for example the translation of church texts from the Greek to the Albanian language.²⁰⁷ By 1912, Albanians in Egypt would rather avoid frequenting the same churches with Greeks, making their dissatisfaction evident in their statements at *Akropolis*, where it was mentioned that they already had their own churches in the United States of America and were preparing separate churches, besides Egypt, also in Romania; as the Albanian doctor describing these evolutions further argued, the Greek government should imitate Austria, considered by him as a country supporting the Albanian language.²⁰⁸

²⁰³ Pyrros, 26.01.1906.

²⁰⁴ Syndesmos, 01/14.07.1903.

²⁰⁵ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, pp. 320-321, footnote 1.

²⁰⁶ Pyrros, 29.12.1905.

²⁰⁷ About the life of Mavrommatis / Noli compare: Pantainos 1913, p. 539; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 321; Federal Writers’ Project, *The Albanian Struggle*, pp. 38-44; Skendi, Stavro: *The Albanian National Awakening*, pp. 160-163; Arshi, Pipa: *Fan Noli*; Papadopoulos, Giannis: *I metanastefsi*, pp. 207-210.

²⁰⁸ *Akropolis*, 29.07.1912.

In the second half of the 19th century, there were still people like Tassos Neroutsos, the Albanian doctor with a “successful” life as an “*imeteros*”, i.e. “one of us [the Greeks]”, described as an eminent “*omogenis*” with a “patriotic sentiment”;²⁰⁹ as he explained in his letters to Gustav Meyer, who was dealing with Albanian linguistics, he had an Albanian origin from his mother side,²¹⁰ whereas he had a great interest, even though settled in Egypt for most of his life, in Albanian language, keeping in touch with many Albanians in Egypt, not only those originating from Greece,²¹¹ but also with people like Mitkou,²¹² whom he considered as a “fervent patriot”.²¹³ Such cases of acceptance by the Greeks, however, were becoming steadily less self-evident by the turn of the century, the descriptions “Greek” and “Albanian” being correlated to nationalist ideas of exclusivity; a 1908 incident is indicating exactly about the mistrust that was evident in the meantime even regarding Albanians correlated to Greeks through multiple paths. According to an eyewitness, the incident took place at a performance of the Greek Melodrama Theater Troupe in Alexandria, when a person from Korçë greeted in Albanian some other Albanians in the audience. One of the later responded asking him ironically why he, “a Greek”, would use the Albanian language, adding also some pejorative comments about Greeks. The person from Korçë, Dardas, tried to avoid a discussion, probably afraid of the reactions of the Greek majority of the audience if someone understood the comments he received from the vice-president of an Albanian Charity Society which, according to the eyewitness, was an Albanian association in Egypt devoted to fighting everything Greek. Always in the same version of the story, many people considered as Greeks and participating in various Greek institutions were sitting next to the protagonists of that incident and therefore ought to have “clearly Greek feelings and ideas” and, instead of remaining silent, should “declare explicitly” their feelings, against rumors that could go round because of their association with the vice-president of such an organization.²¹⁴

²⁰⁹ Compare: Estia Eikonografimeni, 18.09.1888, p. 600; Metarrythmisis, 11/23.08.1892; Lachanokardis, Iraklis: Palaia kai nea Alexandria, p. 191; Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 2, p. 351, footnote 2.

²¹⁰ Jochalas, Titos P.: Albanologische Nachrichten, p. 207; Neroutsos-Hartinger, Helga: Der Briefwechsel, p. 126.

²¹¹ Neroutsos-Hartinger, Helga: Der Briefwechsel, p. 134.

²¹² See footnote 194.

²¹³ Neroutsos-Hartinger, Helga: Der Briefwechsel, p. 119.

²¹⁴ Omonoia, 06/19.03.1908.

A response to this description came a couple of days later in another Alexandrian Greek newspaper by a group of Albanians, claiming that they had made a trip from Upper Egypt to Alexandria just in order just to see the specific performance, about Markos Botsaris, an Ipeiros protagonist of the Greek 1820s revolt for independence.²¹⁵ As they further argued, they had left the show fascinated, but were surprised later when they read that they had said bad things about “Hellenism”, whereas in their version of the story they had just exchanged some jokes in both Greek and Albanian language. If such an espionage and a public denunciation would be repeated, it was added, the “mission” of the Greek theatre in Egypt would be damaged, since theater was a “factor of national action” and the “Eastern people”, especially the Albanians who often spoke Greek and considered Greeks as “brothers in blood”, should not be rejected in such a way from a spectacle, from which even ancient Greeks did not exclude foreigners, objects of their “civilizing mission”.²¹⁶ The person who had made the “jokes” was Pantelis Plouskas, described by a later text as a wealthy “Albanian in origin” with [Greek] patriotic sentiments,²¹⁷ even if being a member of the Albanian Brotherhood that emerged in Bani Suwayf in 1894.²¹⁸ According to the explanations of *Tilegrafos* just after the letter of the abovementioned group of Albanians, Plouskas was not a slanderer of the Greek nation, but actually a “well-to-do merchant”, subscriber of the newspaper since many years, familiar to the publisher, with a Greek wife and a son who could write in Greek better than many Greek children would do, whereas the niece of Plouskas was married to an Albanian from Korçë, who was the son of one of the most enthusiastic teachers of the “Greek letters” in Macedonia. As further commented if *Omonoia*, a newspaper which republished the articles of Bellos,²¹⁹ did not want to be inconsistent, it should consider Plouskas and his friends as “*omogeneis*”.²²⁰ Albanians, especially of a specific social strata, education and networking, could still be considered as “*omogeneis*” by some

²¹⁵ No information about the specific play has been detected, besides two cases that might be relevant. One of the first Greek theater performances in Egypt was an 1864 patriotic drama with the same title: Chatzipantazis, Thodoros: Apo tou Neilou mechri tou Dounaveos, pp. 555-557. Furthermore, following a text of an 1895 reportage from Izmir published in an Alexandrian Greek newspaper, *Faros*, a canzonet with that name was interpreted by a tenor, who had started his career in Alexandria, wearing a “*foustanela*”, a kind of kilt that was used by men in the Balkans, received with enthusiasm by the Smyrniot Greek audience: Kalyviotis, Aristomenis: Smyrni. I Mousiki Zoi, pp. 90-91.

²¹⁶ *Tilegrafos*, 08/21.03.1908.

²¹⁷ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, p. 370.

²¹⁸ *Alvaniki Adelfotita: Kanonismos*, p. 12.

²¹⁹ About these articles see footnote 140.

²²⁰ *Tilegrafos*, 08/21.03.1908.

Greeks, but the mistrust of many Greeks grew parallel to the Albanian demand for an autonomous version of community, if not a mutually exclusive community of nation.

In 1912, a “Pan-Hellenic Hymn” written in Egypt regarding people that ought to revolt against the Ottoman Empire still included Albanians,²²¹ but the distance between Greeks and Albanians had in the meantime grown and Greek policies to attract Albanians and overcome the existing mistrust came too late, such as when Greek diplomats in the Ottoman Empire were asked, in 1911, to take some measures in order to convince Albanians about the good Greek intentions.²²² Saktouris described in a 1912 report how greatly things had changed since his previous service in Egypt just a decade before, expressing his worries about the impact of the evolutions in Egypt to places like Korçë, since the influence of the Egyptian Albanians to other Albanians was according to him greater than in any other place; as he further explained, the attempts he made to promote a cooperation of Greeks and Albanians and employ the measures the Greek diplomatic leadership had suggested proved fruitless since even the Korçë Albanians, the majority of Albanians in Egypt, which he had met as “true blue Greeks” in his previous service in Egypt, were by that time “*misellines*”, i.e. Greek-haters. According to Saktouris, any attempt of the Greek authorities to approach Albanians was perceived by them as a potential trap and they avoided any dealing or association with Greeks, not even attending the churches frequented by Greeks.²²³ A 1912 regulation of the Greek Orthodox Community of Bani Suwayf allowed the participation of all Orthodox Christians living in the city and its environs and provided that only Orthodox Christians of “Greek descent” would be eligible in its communal council,²²⁴ it is not known, however, if any Albanians would still consider themselves or be considered as such by that time. The wars in the Balkans and the formation of an independent Albanian state made the distance even greater, also among migrants in Egypt. In 1913, a memorandum of the “Ipeirots of Egypt and Sudan” was against the Albanian claims to Ipeiros, a part of which was in the meantime controlled by the Greek state; as the signatories declared, they would not like to be found under the rule of a people “beyond comparison inferior to us” regarding “progress”, but also having “nothing common in matters of

²²¹ Gkalekas, Dimitrios: *Ethnika keimilia*, pp. 12-13.

²²² Mentioned in: Nikolaidou, Eleftheria I.: *Xenes propagandes*, p. 305.

²²³ HAMFA 115:8, 1912.

²²⁴ *Elliniki Orthodoxos Koinotita Bani Suwayf: Kanonismos*, articles 1, 40.

religion, national ideas and way of life”,²²⁵ as Albanians were in the meantime described. If in 1904, based on his experiences in Egypt, Lampridis would point that “Greeks and Albanians were equally brothers, like the Macedonian with the Thessalian and the Thrakian”, two “brother races destined from nature to remain inseparable for ever”, concluding that “childish disputes of the kind of what I am and what you are” should be avoided from people with a long history of common struggles against “barbarians”,²²⁶ it proved that there was a potential for more than just “childish disputes”, Albanians being considered by some Greeks as “beyond comparison inferior”, in fact as “barbarians” themselves.

Local antagonisms and stereotypes undermining Greek federalist projects existed simultaneously in Egypt and elsewhere, but issues of communal organization in Egypt, where a great part of migrants originating from contested areas lived, provided the opportunity to check the cohesion of a common political organization in the “future Greece”. Even without sharing some exaggerated estimations, the impact of failures in Egypt was evident in other places as well, as many had feared. The relative failure of such projects was not a result of a self-evident, perennial distinction, but the outcome of a specific process of the long 19th century, with unifying and excluding at the same time aspects, to which not all potential members were ready to participate, at least not without terms assuring some of their particularities, which on the other hand were not necessarily accepted by the model of national culture that prevailed. If Albanians, however, complained for a Greek maltreatment and prejudice using a comparison to the treatment of slaves from Sudan or Abyssinia,²²⁷ Greek diplomats in Egypt were also accused as behaving to Greeks of lower social strata as if they were slaves,²²⁸ whereas Greek migrants were sometimes considered even by other Greeks as not yet “European” enough.²²⁹ Such indications suggest that not only non-Christians, or Orthodox Christian Syrians and Albanians, but also people *a posteriori* included to Greeks in a self-evident way, could experience prejudice of different kind for a number of reasons. The question is why the process of forming “proper” Greeks proved in some cases more successful, in

²²⁵ Empros, 07.01.1913.

²²⁶ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 136-137.

²²⁷ See footnote 165.

²²⁸ See chapter 8, footnote 48.

²²⁹ See chapter 4, footnote 190.

spite of the persistence of stereotypes and cultural heterogeneity, described usually as an expression of a “localistic spirit” among migrants.

10.4 The “localistic spirit”

A book on world geography was issued in 1886 by Nikolaos Petalas, introducing himself as a director of a school in Alexandria, on the purpose of being instructed in Greek schools. Together with different positive observations about the people from the Ionian Islands, Petalas added that they were “less strict” than other Greeks regarding their morals, explaining both those considered as positive as also those perceived as negative qualities as a result of “European civilization”;²³⁰ being “too European” could be a problem not less than not being considered as one, depending on the meanings associated at each time with “Europeanness”. The demand of the local Kefallinians²³¹ that Petalas would not teach any more and that his book would be prohibited led the Greek Community of Alexandria to suggest, at the sitting of the 5th of November, that some phrases would be removed from the his book, even though it was still considered better than geography books in Greece because of connecting historical incidents of ancient and modern Greek history to geography.²³² At the sitting of the 13th of November, held in the presence of a committee of Kefallinians, the withdrawal of the book was demanded,²³³ whereas it was even mentioned that the Greek Community of Alexandria wanted Petalas to burn the copies of his book.²³⁴ It was furthermore hoped that groups of Greek migrants from other places of origin would follow the example of the Kefallinians, being united so as to defend their honour and patriotic character;²³⁵ the same was demanded also by a Cypriot newspaper, asking the Cypriot Brotherhood in Egypt to assist the Kefallinians and protest against Petalas, before he would make similar comments about Cypriots.²³⁶

²³⁰ Petalas, Nikolaos: *Periigisis tis gis*, pp. 81-88.

²³¹ According to the 1889 Greek census there were 735 people from Kefallinia among the Greek citizens detected in Egypt: *Ypourgeion Esoterikon: Statistiki tis Ellados*, pp. 39.

²³² *GCA* 5, 1884-1906, p. 55.

²³³ *Ebenda*, pp. 56-57.

²³⁴ *Metarrythmisis*, 23/04.11.1886.

²³⁵ *Metarrythmisis*, 04/16.11.1886.

²³⁶ *Salpigx*, 20/02.12.1886.

Brotherhoods based on local origin were formed in different places, where migrants settled, such as the United States of America, for which Lykoudis commented that associations of Greek migrants based on local origin were “of narrow local spirit [and practiced] a minimum influence to the strengthening of the national sentiment”,²³⁷ Kitroeff similarly mentioned the existence of two “local” associations in Chicago, that of Arcadians and that of Lakons, as a sign of identification more with people from the same region than with Greeks in general.²³⁸ Regarding the brotherhoods based on local origin formed in late 19th century Athens, it has been suggested that they were not just a sign of nostalgic feelings to the place of origin, but also a reaction of migrants against their integration in the city, similar to brotherhoods based on local origin in Alexandria, which came in conflict with the communal institutions;²³⁹ the comparison was based on an hypothesis of Hadziiosif in a previous text of him, where the foundation of the Cypriot Brotherhood was an example given so as to suggest the antithesis of the Patriarchate to the Greek Community of Alexandria.²⁴⁰ Having these in mind, but also the protest of local brotherhoods to a Greek communal institution earlier mentioned,²⁴¹ it should be questioned whether the brotherhoods in Egypt had an impact to the strengthening of a Greek national identification, as also if and how the existing antagonism of Greek communal institutions and the Patriarchate was decisively intense and expressed through an impact of the later to the brotherhoods in Egypt.

There was a considerable number of brotherhoods based on local origin, mainly – although not exclusively – of islanders, even if some of them were short-lived or did not have a great number of members and power.²⁴² One of the older, wealthier and larger brotherhoods was the Cypriot one, often mentioned as an example to be imitated by other Greek brotherhoods in Egypt.²⁴³ According to Kipiadis, who was also its first president and secretary, a Cypriot Brotherhood was formed in 1861 with charity as its main goal, but after a couple of years, the

²³⁷ Lykoudis, Emmanouil: *Oi metanastai*, p. 54.

²³⁸ Kitroeff, Alexander: *I yperatlantiki metanastefsi*, pp. 165-166.

²³⁹ Hadziiosif, Christos: *I giraia selini*, p. 332.

²⁴⁰ Hadziiosif, Christos: *Pascha stin Alexandria*, p. 134.

²⁴¹ See footnotes 232-234.

²⁴² Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandria*, pp. 316-330; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 460; Psyroukis, Nikos: *To neoelliniko paroikiako fainomeno*, pp. 192-197.

²⁴³ *Imerisia Nea*, 11/23.10.1877; *Imerisia Nea*, 23/07.12.1880; *Neon Kition*, 27/08.04.1881; *Tachydromos*, 24/06.06.1900.

institution was confronted to antagonisms regarding its leadership and, although it already had 820 members in different parts of Egypt, it was dissolved, to be formed again in 1873.²⁴⁴ Initially, people of Cypriot origin and also other “*omogeneis*” were accepted as members,²⁴⁵ whereas in 1886 it was clarified that all Cypriots remaining in Egypt or elsewhere, with no discrimination of “class, religion or nationality”, could become members, as also non-Cypriots of the same [Greek] or another nation who wished to support its goals;²⁴⁶ the emphasis was given to “*omogeneis*”, whereas people of different religious faith could be accepted, something suggesting that the specific brotherhood was in the meantime more than just a tool of the Patriarchate. On the other hand, even though Cyprus had a Muslim population of about 20-25% during the second half of the 19th and the early part of the 20th century,²⁴⁷ no non-Greek and non-Orthodox Christian Cypriot has been detected among the leading personalities of the brotherhood; as late as in 1929, some of the criteria discussed in order to define whether a widow would have the right to receive financial aid from the Brotherhood, together with her “conduct”, were if she was an “*allothriskos*”, i.e. of another than Orthodox Christian religion, or an “*allofylos*”, i.e. of another than Greek descent.²⁴⁸ Similarly, cases of non-Orthodox Christian Cretans participating in the Brotherhood of the Cairo Cretans were also not detected, even though the third article of its regulation allowed as a regular member any Cretan in Egypt; it should be kept in mind that the Brotherhood was named after the 1866 battle of Arkadi against Ottoman power in Crete.²⁴⁹ The Brotherhood of Ipeiros of Cairo, trying to attract also Albanians of other faith or religion than the Orthodox Christian, accepted in 1904 those with an origin from Ipeiros “irrespective of religion and language”;²⁵⁰ if this attempt had any results is not known from available sources, but having in mind the failures even regarding Orthodox Christian Albanians,²⁵¹ it seems unlikely that Muslim Albanians would be attracted in early 20th century attempts. Such ambiguities

²⁴⁴ Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: *Ellines en Aigypto*, pp. 57-62; *Elliniki Adelfotis ton en Aigypto Kypriou*: Lefkoma, pp. 14-15; Sfikas, D. G. (ed.): *Kypriakon lefkoma*, pp. 206-209.

²⁴⁵ *Kypriaki Adelfotita en Alexandria*: *Kanonismos tis Kypriakis Adelfotitos*, article 5.

²⁴⁶ *Kypriaki Adelfotita en Aigypto*: *Kanonismos tis en Aigypto Kypriakis*, articles 3-4.

²⁴⁷ Percival, D[avid] A.: *Cyprus*, p. 3; Pavlidis, Antros: *Istoria tis nisou Kyprou* – vol. 4, p. 214.

²⁴⁸ *Elliniki Adelfotis ton en Aigypto Kypriou*: *Tameion perithalipseos*, p. 7.

²⁴⁹ *Adelfotis ton en Kairo Kriton to Arkadion*: *Kanonismos*.

²⁵⁰ *Ipeirotiki Adelfotis Aigyptou*: *Kanonismos*, article 5.

²⁵¹ See chapter 10.3.

do not differ considerably from the unclear criteria of participation in the communal institutions already described.²⁵²

The Association of the Kefallinians of Cairo, composed of Greek citizens, came *ipso jure* under the jurisdiction of the Greek authorities and the protection of the Greek government,²⁵³ but it was less self-evident that such a protection would be provided by the Greek consul also to the Brotherhood of Smyrniots.²⁵⁴ In 1911, at a celebration of the Peloponnesian Brotherhood, high-standing representatives of religious and diplomatic authorities as well as the president of the Greek Community of Alexandria were present,²⁵⁵ but similar was the constitution of the celebration of the Chian Brotherhood at about the same time,²⁵⁶ even though Chios was not part of the Greek state. A protection by the Greek government was given to the Brotherhood of the Cypriots, initially on the argument that it consisted mainly from Greek citizens,²⁵⁷ a protection retained in the 1886 version of the regulation,²⁵⁸ as well as in the 1912 version, the Greek consul being even the honorary president.²⁵⁹ In the 1911 general assembly of the Cypriot Brotherhood, it was suggested that at least the leading officials of it should be Greek citizens,²⁶⁰ whereas in a turbulent general assembly of 1918, it was feared that some of its members, a number of whom had in the meantime a different from the Greek citizenship,²⁶¹ might demand the intervention of “another power”, apparently the British, fears mentioned by the Brotherhood’s ex-president, himself of British nationality, as also by other members at a letter sent to the Greek minister of interior, asking for his mediation.²⁶²

Politis commented that the brotherhoods were useful for gathering those originating from one town or province and receiving their donations, something that relieved other Greek charity associations in Egypt.²⁶³ Often, the same names of people involved in brotherhoods appeared in various Greek communal and charity associations not based on local origin; even if the archbishop of Cyprus was informed

²⁵² See chapter 9.1.

²⁵³ Kefalliniakos Syndesmos: Kanonismos, article 12.

²⁵⁴ Adelfotis ton en Aigypto Smyrnaion: Kanonismos, article 19.

²⁵⁵ Pantainos 1911, p. 254.

²⁵⁶ Ebenda, p. 477.

²⁵⁷ Kypriaki Adelfotita en Alexandriaia: Kanonismos tis Kypriakis Adelfotitos, article 58.

²⁵⁸ Kypriaki Adelfotita en Aigypto: Kanonismos tis en Aigypto Kypriakis, article 48.

²⁵⁹ HAMFA 51.3, 1920, article 54.

²⁶⁰ Salpigx, 16.09.1911.

²⁶¹ Compare, however, to the difficulties mentioned in chapter 8.2.

²⁶² HAMFA 51.3, 1920.

²⁶³ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, pp. 458-460.

from the beginning about the formation of the Cypriot Brotherhood,²⁶⁴ with relations retained mainly regarding financial support of the Greek educational network in Cyprus,²⁶⁵ even though contact was held also with the patriarch, a member of the Brotherhood,²⁶⁶ names of persons with a “prominent” position in the Cypriot Brotherhood were often detected among members and donators of Greek charity societies of Alexandria as well as leading figures of Greek scientific societies in Egypt,²⁶⁷ or among persons with an active role in the administration of the Greek Communities in Alexandria,²⁶⁸ Minya,²⁶⁹ Suez²⁷⁰ or Shibin El-Kawm.²⁷¹ The Greek Community of Alexandria, as suggested also by Souloyannis, who has studied fastidiously its archives, had a close cooperation with various brotherhoods including that of the Cypriots,²⁷² whereas money for poor students might be given to brotherhoods, such as that of the Limnians.²⁷³ The Greek Community of Cairo had a similar approach regarding the nursing of poor persons from places such as Cyprus or Istanbul, for which either coordination or bargain about sharing of costs was taken with brotherhoods of their place of origin.²⁷⁴ The Ipeiros Brotherhood declared that charity was the only goal of it and did not allow any political or religious goal and discussion,²⁷⁵ but proclaimed a contest just a few years later, the aim defined as the reward and publishing of the best study regarding the “Greek sentiments” of Vlach-speaking Greeks as well as of Albanians.²⁷⁶ Charity could be related to the goal of incorporating possible members of the nation;²⁷⁷ the Cypriot Brotherhood, for example, declared as a goal also the contribution to the “moralization” of the Cypriot poor in Alexandria in order to “form one body” and aid “our beloved homeland, Cyprus”.²⁷⁸ Nikodimos Georgiadis, a member of the central committee of the Cypriot

²⁶⁴ AIKA KB32.

²⁶⁵ AIKA IE 28; AIKA ΙΣΤ 49; AIKA IH 74; AIKA ΙΘ 74.

²⁶⁶ Imerisia Nea, 13/25.07.1876.

²⁶⁷ Elliniki Filoptochos Etaireia ton Kyriou en Alexandria: Ekthesis; Koudounaris, Aristeidis L.: Viografikon Lexikon Kypriou, pp. 87-88.

²⁶⁸ GCA 4, 1868-1884, pp. 313-314, 327-329, 343-344; Lachanokardis, Iraklis: Palaia kai nea Alexandria, pp. 83-84, 109-111.

²⁶⁹ Lampridis, I[oannis]: O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos, p. 132.

²⁷⁰ Politis, Athanasios G.: O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 1, p. 302.

²⁷¹ Ebenda, pp. 319-320.

²⁷² Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias, p. 268.

²⁷³ GCA 6, 1906-1915, p. 119.

²⁷⁴ GCC A44/1:4, 1907-1908; GCC A17/5:5, 1907-1908; GCC A18/5:10, 1910; GCC A45/5:12, 1915-1916.

²⁷⁵ Ipeirosiki Adelfotis Aigyptou: Kanonismos, articles 2-3.

²⁷⁶ See footnote 139.

²⁷⁷ Compare chapter 4.2.

²⁷⁸ Kypriaki Adelfotita en Alexandria: Kanonismos tis Kypriakis Adelfotitos, article 2.

Brotherhood, who had described in an 1875 speech Cypriots of Egypt as a “slightest part of the whole Hellenism of Egypt”,²⁷⁹ spoke at an 1879 religious festivity held in the presence of the Greek consul about the Cypriots of Egypt as having their eyes continually turned to Cyprus, taking care especially for their “brothers remaining in ignorance”.²⁸⁰ At the annual celebration of the Brotherhood on the occasion of a religious festivity, Greek flags decorated the celebration and the Greek consul was invited as usual,²⁸¹ while statements of the Brotherhood were often accompanied by the wish of union of Cyprus to Greece,²⁸² for which the Brotherhood also received wishes from non-Cypriot Greeks, applauded by a crowd of Cypriots.²⁸³ It is difficult to find evidence suggesting an antagonistic relation or antithetic values and priorities between Greek brotherhoods based on local origin and communal institutions in Egypt; the abovementioned Brotherhood of Cretans provided that, in case it would be dissolved, its property would be left to the Greek navy,²⁸⁴ whereas similar provisions existed by the Cypriot one, leaving its property to the Greek Community of Alexandria,²⁸⁵ or the Macedonian one, which preferred the Greek National Bank.²⁸⁶

Similar to what was the case by Greek communal institutions,²⁸⁷ however, not all migrants were involved or affected in the same way from the various brotherhoods trying to inscribe the local into a national narrative, with ties of the local level often remaining more or less important irrespective of such attempts. Gkikas claimed, perhaps with some exaggeration, that 90% of the Greeks who went to Alexandria at the turn of the 20th century retained a “paganistic mysticism” for the saint protecting their island or village;²⁸⁸ originating from Corfu, Gkikas recalled of how he was welcomed from Averoff, a distant relative of him from the opposite coast of the Ionian Sea, who also helped him to find a job as a teacher in Greek communal schools in Egypt.²⁸⁹ When writing his memories from his years in Egypt, Gkikas already had a long experience as a teacher there, from which he concluded that local origin played a major role among private Greek schools in Egypt, since the Chians supported the

²⁷⁹ Kypriaki Adelfotita Alexandreias: I epeteios ekklesiastiki eorti, pp. 13-14.

²⁸⁰ Neon Kition, 21/03.10.1879.

²⁸¹ See for example: Alitheia, 15/27.09.1895.

²⁸² See for example: Alitheia, 20/01.01.1887.

²⁸³ Salpigx, 19.09.1887.

²⁸⁴ Adelfotis ton en Kaïro Kriton to Arkadion: Kanonismos, article 30.

²⁸⁵ HAMFA 51.3, 1920, article 56.

²⁸⁶ Makedoniki en Aigypto Adelfotis: Kanonismos, article 27.

²⁸⁷ See chapter 9.1.

²⁸⁸ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: Peninta chronia daskalos, pp. 49-50.

²⁸⁹ Ebenda, pp. 9-10.

other Chians, the Samians the other Samians, the Cypriots the other Cypriots etc.²⁹⁰ Small enterprises often had employees from a specific island, the island the owner came from, for example Tinos,²⁹¹ Limnos,²⁹² Rhodes²⁹³ or Cyprus,²⁹⁴ but even in big trading houses, in Egypt as well as in other places of the world, the management and staff was very often based on family or local origin, factors that were supposed to assure trustworthiness and provide cohesion;²⁹⁵ the Chian organization of business in particular was considered as a model one, based on successful marriages creating “close circles of trust”, although local origin was not the only factor, intermingled with religious or social factors as well.²⁹⁶ A scholar observed that “among diaspora communities there is a marked concern with marrying within the group, and Greeks are a prime example since even local or regional preferences are maintained”,²⁹⁷ there are indeed many cases, in colonial Egypt as well as elsewhere, where a Greek island, town or village was actually reproduced at another place, the catalogues of marriages of Orthodox Christians in Egypt, however, suggest that it was not an absolute trend, even if neighboring villages or islands were common in the choices of a partner.²⁹⁸ Different kind of socialization between Greek migrants in Egypt was often, but not always based on local origin: a Cypriot villager, for example, initially surviving with money he borrowed from another migrant from his village already working in Alexandria, later found a job at the tavern of a person from Corfu.²⁹⁹

Various antagonisms of people defined by local origin were present in the Greek state since its very formation, even if it was often rather about an antithesis of urban and rural or different remains of antagonisms from the Ottoman period.³⁰⁰ In Egypt, islanders in the towns around Suez Channel and especially in Port Said, where

²⁹⁰ Ebenda, pp. 69-70.

²⁹¹ *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1897, pp. 199-200.

²⁹² Wikipedia, *Aigyptiotes Limnioi*.

²⁹³ Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandria*, p. 342; Kottis, Spyros: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 186.

²⁹⁴ Pieridis, Giorgos Filippou: *Mnimes kai istories*, p. 13.

²⁹⁵ Kardasis, Vasilis + Harlaftis, Gelina: *Anazitontas tis chores tis epangelias*, p. 56; Moutafidou, Ariadni: *Greek merchant families*, p. 144.

²⁹⁶ Mandylara, Anna: *Elliniki diaspora*, p. 245.

²⁹⁷ Hirschon, Renée: *Identity and the Greek State*, p. 160.

²⁹⁸ APA - Alexandria: *Iera Mitropolis Pilousiou. Kodix gamon (1872-1931)* [Holy Archdiocese of Pilousion. Catalogue of marriages (1872-1931)]; APA - Alexandria: *Protokollon Synoikesion tou Patriarchikou Grafeiou Alexandreias (1868-1892, 1893-1901, 1915-1929)* [Record of marriages of the Patriarchal Private Office in Alexandria, (1868-1892, 1893-1901, 1915-1929)].

²⁹⁹ Stavridis, Foivos (ed.): *Tserkezis*, Savvas: *Imerologion*, pp. 48-51.

³⁰⁰ Skopetea, Elli: *To “protypo vasileio”*, pp. 26-27.

the majority of Greeks came from Kasos,³⁰¹ were reported of having a very “localistic spirit”, although it was argued that this did not have any coincidence as far as their “[Greek] patriotism” was concerned;³⁰² as late as in 1936, however, after almost a century of Kasian presence there, Kasians rarely got married with non-Kasians,³⁰³ whereas in 1922 a local Greek, himself originating from Kasos, described not only what he called “the localistic idea”, expressed also in communal politics, but even mentioned that the older, but even some among the younger Kasians of Port Said still “speak, get dressed, live, are raised, eat and go to bed as they did in Kasos”, as if they had not changed a place of residence at all, in spite of the existence of some having contact with non-Kasians and following the trend of the “more civilizing and progressive European elements of the town”.³⁰⁴ The “localism” of Kasians, or at least of many among them, was sometimes a factor provoking tensions in the communal affairs of the town, as confirmed by another Kasian, participating himself in the local communal life during the second decade of the 20th century; although he did not accept the accusation of the other Greeks that Kasians were “localists”, he recalled that they called non-Kasian Greeks “*xenikous*”, i.e. foreign, but also pointed out that other factors might be part of the explanation for antagonisms, such as that Kasians were mainly poor workers having a greater interest in demanding the broadening of the Community.³⁰⁵

An incident of 1891, when a group of Greeks from Izmir was insulted by a drunk person from Ydra and reacted by beating him to death, was described in *Metarrythmisis* as “one of the infinite incidents of the accursed localism” of Greeks,³⁰⁶ but neither were many details given, nor were many similar incidents detected. In 1904, Lampridis assured that the differentiation of Ottoman Greeks from other Greeks was not great, since “they recognize each other irrespective of origin and nationality as children of the one and only homeland”,³⁰⁷ but even though nationality was not always a factor in “localistic” disputes, it was in some cases, even if perhaps combined with other prejudices. In 1899, Paraskevopoulos referred to rumours about minor antagonisms and localism of Greeks in Egypt, with distinctions to

³⁰¹ See chapter 4, footnotes 42-43.

³⁰² Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 96-97.

³⁰³ *Imerologion ton Dodeka* 1936, p. 202.

³⁰⁴ Soultanakis, Ioan[nis] P.: *To lefkoma*, pp. 167-169.

³⁰⁵ Kakomanolis, Grigorios Ant.: *Anamniseis* 60 eton, pp. 101-107.

³⁰⁶ *Metarrythmisis*, 09/21.05.1891.

³⁰⁷ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 70-71.

Peloponnisians or Thessalians, or Islanders or Kefallenians, but also to persons from the “enslaved” or “liberated” Greece.³⁰⁸ If in these cases, including antagonisms of people not forming part of an Ottoman Greek / Greek citizen dichotomy, no details are further known, there is an 1895 case in the courts of Mansourah, when the arguments exchanged between a Peloponnisian and an Ottoman Greek included whether the military duty in the Greek state was served or whether one was a descendant of a protagonist of the Greek independence war in the 1820s.³⁰⁹

In 1891, a person in Alexandria committed suicide, after sending his son to school; in a note he left, he presented himself as a “Greek, Cypriot”.³¹⁰ If a person originating from a place out of the limits of the Greek state wanted to provoke the interest of Greek consular and communal authorities about his son or if the clarification “Cypriot” might indicate an expectation from the famous Cypriot Brotherhood to aid his son are just hypotheses, in any case and even in such an extreme moment, local origin even from places not included to the Greek state was not necessarily expressed as an alternative to a definition of “Greekness”, but could be complementary. A 1918 speech at the inauguration of the Union of people from Asia Minor was held in order to suggest how important it was to love the place where someone was born and raised, something described as “localism”; as pointed out, however, the circle grew bigger and increased communication, the progress of sciences and commerce as also the greater intermarriage had made the concept of “nation” necessary, the later being therefore an evolution of “localism” and the base of “patriotism”.³¹¹ Forming the greater circle of the “*omogeneis*”, of those who could be considered as equal, in theory at least, members of the Greek nation, was neither a linear nor a self-evident process. A great part of the Italian community of citizens that emerged in the long 19th century was stigmatized as “racially inferior, rebellious criminals”, stereotypes reproduced all around the world and helping guarantee that the mass international migrations of the late 19th and early 20th centuries “would generate not one Italian diaspora, but many”,³¹² even migration of a different kind and to

³⁰⁸ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: I Megali Ellas, p. 463.

³⁰⁹ Tachydromos, 16/28.02.1895; Tachydromos, 22/06.03.1895. About similar arguments used in the early 20th century Greek state against Ottoman Greeks and combined with antagonisms in the labour market see: Potamianos, Nikos: “Ntopio prama!”, pp. 290-291.

³¹⁰ Salpigx, 16.11.1891.

³¹¹ Krendropoulos, M[iltiadis]: Patriotismos kai topikismos.

³¹² Gabaccia, Donna R.: Italy’s many diasporas, p. 57. About the Italian “Southern Question” see especially: Schneider, Jane (ed.): Italy’s “Southern Question”, pp. 1-23.

different destinations helped keep alive the localism Italian nationalists sought to overcome.³¹³ In the Greek case, even the worse exchanges of stereotypes and “localistic” disputes described in the previous couple of paragraphs did not have a dividing outcome in such a strong way as in the Italian case. The set of stereotypes regarding the Syrians and Albanians was on the other hand equally powerful, undermining in practice the ideas of many Greeks in the long 19th century about these people as potentially becoming “proper” Greeks and Europeans. A major difference was also the willingness of decisively many agents from the different islands or other places of origin examined in the previous paragraphs to be a partner in the Greek national project and contribute to the formation of “proper” Greeks in the monocultural direction, which prevailed as a norm and was achieved to some extent not only through exclusions, but simultaneously with the formation of a relatively uniform Greek community, extending also in Egypt.

10.5 Summary

At this chapter, it has been seen how part of the Orthodox Christian migrant population in Egypt was actually excluded from the Egyptian Greek perceptions of a Greek national community, in spite of some potentially unifying cultural characteristics and the existence of projects supportive of inclusion. The crucial point was not the intention of including *per se*, but the way of including people who were at the margins of the monocultural version of “Greekness”, which prevailed in the meantime, promoted by agents in as well as out of the Greek state.

³¹³ Gabaccia, Donna R.: Italy’s many diasporas, p. 73.

11. Training “proper” Greeks: an advanced Greek image of communion

Theodoros Kolokotronis, one of the major military leaders during the Greek independence war in the 1820s, pointed out in his memoirs factors such as a growing commercial activity and the revolution against the Ottoman rule that made the Greeks more interrelated, whereas earlier they did not know much about Greeks living just a little further away;¹ more than a century after Kolokotronis, Benedict Anderson described different aspects of such a process having as an outcome an “imagined political community”, a term referring to any community “larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact”, but having members that would “never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them”, would however have in their minds “the image of their communion”.² Nation has been an extremely important type of an “imagined community” in the long 19th century, a question being if the state had as a great role as it is often attributed to it in the process. A tendency of scholars like Kitromilides was to emphasize in particular the role of the state as a “centre” with a “political elite” and an “intelligentsia of Athens” exporting nationalism to the “major centers of Hellenism outside Greece” and to the “Greek periphery in the East”, politicizing an already existing ethnological character even in “distant and isolated regions without any direct or organic ties” with the specific state.³ Even when it was admitted that places other than Athens, Alexandria being one of those mentioned, also played a major role as focal points of Greek urban culture in the eastern Mediterranean, with an importance regarding the production and export of Greek nationalism,⁴ a hierarchical state-periphery relation was often reproduced, tending to overemphasize the role of Greek civil servants rather than local agents, an argument related also to the tendency at the post-1974 period to criticize in particular the role of the Greek state and generally of non-Cypriot agents regarding Cyprus. Hadziiosif assumed that even though Egypt was considered a place, from which educational mechanisms forming a Greek national consciousness were financed, it was the teachers coming from the University of Athens and the civil servants working in the Greek consulate that had played a decisive role, in spite of reactions, to the formation of a Greek “*kalamaradiki*” (probably meaning “*kalamaristiki*”, that of a

¹ Kolokotronis, Theodoros Konstantinou: *Diigisis symvanton*, p. 49.

² Anderson, Benedict: *Imagined Communities*, p. 6.

³ Kitromilides, Paschalis M.: *The Dialectic of Intolerance*, p. 20; Kitromilides, Paschalis M.: “Imagined Communities”; Kitromilides, Paschalis M.: *Greek irredentism*.

⁴ Kitromilides, Paschalis M.: *Greek irredentism*, pp. 4, 8.

“*kalamaras*”⁵) instead of an Orthodox conscience.⁶ Kitroeff also wrote about “the transmission of Greek nationalist ideology from Athens” to Egypt,⁷ whereas later texts about Greeks in Egypt continued to refer to a “strong nationalist ideology imported from the metropolis”.⁸ If the post-1974 atmosphere of critique and a reaction to previous understandings of a “Greek diaspora” ascribed with an uncritically overstressed role explain such models, it would be no less problematic to overemphasize the role of the Greek state, even if indeed some of its institutions had a role in the promotion of a specific Greek national ideology; after all, part of the process was taking place by agents out of the Greek state and differently related to it, as has been seen also in the previous chapter. In 1904, Lampridis assured that the “inherent tendencies of Greeks to quarrel” had gradually decreased and that the “various Greek racial elements” of Cairo came to know better each other, due to their “common desire” for a “Greek homeland”, the “common fear of foreigners” and the “progressing isolation from foreign elements” achieved through education.⁹ Even if it was not “isolation” but rather the co-existence with “foreign elements” that enforced unifying tendencies, a greater unity was achieved, among other factors, also by “knowing” better the other Greeks, by education as well as through other paths. It is this process that is explored in the present chapter, in an attempt to make sense with the multidirectional trends which shaped a global Greek national community of the long 19th century, but going beyond models overemphasizing the role of a “Greek diaspora” as also beyond models overstressing the importance of the “exports” by a Greek state functioning as a “centre” of the nation.

The term “long distance nationalism” has been applied for “a people comprising a citizenry, a sovereign, a nation and a group of solidarity [but] not thought of as congruent and territorially bounded”.¹⁰ In the late 20th century, for example, claiming the exclusive right to use the description Macedonian had been of great importance not only for many people in the Balkans, but also for migrants in

⁵ “*Kalamaras*”, in plural “*kalamarades*”, was a 19th century pejorative term referring to members of bureaucracy or to literate people of any kind, usually associated with the Greek state, but is currently used mainly as a pejorative – when not racist – description by some Cypriots, when referring to people from the Greek state.

⁶ Hadziiosif, Christos: *Emporikes paroikies*, p. 34.

⁷ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 2.

⁸ Karanasou, Floresca: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 48.

⁹ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, p. 119.

¹⁰ Wimmer, Andreas + Schiller, Nina Glick: *Methodological nationalism and beyond*, p. 323.

places as far as Australia or Canada.¹¹ Nevertheless, national communities based on exclusivity and regarding people living far from their places of origin were not a novelty of that period; actually, the Italian long 19th century indicates both how migration contributed with external descriptions as also with self-definitions of migrants to the predominance of the common Italian identification over different regional labels,¹² as also how an important proportion of migrants, who had not left Italy for political reasons, might become republicans and nationalists while living and working abroad;¹³ as argued regarding the German case, “German nationalism was from the beginning [...] a transnational nationalism”.¹⁴ The ways, in which a broadened “image of communion” and the identification with a national project were expected to be expressed also by people living in Egypt form the major issue dealt in the present chapter.

11.1 The broadening of Greek education

According to a local Greek journalist, most migrants in Egypt had no contact with the intellectual life in the Greek state before the 1860s and were disadvantaged in “education”, whereas many had even lost their [Greek] mother tongue;¹⁵ on the other hand, a Greek visitor in 1863 was impressed since, even though mainly people of commerce, Greeks in Egypt spoke a Greek language “like the inhabitants of the Greek metropolis”, including a woman which was born and raised in Egypt, but could speak the Greek language “with admirable clearness”.¹⁶ If such diverse impressions indicate of a variety of possible connections with affairs in the Greek state during the 19th century, complaints both from Greek visitors and from local Greek press existed still until the 1880s, pointing the absence of good Greek high schools even in Alexandria, where thousands of Greeks lived, including some very wealthy;¹⁷ there is indication that not only Greek teenagers quitted from schools, but also that Greek children in Alexandria went to Arabic schools,¹⁸ whereas in small towns it was not uncommon

¹¹ Danforth, Loring M.: The Macedonian conflict.

¹² Gabaccia, Donna R.: Italy’s many diasporas, p. 45.

¹³ Ebenda, p. 47.

¹⁴ Conrad, Sebastian: Globalisierung und Nation, p. 24.

¹⁵ Tsihlikis, T[filemachos] M.: O en Aigypto Ellinismos, p. 69.

¹⁶ Pandora14:325, 1863, pp. 347-348.

¹⁷ Metarrythmisis, 12/24.08.1886; Kleio 5:6, 1889, p. 84.

¹⁸ Hadziiosif, Christos: Pascha stin Alexandria, p. 133.

that the local priest and a well-educated merchant might have been in charge of the education.¹⁹ Politis wrote that it was since the 1870s that Greek schools in Egypt increased the number of their pupils, teaching the same lessons with schools in the Greek state, with just a little emphasis in foreign languages.²⁰ In 1886, a renewed Greek high school in Alexandria was ready and by 1890, the Greek government recognized it as equal to high schools in Greece, something that meant that its graduates could be accepted at the University of Athens without any further exam.²¹ Greek communal schools in Cairo also followed the model of schools in Athens.²²

From its establishment in 1837, the University of Athens was ascribed with a “national”, “civilizing” mission to the “East”, including Egypt;²³ the university, however, was financed to a great part from Greeks not living in the Greek state, including many of them active in Egypt.²⁴ Students of the University of Athens originating from Ottoman provinces often went back to their places of origin afterwards to teach at Greek schools.²⁵ Egypt was also a major turn-of-the-century destination for graduates of the University of Athens irrespective of origin;²⁶ those teaching in Greek communal schools in Egypt were, according to Politis, selected among the best graduates of the University of Athens²⁷ and, even though some of these graduates might hesitate to go to Egypt because of different kind of fears, for example of epidemics,²⁸ teachers in the 1911 communal schools of Alexandria had studied mostly in Athens or other places with an important Greek presence, in or out of the Greek state.²⁹ Teachers in the Greek communal school in Cairo were also selected mainly among Greeks out of Egypt,³⁰ whereas even those in Greek communal schools of small towns at about that time originated mainly from different places of the Greek state, from Cyprus, from Izmir and from different Ottoman

¹⁹ Diakofotakis, Ioannis: *Istoria tis ellinikis paroikias Kafr El-Zayyat*, pp. 17, 80.

²⁰ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 255.

²¹ Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: *Ellines en Aigypto*, p. 40; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, pp. 258-259; Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias*, pp. 148-149; Lekkou, Pantelis K.: *To Averofeio Gymnasio*, pp. 206-236.

²² Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I Elliniki Koinotita tou Kaïrou*, p. 79.

²³ Bournazos, Stratis: *I ekpaidefsi*, pp. 199, 244-245; Lappas, Kostas: *Panepistimio kai foitites*, pp. 123-132.

²⁴ Lappas, Kostas: *Panepistimio kai foitites*, pp. 107, 110.

²⁵ Kitromilides, Paschalis M.: “Imagined Communities”, pp. 173-174; Clogg, Richard: *A Millet Within a Millet*, p. 128.

²⁶ See chapter 5.1.

²⁷ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 253.

²⁸ See for example: *Syndesmos*, 16/29.09.1902.

²⁹ *Elliniki en Alexandria Koinotis: Ekthesis*, p. 9.

³⁰ Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I Elliniki Koinotita tou Kaïrou*, p. 79.

Aegean islands.³¹ Since the beginning of the 20th century, some children of Egyptian Greeks started to take positions as teachers in Egypt;³² an early and well-known case was that of Palaiologos Georgiou, a graduate of the *Ampet School* in Cairo originating from Thraki, sent to the University of Athens and later to German universities with the financial aid of Georgios Averoff, before returning to Egypt to take the administration of a Greek school in Egypt and making it “a barrack” with discipline comparable to the military one.³³ As pointed out about Ottoman Greeks, even though the influence from the Greek state can not be questioned, the relation between the education in Greece and that of the Orthodox communities of the Ottoman Empire had been bidirectional, whereas Ottoman Greeks were also engaged in debates on Greek education of that time.³⁴

The growing networks of education had specific goals in Egypt as also elsewhere, as evident in the issue of female education. By the turn of the century, there were two distinct tendencies, on the one hand those supporting a differentiated female education orientated to a mother and housewife, whereas feminists pursued an education that would provide women with professional equipment combined or even surpassing the concept of the “women duties”; even though feminists themselves argued that their ideas were compatible with the political goals of the nation, their opponents considered their ideas as incompatible or even as a Western import.³⁵ Reactions to these ideas were expressed also among Greeks in Egypt, arguing for example that women had a place in the nation only as “Greek mothers”, not in the need to know more than the necessary for their “proper destiny” as a wife and a mother and without innovations of clothing, luxuries, make up etc;³⁶ at a speech in Port Said, a director of a local Greek school criticized in particular the sending of girls, “these future Greek mothers”, in schools of the Catholics, since that would make them incapable to raise a child and run their house properly.³⁷ Female teachers from Athens were expected by authors like Lampridis to convert a Greek Girls’ School of

³¹ Diakofotakis, Ioannis: *Istoria tis ellinikis paroikias Kafr El-Zayyat*, pp. 81-83, 100.

³² Lekkou, Pantelis K.: *To Averofeio Gymnasio*, p. 175.

³³ *Imerisia Nea*, 30/11.08.1873; Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: *Aigyptiakai anamniseis*, p. 62; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 361.

³⁴ Exertzoglou, Haris: *Oi “chamenes patrides”*, p. 173.

³⁵ Varika, Eleni: *I exegersi ton kyrion*; Bournazos, Stratis: *I ekpaidefsi*, p. 226; Psarra, Angelika: *A Gift*, pp. 150-175.

³⁶ Kipiadis, Georgios I.: *I gyni tis proodou*.

³⁷ *Omonoia*, 17/29.06.1899.

Cairo to a place “that would educate and create Greek mothers and wives”.³⁸ At a major Greek journal of Egypt, a text was devoted exactly to the role of mothers regarding the shaping of the characters of people, differing from that ascribed to men, “the head, the mind, the power of humanity”.³⁹ A doctor speaking about the “mission of Greek woman” in 1911 insisted on the importance of “national upbringing” of children by Greek women, criticized the influence of feminist ideas, originating from [non-Greek European] people not having the same [Greek] need for a “national mission” and added that the Greek woman should learn what suited her nature and her mission, i.e. to be a “fanatic chauvinist of her family, her nation, her race”, instead of learning French and piano;⁴⁰ at another speech held in Alexandria just a few years later by another doctor, it was argued that Greek mothers should actually imitate German mothers, using as lullabies “patriotic traditions” and “legends of the nation”.⁴¹ Such ideas were not discussed only among Greeks in Egypt, but were in any case appropriate for a “mission” in colonies ascribed, for example, to German women having the duty to maintain the colonies culturally German, reproduce the race, keep the household and raise the next generation, at the same time male Germans would conquer the colonies militarily and economically.⁴² On the other hand, there were people like Angeliki Panagiotatou, according to an author being “for Egypt what Parren was for Greece”,⁴³ the first woman trying to make an academic career at the University of Athens, before her students protested and managed to send her away, in 1908, since they would not accept a female professor.⁴⁴ Occasions of wars gave the opportunity to Greek feminists to negotiate the integration of women into the nation with a more active involvement and mobilization on behalf of nation and helped legitimize their goals;⁴⁵ being in Egypt, Panagiotatou held some seminars

³⁸ Lampridis, I[Ioannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 122-123. Compare also: Lampridis, Ioannis: *Ai ellinikai apoikiai*, pp. 47-48.

³⁹ *Nea Zoi*, October 1904, pp. 22-24.

⁴⁰ Nikolaou, G[eorgios]: *I apostoli*.

⁴¹ Krendiropoulos, M[iltiadis]: *Patriotismos kai topikismos*, p. 15. For a similarly selective use or rejection of “European” ideas also regarding Greek women see various examples in chapter 5.

⁴² Walgenbach, Katharina: *Die weiße Frau*, pp. 119, 261.

⁴³ Konstantinidis, Apostolos G.: *Dianooumenes Ellinides*, p. 21. What Konstantinidis meant as “Egypt” was probably the “Greeks of Egypt”, since no involvement of Panagiotatou to broader issues has been detected. The Rethymniot Kalliroi Parren is considered as the pioneer of the Greek feminist movement. About her see: Varika, Eleni: *I exegersi ton kyrion*, pp. 206-207.

⁴⁴ About the life of Panagiotatou see: Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos – vol. 2*, pp. 397-398; Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, pp. 420-421; Konstantinidis, Apostolos G.: *Dianooumenes Ellinides*, pp. 20-24.

⁴⁵ Varika, Eleni: *I exegersi ton kyrion*, p. 184; Avdela, Efi + Psarra, Angelika: *Engendering “Greekness”*.

during the 1912-1913 wars in the Balkans, expressing among other issues the hope of the renaissance of Alexandrian Greek women according to new conditions of modern life, with a better knowledge of house economy, pedagogic, hygiene and nursing, contributing thus to the “reborn of our race”, a goal to be achieved through children raised by “proper” Greek mothers.⁴⁶

The broadening of education was discussed not only regarding the “future Greek mothers”, but also about male migrants of middle and lower social strata in Egypt. By the beginning of the 20th century, even if there were still many Greeks sending their children to non-Greek schools,⁴⁷ there were 46 Greek schools, 27 of which communal.⁴⁸ Not only did Greek communal institutions gradually increase their expenses regarding education so as to respond to the increase of pupils by the turn of the century,⁴⁹ but they also supported an important number of pupils coming from poor families to register for free at Greek communal schools, at least in the elementary schools.⁵⁰ This policy might have been related also to complaints regarding the neglect of people living in poor neighborhoods of Cairo, relatively isolated from communal and religious institutions;⁵¹ in April of 1912, at a period of great tension regarding a possible broadening of the Greek communal institutions,⁵² the need for a school in a neighborhood the most Greek families of lower social strata lived as also for facilities for pupils living far from Greek communal schools was stressed at the general assembly of the Greek Community of Alexandria.⁵³ Night and Sunday schools were also opened, even though not always with the expected success;⁵⁴ Tsokopoulos mentioned that, similarly to the Friends of the People Association in Greece, practical knowledges, hygiene, but also history was offered at evening lessons in Alexandria in a way suitable for an audience “of workers with their language and ideas”;⁵⁵ in Port Said, a text about the absence of a public reading-room having as result that many “*omogeneis*” spent their free time in places of entertainment, wasting not only their time, but also their money, was accompanied by

⁴⁶ Panagiotatou, Angeliki G.: *Ta mathimata tou Savvatou*, pp. 5-9.

⁴⁷ See chapter 5.3.

⁴⁸ Tsolekidis, Nikolaos T.: *I dimosia ekpaidefsis en Aigypto*, pp. 96-97.

⁴⁹ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, pp. 359-360.

⁵⁰ Compare: GCA 6, 1906-1915, pp. 6, 227; Tsolekidis, Nikolaos T.: *I dimosia ekpaidefsis en Aigypto*, p. 53; Trimi-Kirou, Katerina: *Dorean i epi pliromi*.

⁵¹ Tachydromos, 15/28.05.1900; Pyrros, 17.04.1904.

⁵² See chapter 12.3.

⁵³ GCA 6, 1906-1915, p. 231.

⁵⁴ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, pp. 384-390.

⁵⁵ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: *Aigyptiakai anamniseis*, pp. 108-109.

an appeal to the “*omogeneis*” all over Egypt to contribute so as to help an initiative for the formation and maintenance of one, that would have a “national” besides its “intellectual” activity.⁵⁶

The interest for a broadening of education did not exist only regarding the migrants in Egypt. The Brotherhood of the small Aegean island of Agios Efstratios mentioned the maintaining of schools in the island as its primary goal,⁵⁷ whereas supporting schools in the place of origin or poor students to proceed with their studies was a goal proclaimed by different brotherhoods, such as that of the Smyrniot,⁵⁸ the Cypriot,⁵⁹ or the Limnian.⁶⁰ Financial aid to the school system in Macedonia had an even clearest political importance,⁶¹ which was supposed to be promoted also by another association in Alexandria, having Georgios Averoff as its honorary president and the goal of the “diffusion of Greek culture through every possible means to the enslaved Greek provinces, Macedonia, Albania, Thraki and others, irrespective of race and religion”.⁶² Averoff, one of the wealthiest people in Egypt and the “greatest man of Greece”, according to a description,⁶³ had gone to Egypt in 1866 and spent there most of his life, according to legend never having been to the Greek state,⁶⁴ but was nonetheless a fervent supporter of the Greek language, even though himself a Vlach-speaker:⁶⁵ before giving a job as a teacher in Greek communal schools in Egypt to a distant relative of him who had just arrived there, Averoff wanted to make sure that he had learnt Greek and not Vlach.⁶⁶ There is a story that Averoff once declared he would offer money for schools so as to prepare teachers and priests rather than for warships, even though in fact he contributed materially for direct war preparations as well.⁶⁷

⁵⁶ Syndesmos, 09/22.12.1902.

⁵⁷ Adelfotis “Agios Efstratios”: Kanonismos.

⁵⁸ Adelfotis ton en Aigypto Smyrnaion: Kanonismos, article 2.

⁵⁹ Kypriaki Adelfotita en Aigypto: Kanonismos tis en Aigypto Kypriakis, article 1.

⁶⁰ Imerisia Nea, 28/09.01.1875.

⁶¹ Makedoniki en Aigypto Adelfotis: Kanonismos, article 2; Vouri, Sofia: Ekpaidefsi kai ethnikismos, pp. 83-84.

⁶² Ellinikos Epikourikos Syllogos: Kanonismos, article 1.

⁶³ Konstantinidis, Theodoulos F.: Georgios Averoff, p. 15.

⁶⁴ Empros, 17.07.1899.

⁶⁵ Akropolis, 09.09.1887; Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: Ellinikos diakosmos, p. 88; Tsirkas, Stratis: O Kavafis kai i epochi tou, p. 377.

⁶⁶ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: Peninta chronia daskalos, pp. 9-10.

⁶⁷ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: Aigyptiakai anamniseis, pp. 22-23; Empros, 17.07.1899. In fact, the most famous battleship of the early 20th century Greek wars was named after Averoff, since a great part of the expenses were taken by Averoff’s legacy.

In a 1900 speech by the president of the Cypriot Brotherhood in Cairo, the audience was reminded of a recent past, when Cyprus was much distanced from the “free Greece” compared to islands such as Crete, Mytilini, Samos and Chios, the later having proper schools and high schools at a time Cypriots “were living in darkness and left their island, searching for resources, with no knowledge, [being] almost illiterate”; the goal of the speech was to praise the success of the Brotherhood in the previous couple of decades and to justify the expenses necessary for the support of schools in Cyprus.⁶⁸ If one turns back to 1875, for example, two years after the establishment of a Cypriot Brotherhood,⁶⁹ at a speech at the annual celebration of the Cypriot Brotherhood in Egypt taking place as usual at the *Evangelismos* church, a dean pointed out the need of the Brotherhood to sacrifice pains and money in order to “resurrect” Cyprus which was like dead, if compared to “other Greek islands” and “Hellenism across the earth”, calling the “famous and rich” monasteries of Cyprus to contribute, but also the Cypriot Brotherhood to follow the example of Greeks in Izmir, Chios, Mytilini or Trabzon.⁷⁰ A text in Cypriot press in 1881 appealed to Cypriots of Egypt to finance the educational system of the island, an act that was characterized as urgent,⁷¹ whereas at the annual general assembly of the Brotherhood just a couple of months later it was decided to support four new and preserve four existing schools in Cyprus since, as mentioned, “education was the core of progress, prosperity and national restoration of every people” and with it the “villager” would be educated, understand his real freedom and claim his rights as a Greek.⁷² In 1894, when after many years in Egypt he returned to his village in Cyprus, Thomas Papadopoulos decided to establish an elementary school hoping, as was mentioned in Cypriot press, that other Cypriots would also imitate him.⁷³ It was not unusual in Greek newspapers of Cyprus to mention Cypriots in Egypt as an example of patriotic and charity activity that people in Cyprus ought to imitate.⁷⁴ A number of Cypriot Greeks in Egypt also gave money to support various schools and libraries in Cyprus,⁷⁵ whereas various villages of Cyprus maintained schools with the economic assistance

⁶⁸ Tilegrafos, 19/01.06.1900.

⁶⁹ See chapter 10, footnote 244.

⁷⁰ Imerisia Nea, 16/28.09.1875.

⁷¹ Alitheia, 02/14.02.1881.

⁷² Neon Kition, 27/08.04.1881.

⁷³ Alitheia, 25/06.09.1894.

⁷⁴ Foni tis Kyprou, 12/24.04.1886; Foni tis Kyprou, 09/22.06.1900.

⁷⁵ Zannetos, Filios: Istoría tis nisou Kyprou – vol. 3, pp. 92-93; Kokkinoftas, Kostis: Oi Kyprioi tis Aigyptou, pp. 301-329.

of people originating from that village and had gathered some money in Egypt.⁷⁶ In 1897, a Cypriot doctor in Egypt, Polis Modinos, reviewing the successes of the Brotherhood, referred also to the formation of schools in Cyprus where the “illiterate farmers” could learn to write the name of their “great homeland” and then volunteer at Velestino and Domokos, places indicating of battles in the 1897 Greek-Ottoman war.⁷⁷ The Brotherhood also offered scholarships to Cypriot pupils of Greek communal schools in Egypt to continue their studies in Athens,⁷⁸ whereas since 1893 it financed the famous *Pancyprian High School* in Nicosia, a classical gymnasium that became the pattern to be followed by other secondary schools in Cyprus, recognized as equivalent to Greek public high schools by Greek authorities.⁷⁹

It has been suggested that unlettered villagers in Cyprus were also engaged in the creation of schools,⁸⁰ oriented towards making “more fully what one was, in ethnic terms [...] *better* representatives of their community and better persons than their uneducated parents”.⁸¹ Even in the cases of non-Cypriot Greek teachers in Cypriot schools such as Nikolaos Katalanos, who “almost single-handedly raised close to a thousand volunteers – mostly young boys – to be sent off in 1897 to the war [and] was elected numerous times and by handy margins to the legislative council”, it was pointed that “his popularity indicates that the words he spoke and wrote resonated with Greek Cypriots of the period”.⁸² If being a “proper” and “patriotic” Greek was a major goal of these schools and a criterion for selecting their teachers, the actual orientation was not a given, in Cyprus or anywhere. Focusing on the case of Cyprus, Bryant argued that the insistence in a classical education was considered as a patriotic duty because of being tied “both to the curriculum of schools in Greece and to the traditional education of which the church had formerly been the bearer” and that Cypriots all over the colonial period “resisted the banalization of their education and emphasized the ornate and classical in the name of cultural ideals that they believed pupils strove to embody”; as further explained, “the villagers to whom speeches such as Katalanos’ were directed were not expected fully to understand them, only to have

⁷⁶ Alitheia, 29/10.09.1881; Alitheia, 25/06.09.1894; Kokkinoftas, Kostis: I Emporiki Scholi Mitsi.

⁷⁷ Foni tis Kyprou, 23/05.10.1897.

⁷⁸ Foni tis Kyprou, 06/18.07.1890.

⁷⁹ Persianis, Panayiotis K.: Church and State, p. 47; Theocharidis, Ioannis: I symvoli, pp. 506-507.

⁸⁰ Bryant, Rebecca: An Aesthetics of Self, p. 585.

⁸¹ Ebenda, p. 587.

⁸² Ebenda, p. 589.

a visceral response of pride”.⁸³ Nevertheless, a high school oriented in commercial studies was formed in a mountainous village of Cyprus with the support of a merchant in Egypt originating from there and with lessons taught in English, so as to facilitate graduates seek a position in the British administration in Cyprus, Egypt or Sudan.⁸⁴ According to a Cypriot residing in Egypt, the orientation of high schools should not be to teach a little more from the Iliad and the Odyssey, assisting thus a few wealthy Cypriots to educate their children, but rather to provide merchant, theological, pedagogic and agricultural courses which would correspond to the needs of Cyprus; the author of this letter mentioned Greece as an example to be avoided because of being full of “scientists” and criticized the decision of the Cypriot Brotherhood to stop supporting four primary schools in Cyprus in order to give money to a high school of Nicosia.⁸⁵ Also during the operation of these four schools, disagreements arose between Cypriots in Egypt and the villagers, the later seemingly not having an interest in the education of their children, being rather preoccupied with their agricultural activities;⁸⁶ when the Brotherhood decided to give an emphasis to a high school, complaints emerged regarding an actual exclusion of the children of villagers from the possibility of education,⁸⁷ whereas others blamed the ecclesiastical leadership of Cyprus for not supporting the attempts of Cypriots of Egypt sufficiently.⁸⁸ There were also Cypriots both in Cyprus and in Egypt regarding the possible emergence of many Cypriot “scientists” a positive thing, since a high school in Cyprus would help children develop their “national feelings” instead of being sent to Syria, or would raise the negotiating status of Cypriots with the British.⁸⁹

It has been assumed that such disputes were the outcome of an impact of a traditional trend coming from Greece and of a modernist one originating from England,⁹⁰ but this approach, similarly to the remarks of Bryant regarding the insistence in classical education considered as a patriotic duty,⁹¹ tend to underestimate

⁸³ Ebenda, pp. 595-598.

⁸⁴ Kokkinoftas, Kostis: *I Emporiki Scholi Mitsi*, p. 71.

⁸⁵ *Metarrythmisis*, 04/16.06.1893.

⁸⁶ Such views are mentioned in: *Salpigx*, 25.07.1892; *Theocharidis, Ioannis: I symvoli*, pp. 494-500.

⁸⁷ *Salpigx*, 15.05.1893.

⁸⁸ *Metarrythmisis*, 06/18.07.1892; *Metarrythmisis*, 08/20.07.1892.

⁸⁹ *Metarrythmisis*, 03/15.07.1892; *Metarrythmisis*, 04/16.07.1892; *Foni tis Kyprou*, 03/15.11.1895. About the issue of sending Cypriot youth to Syrian schools and the dangers for their “Greekness”, as expressed by Cypriots also in Egypt, see also: *Enosis*, 17/29.07.1887; *Enosis*, 30/11.04.1890; *Kokkinoftas, Kostis: I Emporiki Scholi Mitsi*, p. 21.

⁹⁰ *Theocharidis, Ioannis: I symvoli*, pp. 500-503.

⁹¹ See footnote 83.

the existence of a Greek modernist trend and its potential influence in Cyprus, also through Egypt, a trend claiming of being “patriotic” not less than the classicist one. At the second half of the 19th century, discussions about education in the Greek state included critiques of the classicist model or of the growing number of university graduates becoming jobless “*thesithires*”, i.e. “office seekers”, as also a number of people arguing about the need to correlate education with the growing economy and the “practical life”;⁹² the example of “civilized nations” and “Europe” and appeals to the new “spirit of the time” were also used in Greek discussions in order to support the arguments for a more “practical” orientation, especially regarding middle class pupils,⁹³ accompanied also by ambitious plans about an economic campaign, especially in the “Greek East”.⁹⁴ Egypt was an important part of such plans with Lampridis insisting, for example, on its importance, criticizing at the same time the absence of care for an education that would enable Greeks compete other people in the “practical life”.⁹⁵ Even if people like Alexandros Ragkavis, the famous author and diplomat, might observe that local Greek schools were a model for those in Greece exactly for avoiding an extreme attachment to antiquity,⁹⁶ the usual turn-of-the-century critique regarding the needs of “practical life” usually referred to schools in Egypt as well and, as Paraskevopoulos commented about the *Ampet School* in Cairo, “only with Homer and Thucydides we [the Greeks] will not be able to react against the great wave of the Israelites [that] strive to substitute us wherever we managed to advance”.⁹⁷ Even if an admiration about the Greek communal schools in Egypt was expressed, the hope that the later would be oriented to commerce rather than the classics was expressed on the argumentation that there were enough high schools “promoting stupidity” in Greece, whereas the Greek government was blamed for recognizing Greek schools in Egypt only when following the lessons of schools in the Greek state;⁹⁸ therefore a city which, as explained, had little respect for the “*kalamarades*”, when they come from elsewhere, in fact prepared many of them, at the same time it lost many Greek children to the schools of “the foreign

⁹² Bournazos, Stratis: *I ekpaidefsi*, pp. 189-281.

⁹³ Even though a very small number of pupils from lower social strata finished elementary school, a great part of those who did managed to continue to high school and even to enter the university: Bournazos, Stratis: *I ekpaidefsi*, pp. 204-205.

⁹⁴ Ebenda, pp. 209-213.

⁹⁵ Lampridis, I[oannis]: *O en Aigypto sygchronos Ellinismos*, pp. 30-33.

⁹⁶ *Estia Eikonografimeni*, 14.08.1888, p. 514.

⁹⁷ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, p. 449.

⁹⁸ Ebenda, p. 407.

propagandas”, preferred for the preparation for “practical professions”.⁹⁹ In 1899, *Akropolis* presented three stories from Upper Egypt, in order to show that Greek students were “worthy only for begging” and had difficulties to find a job by Greek enterprises in Egypt because of the classicist education and the knowledge of Latin rather than French, English or other languages needed for a career in commerce.¹⁰⁰ The director of *Akropolis* commented after an 1911 visit in Egypt that Greek children went to the schools of Catholic Brotherhoods because of the classicism of the local Greek schools, criticizing especially the formalism of classicism and pointing out that it caused a distinction of Greeks in Egypt to rich and poor, going either to the “foreign” and “*antethnika*” schools, i.e. those against the nation, or to Greek schools, where they remained unprepared for “the struggle of life”.¹⁰¹ On the occasion of an agricultural and industrial 1912 exhibition in Cairo where only a scanty Greek interest was showed and only one exhibitor from the Greek state was present, the reporter of *Akropolis* questioned why “so many Greek schools in Egypt [had to] add every day just a couple of hours of ancient Greek so as to revive a “Greek national sentiment” or if it was the opposite that was needed to that purpose.¹⁰² The intense antagonism with non-Greeks as also the increased needs for homogenizing a diverse population of migrants was an argument in Egypt, but supporters and opponents of both orientations existed there as well as in other places, including the Greek state.

The exaggerating critique of the classicist education system was characteristic for the demoticist movement which, in spite of its broadness as far as the political orientation of its agents is concerned,¹⁰³ had as a major goal the preservation or strengthening of the “Greekness” in the middle and lower social strata; during his 1911 visit to Egypt, Gavriilidis made a comparison to the Egyptians, who managed to publish most of their papers in their demotic version, in spite of reactions from the “oligarchy” or the British;¹⁰⁴ as he further commented, Greeks in Egypt “should be the vanguard of both the free and enslaved Hellenism” both for the individual elevation as also for that of their family and homeland.¹⁰⁵ In 1919, a young generation

⁹⁹ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: *Aigyptiakai anamniseis*, p. 61.

¹⁰⁰ *Akropolis*, 15.02.1899.

¹⁰¹ Gavriilidis, Vlasis: *Taxidia*, pp. 103-109.

¹⁰² *Akropolis*, 22.03.1912.

¹⁰³ Stavridi-Patrikiou, Rena: *O G. Skliros stin Aigypto; Skopetea, Elli: Oi Ellines kai oi echthroi tous*, pp. 32-33.

¹⁰⁴ Gavriilidis, Vlasis: *Taxidia*, pp. 124-125. For the way comparisons to Egyptians served as a method of criticizing different issues regarding Greeks see also chapter 6.3.

¹⁰⁵ Gavriilidis, Vlasis: *Taxidia*, p. 108.

of Greek demoticists and aspirant reformers in Egypt still considered it necessary that commercial schools should possess a greater place in the Greek education in Egypt than lessons regarding “the contracted verbs of third declension and the sons of Jacob”,¹⁰⁶ whereas other authors would also observe that the Greek education in Egypt should be oriented to a “more practical way” also because some Greeks, as mentioned because of an incident in Corfu, might not speak Greek at all when sent to other schools, in order to assure a professional future.¹⁰⁷ Filippos Dragoumis pointed out incidents he considered as positive changes, such as that girls at communal girl schools were instructed the “Swedish” system of gymnastics and specific Greek [folk] dances and songs, indications for a dismissal from the scholar tradition towards demoticism, at least as Dragoumis hoped.¹⁰⁸

To see demoticism as specifically characteristic of Egyptian Greeks being a kind of *avant-garde* Greeks would be an exaggeration common to other representations of and expectations from the “westernmost part of the Greek world”, even though there was also in Egypt a group of youth supporters of demoticism, perceived as a precondition for a “national culture”, referring to “western Europe” as an example on that issue.¹⁰⁹ Gkikas recalled of an incident of 1894, when he was a freshman in Egypt and a simple speech of him in front of many leading figures of the local Greek economic and intellectual life led to reactions, even though he claimed of having said nothing more than what was taught by Georgios Chatzidakis, the first professor of linguistics in the University of Athens, a person with rather a moderate point of view regarding demoticism; Averoff, who had played an important role in helping Gkikas find a job as a teacher in Egypt,¹¹⁰ asked him after that incident if he was an “anarchist” and why he did not like the language of his homeland.¹¹¹ At a speech held in front of Greek diplomats and teachers at the beginning of the 20th century, a Greek doctor, presiding the Egyptian branch of the “Hellenism Society” at that time, considered the language question a “national issue” and described demoticists as “*arnisiethnoi frankolevantinoi*”, i.e. “Levantine denying their nation”, to conclude about a future of the Greek race that would be determined not only by the

¹⁰⁶ Grammata 5, July-September 1919, pp. 136, 142.

¹⁰⁷ Dendias, Michail G.: *Ai ellinikai paroikiai*, pp. 66-67, footnote 1.

¹⁰⁸ Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): Dragoumis, Filippos Stef.: *Imerologio*, p. 49.

¹⁰⁹ *Dimotikistiki Omada: Gia ti glossa mas*, p. 3.

¹¹⁰ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: *Peninta chronia daskalos*, pp. 9-10.

¹¹¹ *Ebenda*, pp. 26-29.

sword, but also by the pen;¹¹² arguments against reformists in Egypt included their characterization as atheists, Bolsheviks and immoral.¹¹³ The reformers themselves admitted that their model was in Athens,¹¹⁴ even though evolutions in Egypt such as the “influx of foreign civilized elements” or the greater antagonism by the “natives” were also mentioned as factors making the need to adjust in such a way greater.¹¹⁵ This was particularly the case for the children of workers or petit-bourgeois Greeks, who could not always receive a high school education, but through the demotic version would have more opportunities, according to a demoticist, to be prepared for “practical life” and learn the “national history”, without the emphasis given to the antique world and a “dead language”.¹¹⁶ Marselos, one of the main figures of the reformers, explained in 1919 that the purist linguistic version, the “*katharevousa*”, could not “express the desires, the dreams and the consciousness of the [Greek] race”, nor “constitute a suitable instrument of our national unity”, which was possible only through the demotic version, “the most palpable sign of our national genuineness”.¹¹⁷ In spite of their “national” arguments, the reformists had little success in early 20th century Egypt, with some short-lived experiments in small towns failing not only because of reactions, but also due to economic difficulties.¹¹⁸ The impact of Greeks in Egypt to their places of origin or the Greek state was important, but not less than the influence of the Greek state or of Greek discussions both in Egypt and elsewhere, in a dynamic and multidirectional process of forming a Greek cultural norm.

11.2 The “manly, athletic upbringing” of the nation

In 1898 and on the occasion of the autonomy of Crete, Pierre de Coubertin, the French founder of the International Olympic Committee, wrote in the first Greek sports newspaper that “the reshaping of the East belongs to Greece” and could be achieved through “the manly, athletic upbringing, in the good and great meaning of the word”.¹¹⁹ An important aspect of the turn-of-the-century Greek educating

¹¹² Pistis, N[ikolaos]: Dialeksis.

¹¹³ Grammata 5, July-September 1919, pp. 138-139.

¹¹⁴ Marselos, A[thanasios]: Synergasia spitiou kai scholeiou, p. 15.

¹¹⁵ Grammata 5, July-September 1919, p. 130.

¹¹⁶ Ebenda, pp. 131-137.

¹¹⁷ Papadimitriou, Panagiota: O Diagonismos.

¹¹⁸ Diakofotakis, Ioannis: Istoría tis ellinikis paroikias Kafr El-Zayyat, pp. 104-111; Stavridi-Patrikiou, Rena: O G. Skliros stin Aigypto, pp. 108-109, 166-169.

¹¹⁹ Podilatiki kai Athlitiki Epitheorisis tis Anatolis, 01.10.1898.

“mission” was correlated to specific perceptions of that time regarding sport activities, including also their usefulness in order to achieve the “moralization” of broader social strata and help prepare a possible war in the name of the nation. Gymnastics were introduced in schools of the Greek state in the 1880s,¹²⁰ whereas the teaching of shooting at schools was also discussed at the turn of the century, with shooting clubs existing already since the late 1860s.¹²¹ In a typical expression of the cosmopolitan legend, Greeks in Egypt were often considered as the introducers of “Western” activities such as sports in their modern form in Egypt or in the Greek state: as recently commented, for example, it was the local Greeks that “gave a first push to Egyptian sports”, being “the first instructors” of those involved in Egyptian sports as also of the “initially indifferent” Egyptian youth which “tried slowly-slowly to imitate Greeks and succeed”.¹²² Although there was indeed a Greek influence, such texts were often part of the dominant stereotypes of a Greek “civilizing mission” discourse;¹²³ *Milonas*, a Greek sport club of Alexandria established already in 1873, was described as a model for non-Greek Egyptians in the 1910s,¹²⁴ in a way similar to how Greek gymnastic activities in Izmir were supposed of being considered an example for Armenians or Turks.¹²⁵ Egyptian Greeks were considered as agents of this type of “Western” activities in the Greek state as well, even in recent texts, such as when a historian drew the conclusion that “in the same way the Greek bourgeoisie of the eastern Mediterranean diaspora influenced historically the development of modern Greece, so was also sport activity in the communities of diaspora destined to influence the course of sports in Greece”.¹²⁶ At the prologue of another recent publication on Greek sport and scout activities in Egypt, it was mentioned that “at the cosmopolitan environment where they lived, the Egyptians were ready to receive and assimilate the messages coming from the West and it is sure that their everyday contact to the English influenced decisively Greeks of Egypt”.¹²⁷

Whereas an influence is hard to be denied, one-dimensional descriptions and especially references to the “cosmopolitan”, i.e. European, environment of Egypt,

¹²⁰ Koulouri, Christina: *Athlitisimos*, p. 59.

¹²¹ Ebenda, pp. 69-70, 99.

¹²² Kottis, Spyros: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, pp. 146-147, 152.

¹²³ See for example: Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandria*, p. 160.

¹²⁴ Stefanoudakis, I[oannis]: *Milon*. *Athlitiko Lefkoma*, p. 31.

¹²⁵ *Anatoli* 2, 15.05.1912, p. 32; Manitakis, Pavlos N.: *100 chronia neoellinikou athlismou*, p. 336.

¹²⁶ Kitroeff, Alexander: *I diethnis diastasi*, p. 389.

¹²⁷ *Pnevmatiko Kentro – Dimos Athinaion: Ellinikos athlitisimos*, p. 7.

should be seen in a more balanced way. Sport activity in the Greek state was also important in the second half of the 19th century,¹²⁸ without necessarily receiving an influence from Egypt, not to mention of the reverse impact, from Greece to Greeks in Egypt; *Ifitos*, the major Greek sport club in early 20th century Cairo, was formed in 1905 by a professor of history in Greek communal schools originating from Sterea Ellada, Georgios Kremos, together with Angelos Fetsis, an athlete and gymnast from the island of Lefkada, who came to Egypt to introduce the so-called “Swedish” system of gymnastics.¹²⁹ The Greek scout movement in Egypt was probably established by Markos Lioufis, who had been himself in England and decided to imitate the model he saw there;¹³⁰ another person claiming of having established a Greek scout club in Port Said at the same period, so as to make Greeks ready to sacrifice themselves in the wars taking place in the Balkans, explained that he was inspired by personal experiences he had in England, as also by the example of the scouts in Athens,¹³¹ whereas in Kafr El-Zayyat, a group of Greek scouts was formed in 1914, in the aftermath of the two wars in the Balkans, headed by a reserve officer and having a military organization.¹³² At the first systematic study on the Greek scout movement, its history in Greece is correlated with the influence of British gymnasts the Greek participants had met at the 1908 Olympic Games;¹³³ some space was dedicated to Greek scouts in Egypt, but rather as the place which pre-eminently competed with the Athenian “cradle” of the Greek scout movement,¹³⁴ whereas the only influence of local Greeks to a place out of Egypt mentioned was that of a scout, who had been active also in Alexandria, before taking the initiative for the creation of such groups in Izmir.¹³⁵ Even when it was accepted that the official establishment of a Greek scout movement in Egypt was made with the permission from the “centre”, i.e. Athens, it was added that the girls’ guides movement had started in Alexandria in 1926, before Greece and through a direct English influence; as further explained for that matter Greeks in Egypt, because of the existence of an “international

¹²⁸ For a first approach to the late 19th and early 20th century sport activity in the Greek state see: Koulouri, Christina: *Athlitismos*.

¹²⁹ *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1906, p. 389; Savvidis, Pan[agiotis] S. (ed.): *Lefkoma*, p. 159; Adamantidou, Maria: *Ellinikos athlitismos sto Kairo*, pp. 29-34.

¹³⁰ Tsihlakis, T[ilemachos] M.: *O en Aigypto Ellinismos*, pp. 82-84.

¹³¹ Kakomanolis, Grigorios Ant.: *Anamniseis 60 eton*, pp. 223-224.

¹³² Diakofotakis, Ioannis: *Istoria tis ellinikis paroikias Kafr El-Zayyat*, pp. 169-172.

¹³³ Isaia, Isaias G.: *Istoria tou ellinikou proskopismou*, pp. 16-20.

¹³⁴ Ebenda, pp. 111, 256-275.

¹³⁵ Ebenda, p. 282.

community”, were more “modern”,¹³⁶ an argument that should be juxtaposed, for example, to the comments of Pinelopi Delta about the subjugation of women in Egyptian Greek high society.¹³⁷ What this information suggests is that the influence was multidirectional, directed from as well as towards Egypt, therefore a role of the Greeks in Egypt as introducing modern ways of sport and scout activities in the Greek state should not be ascribed with the usual, extreme easiness.

Even when leaving aside the exaggerations about a pioneer spirit of Greeks in sports as in any other aspect of life in Egypt, it is worth noting that the gymnastic club of *Milonas* was formed in 1873, when there were not many organized gymnastic clubs even in Europe, as emphatically stressed at an album issued on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.¹³⁸ According to a text of 1903, *Milonas* and some games organized by Greeks in Egypt proved that Egyptian Greeks did not only worship the “profit-making Hermes”, as a Greek stereotype wanted them to be,¹³⁹ but also had merchants patronizing “letters and arts”, whereas the athletic bodies were also meant to be a proof of faith in “nation [and] its future”.¹⁴⁰ According to the 1873 regulation of *Milonas*, any Greek of “blameless conduct” proposed by three from its already registered members could become a member, provided he paid 100 francs per month for the first ten years and a smaller amount later on.¹⁴¹ It seems, however, that soon the council of *Milonas* allowed pupils of the communal schools to visit its gym for free, a decision that contributed to the emergence of some of the greatest turn-of-the-century Greek athletes in Egypt,¹⁴² but also gave the possibility to young people to prefer a visit to the gym of *Milonas* rather than a “dissolute entertainment”.¹⁴³

Describing the Greek sport activities in Egypt, Politis mentioned their importance for protecting youth from “dangers inherent of their age”,¹⁴⁴ whereas other texts of the 1920s correlated sport activity with the “moralization” of a youth that would otherwise spend its time and damage their health in theatre and cinema¹⁴⁵ or to

¹³⁶ Kottis, Spyros: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, pp. 156-161.

¹³⁷ Zannas, P. A. (ed.): *Delta, P[inelopi] S.: Protes enthymiseis*, pp. 38-39.

¹³⁸ Stefanoudakis, I[oannis]: *Milon. Athlitiko Lefkoma*, pp. 64-65.

¹³⁹ For stereotypes of this kind see chapter 12.1.

¹⁴⁰ *Tachydromos*, 07/20.06.1903.

¹⁴¹ *Ellinikos Gymnastikos Syllogos o Milon: Genikos Kanonismos*, articles 3, 4.

¹⁴² Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandria*, p. 161.

¹⁴³ *Imerisia Nea*, 01/13.04.1875.

¹⁴⁴ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, p. 447.

¹⁴⁵ Gneftos, Manolis P. (ed.): *Athlitiko lefkoma*, p. 5.

the “infected environment of cafeterias and dancing”,¹⁴⁶ even though people engaged in sport activities, such as Alexandrian Greek football players in the 1910s, were not necessarily sacrificing night life and feasts, according to some complaints.¹⁴⁷ The Olympic Games of 1896, extensively covered also by Greek newspapers in Egypt, even though only one athlete from Egypt participated as a representative of Greece,¹⁴⁸ gave the opportunity to a renewed and broader interest of local Greeks to exercise sports or watch sport events and therefore avoid the “infected environment” of the cafeterias, where “the body withers”, as written in an Alexandrian newspaper of 1896.¹⁴⁹ In the following years and with arguments of this kind, the “*omogeneis*” were encouraged to participate at “Greek gyms” in other towns, as for example in Port Said,¹⁵⁰ whereas in Zagazig, besides their “beer springs”,¹⁵¹ part of the Greek youth also frequented the local Greek gyms.¹⁵² As commented regarding the Alexandrian Greek gyms, they ought to support not only those expected to win, but also the rest, as part of a national mission and not only in the name of “victory” and “profit”.¹⁵³ A well-known feminist of that time, Angeliki Panagiotatou, in the public speeches she held in Egypt during the 1912-1913 wars in the Balkans,¹⁵⁴ explained the importance of “patriotic” dances but focused on sports, using the example of “Northern civilized states” and referring especially to the Swedish model, which made it possible that “people of all social classes, from the Successor and the Princes to the worker”, would regularly exercise, making possible for the later to go home “clean, relaxed, with noble ideas” and not with a mind damaged “from the wine of the tavern”.¹⁵⁵

An important part of the “moralization” was correlated with “nationalization” and in 1905, when *Ifitos* was formed in Cairo, together with the usual “moral” argumentation, the inauguration ceremony included a phalanx of 55 “robust” young Greeks passing with the flag in front of the president of the Greek Community of Cairo, the Greek consul, the presidents of many associations based on local origin as

¹⁴⁶ Papafiggos, G.: Gyro apo ton athlitismon mas, p. 41.

¹⁴⁷ Tsivilis, G.: Mia matia perix tou podosfairou, p. 27.

¹⁴⁸ Kitroeff, Alexander: I diethnis diastasi, p. 387. Averoff, however, offered a decisive contribution to restoring the stadium, his statue being put in its forecourt: Koulouri, Christina: Athlitisimos, p. 110.

¹⁴⁹ Omonoia, 11/23.04.1896.

¹⁵⁰ Syndesmos, 22/04.08.1902.

¹⁵¹ See chapter 5, footnote 7.

¹⁵² Empros, 02.07.1906.

¹⁵³ Anatoli 1, 01.05.1912, p. 15.

¹⁵⁴ See footnote 46.

¹⁵⁵ Panagiotatou, Angeliki G.: Ta mathimata tou Savvatou, pp. 205-218.

also the patriarch, Fotios.¹⁵⁶ On the occasion of the 1906 Intercalated Games in Athens, a professor in the *Averofeio High School* wrote in a major Egyptian Greek journal of that time about the importance of sport games already since the antiquity so as to avoid “sybaritic luxury”, but also to get robust soldiers, an argument accompanying a proposal to introduce gymnastics at high schools.¹⁵⁷ Gymnastic exercises, such as the “so-called Swedish system”, having a place in the education system of all “civilized nations”, according to the director of a Greek communal school in Cairo,¹⁵⁸ were introduced in Greek communal schools in Egypt so that the migrant community would not be composed any more by “sickly girls with rickets”, but rather from “healthy young women with nice bodies, capable of accomplishing their great destination”, defined as giving birth to robust children and raising them “*ellinoprepos*”, i.e. in a proper for Greeks way;¹⁵⁹ even a possible introduction of shooting as a lesson in Greek communal schools was discussed, so as to make pupils “capable to defend in the future the rights of the beloved homeland”.¹⁶⁰

In the turn of the 20th century, great games were also a way of potentially transmitting ideology through sports, the 1906 Intercalated Games being a milestone concerning that matter. During these games, not only financed by wealthy Egyptian Greeks, but also with five of them participating as athletes, a great campaign about the games took place in Egypt,¹⁶¹ whereas even a steamship was rented on the occasion, so as to carry wealthy Greeks of Egypt to Athens to watch the games and make a “patriotic excursion”.¹⁶² The results were presented with all detail in Alexandrian Greeks newspapers such as *Omonoia* in spring of 1906, also because of the victories of two Greeks from Egypt,¹⁶³ whereas short films from the games were presented in a theatre in Cairo, with a great audience.¹⁶⁴ Many sport clubs were formed in the years just following the 1906 games, even though estimations should be moderate, since the leading members were often just the same persons in many of these clubs, whereas some were not encouraging a broad participation; for example the *Greek Nautical*

¹⁵⁶ *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1906, pp. 390-391.

¹⁵⁷ *Nea Zoi*, April-May 1906, pp. 361-364.

¹⁵⁸ See the whole argumentation for introducing it in the Greek communal schools of Cairo in: GCC A18/5:10, 1910, letter n. 361.

¹⁵⁹ *Omonoia*, 09/22.05.1905.

¹⁶⁰ GCC A18/4:9, 1910, letter n. 33.

¹⁶¹ *Omonoia*, 25/08.05.1906; Manitakis, Pavlos N.: 100 chronia neoellinikou athlismou, p. 169; Kitroeff, Alexander: I diethnis diastasi, pp. 386-391.

¹⁶² *Akropolis*, 08.03.1906; *Empros*, 07.04.1906.

¹⁶³ *Omonoia*, 25/08.05.1906.

¹⁶⁴ *Akropolis*, 20.06.1906.

Club of Alexandria, which had as honorary presidents the Greek consul and the president of the Greek Community of Alexandria,¹⁶⁵ accepted as members “Greeks in descent” proposed by the existing members and paying at least five Egyptian pounds.¹⁶⁶

The first great games organized by Greeks in Egypt were held in 1906 on the initiative of *Ifitos* and under the auspices of the patriarch, the Greek consul, the president of the Greek Community of Cairo and other “prominent” Egyptian Greeks;¹⁶⁷ most of the participating athletes had Greek names and represented different Greek sport clubs in Egypt,¹⁶⁸ whereas Egyptian Greek sport clubs also took part in different early 20th century games organized by Greeks in other places or international games in Egypt.¹⁶⁹ In 1910, the *Greek Association of Alexandria’s Sportsmen* organized great games with more than 30, mainly Greek clubs, with about 100 Greek participants from clubs in Egypt and about 90 Greeks representing clubs from other places, not to mention guest stars like Spyros Louis, the winner of the marathon in the 1896 Olympic Games and the first Greek “sportsman hero”,¹⁷⁰ all received with enthusiasm by about 6000 spectators.¹⁷¹ Similar was the situation described regarding the great games in 1911 Alexandria, taking place in tension because of the situation in the Balkans and the simultaneous arrival of the “Averoff” battleship there, accompanied with great “patriotic festivities”.¹⁷² A further opportunity of Greeks in Egypt to gather and watch a spectacle were the tours of Greek wrestlers, such as the famous Panagis Koutalianos, who had already fought against non-Greek wrestlers in Greek coffee shops all over the world,¹⁷³ but also visited different places in Egypt to give a performance in front of his local Greek fans.¹⁷⁴ All this activity contributed not only to the “manly, athletic upbringing” of the Greek nation, but also to the formation of a global Greek public.

¹⁶⁵ Ellinikos Naftikos Omilos en Alexandria: Katastatikon, article 6.

¹⁶⁶ Ebenda, articles 3, 4.

¹⁶⁷ Unknown author: Protoi Panaigyptioi Agones.

¹⁶⁸ Ebenda.

¹⁶⁹ Stefanoudakis, I[oannis]: Milon. Athlitiko Lefkoma; Manitakis, Pavlos N.: 100 chronia neoellinikou athlismou; Koulouri, Christina: Athlismos, p. 127.

¹⁷⁰ Koulouri, Christina: Athlismos, p. 114.

¹⁷¹ Empros, 28.02.1910; Empros, 06.03.1910; Lachanokardis, Iraklis: Palaia kai nea Alexandria, pp. 164-165; Manitakis, Pavlos N.: 100 chronia neoellinikou athlismou, pp. 262-268.

¹⁷² Manitakis, Pavlos N.: 100 chronia neoellinikou athlismou, pp. 296-299.

¹⁷³ See for example: Tamis Myrodi, Anastasios: Oi Ellines tis Latinikis Amerikis, p. 125.

¹⁷⁴ Cairon, 20/02.05.1885; Syndesmos, 21/02.09.1897; Syndesmos, 04/16.09.1897. About similar shows of other Greek wrestlers in Egypt see: Foni tis Kyprou, 06/18.02.1892; Tachydromos, 09/21.11.1894; Tachydromos, 31/13.11.1900; Syndesmos, 17/30.04.1903.

11.3 A global Greek public

It was not just athletes that went wherever a global and relatively broad Greek audience might exist; Spyros Matsoukas was a well-known person touring around the world, without omitting to visit Egypt, so as to recite his “patriotic poems” and collect money for the Greek navy.¹⁷⁵ In 1892, the Greek Philharmonic visited Egypt on the initiative of Averoff, helping the local Greeks appreciate their “nationhood” and proudly turn their eyes to Greece, according to a description of that time.¹⁷⁶ Greeks in Egypt had their own music associations as well, also with “national” aims;¹⁷⁷ when a Greek Musical Club was formed in Alexandria, already in 1867, it was stressed that such an institution was important as a unifying factor for the Greeks in Alexandria, consisting of “heterogeneous elements” regarding their education, customs, habits and behavior.¹⁷⁸ An Alexandrian Greek Philharmonic accompanied the abovementioned excursionists from Egypt to the 1906 Intercalated Games in Athens,¹⁷⁹ whereas a Greek composer from Egypt, whose songs were played during the opening of the Olympic Games of Athens, was also the composer of songs based on Greek folk poems and taught to the pupils of the Greek communal schools of Egypt.¹⁸⁰

Theater was described, as already seen, as a “factor of national action”;¹⁸¹ this was a perception also of the leader of the Arab Opera troupe explaining, in an 1882 letter, that theatrical plays were “a school for the people to learn what cannot be learned from the [old] education [and] a garden with mellow fruits of refinement that can be harvested by anyone”.¹⁸² By the turn of the 20th century, the number of Greek clubs and associations of all kind in Egypt was growing and Andreadis was optimistic for the fruits to be harvested, since their contact with Athens was expected to strengthen the “national sentiment” against a threatening “cosmopolitan character”.¹⁸³ Professional theatrical troupes from the Greek state also made tours in Ottoman and

¹⁷⁵ Empros, 17.04.1902; Tachydromos, 11/24.05.1902; Tachydromos, 10/23.08.1902; Aigyptiakon Imerologion Drakopoulou 1905, pp. 213-214.

¹⁷⁶ Efimeris ton Kyrion 258, 03.05.1892, p. 6.

¹⁷⁷ Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1, pp. 449-451.

¹⁷⁸ Pandora 18:416, 1867, p. 157.

¹⁷⁹ Akropolis, 08.03.1906.

¹⁸⁰ Empros, 18.03.1912.

¹⁸¹ See chapter 10, footnote 216.

¹⁸² Cited in: Mestyan, Adam: “A garden with mellow fruits of refinement”, p. 9.

¹⁸³ *O Ellinismos*, March 1907, p. 188.

Egyptian urban centers with many Greeks;¹⁸⁴ the subject was often correlated with “patriotic dramas” and the fighting in the Balkans,¹⁸⁵ whereas “appropriate” and “educating” events were expected to be chosen by Greek press in Egypt, protesting when that did not happen.¹⁸⁶ As usual, the Greek government was criticized for not supporting touring theaters of “national propaganda”, as the Bulgarians were mentioned of doing, spending huge amounts for their theaters;¹⁸⁷ a Greek vice-consul was praised for taking care of more than 20 performances, lectures, concerts etc., but he was considered an exception compared to other diplomats not having understood, as pointed out at a critical text in *Tilegrafos*, the importance of maintaining contact with people of letters from Greece.¹⁸⁸ In spite of complaints and comparisons of this kind, Greek visitors of Egypt were some times impressed from the “huge programs of the Greek theatrical troupes” they saw in Egypt,¹⁸⁹ or from crowds rushing to theatres, when big names from Greece visited Egypt.¹⁹⁰ Alexandros Filadelfefs, an archaeologist that also passed from Egypt, commented that sometimes theatrical troupes, even if not of best quality, were making profitable for them tours in Egypt,¹⁹¹ whereas Tsokopoulos, himself an author of theatrical plays, wrote a text during the years he worked as a journalist in Egypt about Alexandria at night, commenting that many people were attracted in local Greek theatres, visiting however mainly *Fasoulis*, the popular comedies of Souris, rather than the opera.¹⁹²

After the famous 1895 admission of the Greek prime-minister Trikoupis that Greece was bankrupt was heard through a phonograph, a Greek crowd was reported of booing and later demonstrating in the streets of Alexandria.¹⁹³ A Greek cinema was also formed in Alexandria in 1912, one of the first of the city, organizing projections of scenes from the Greek wars of that period.¹⁹⁴ The wars’ atmosphere gave the opportunity for the issuing of many triumphant plays, as a list of publications

¹⁸⁴ Delveroudi, Eliza-Anna: *Theatro*, p. 368; Stamatopoulou-Vasilakou, Chrysothemis: *Greek Theater*, p. 274.

¹⁸⁵ See for example: Michailidis, Evgenios: *Vivliografia*, p. 56.

¹⁸⁶ See for example: Souloyannis, Euthymios: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 84.

¹⁸⁷ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: *Peninta chronia daskalos*, pp. 60-61; Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandria*, pp. 210-212. For a Bulgarian debate regarding a possible “usefulness” of theatre compare: Wolf, Gabrielle: “Was nicht nützlich ist”.

¹⁸⁸ *Tilegrafos*, 02/15.07.1905. For a similar argumentation see: *Aigyptiakon Imerologion Drakopoulou* 1905, p. 215.

¹⁸⁹ *Akropolis Filologiki* 5, 28.02.1888, p. 67; *Akropolis Filologiki* 9, 27.03.1888, p. 130.

¹⁹⁰ *Empros*, 19.11.1897; *Empros*, 17.04.1901.

¹⁹¹ *Akropolis Filologiki* 7, 13.03.1888, p. 99.

¹⁹² Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: *Eikonografimenon Aigyptiakon Imerologion tou 1895*, p. 222.

¹⁹³ *Akropolis*, 10.04.1895.

¹⁹⁴ Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandria*, pp. 155-156.

indicates,¹⁹⁵ whereas press was also important at a time numerous Greek coffee shops of Cairo, for example, were described as gathering groups of people discussing with fervor around tables about [Greek] politics, just like in Athens.¹⁹⁶ An enthusiastic Greek visitor was impressed in 1904 also because of listening of non-Greek Egyptians selling Athenian Greek newspapers in the streets of Egypt as if one was in a central street of Athens,¹⁹⁷ whereas many Greek newspapers and journals could be found in different clubs, confectioneries or stations of Egyptian cities.¹⁹⁸ Greeks from Egypt were often mentioned as subscribers of major Greek newspapers of Athens, of their places of origin or even elsewhere, or sent letters there,¹⁹⁹ even to minor or specialized ones.²⁰⁰ When Spandonis, a major reporter of *Empros*, was once again sent to Egypt in 1899, the trip was justified by the “ardent support” the newspaper received from there and its wish “to serve the interests of Hellenism in Egypt”;²⁰¹ at a similar occasion of 1897, this time Dimitrakopoulos being sent to Egypt, *Empros* was described as possessing many sympathies and selling many papers among Greeks of Egyptian towns.²⁰² Numbers are not often available, but there is 1906 information from a press agency that average 4000 papers of Athenian press were sold every week only in Alexandria,²⁰³ whereas one has to consider that some of these were probably read and discussed by a number of people in coffee shops or reading clubs.

A British bureaucrat observed in 1923 that a large number of Cypriots in Egypt had “entirely cut themselves off from Cyprus”²⁰⁴ and, at the same year, a journal about Cyprus was published by a Cypriot Greek in Alexandria, explaining in the prologue how necessary that was for Cypriots of Egypt, often absent for two or three decades from Cyprus and being “absolutely or partially foreign to it”.²⁰⁵ Even if

¹⁹⁵ Michailidis, Evgenios: *Vivliografia*, pp. 70-78.

¹⁹⁶ Vaxevanoglou, Kal.: *To Kairon*, p. 27.

¹⁹⁷ *Empros*, 18.11.1904.

¹⁹⁸ *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1893, p. 108; Prokopiou, Sokratis: *Neoellines*, p. 192; Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 158.

¹⁹⁹ At the beginning of the 20th century, the New York Greek newspaper *Atlantis* claimed of having a daily circulation of 25.000 papers, ranging between 20.000 and 30.000 papers during the 1910s: Georgakas, Dan: *The Greeks in America*, p. 10. *Atlantis* retained representatives in Alexandria, in Cairo and in Port Said, among other places all over the world. The Greek newspaper of Trieste *Nea Imera* also had an impact in different places of the world, including Greeks – and directors of Greek newspapers – in Egypt: Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: *Peninta chronia daskalos*, p. 24.

²⁰⁰ There is a letter from a reader in Alexandria already in the second issue of the first Greek sport newspaper: *Podilatiki kai Athlitiki Epitehorisis tis Anatonis*, 15.10.1898.

²⁰¹ *Empros*, 20.11.1899.

²⁰² *Empros*, 08.11.1897.

²⁰³ *Nea Zoi*, September 1906, p. 452.

²⁰⁴ BNA, FO series 141/511.1: *Annexation of Cyprus. Nationality and Treatment of Cypriots*.

²⁰⁵ Olympios, Petros G.: *Kypriakai selides*, p. 6.

there was apparently a number of Cypriots in Egypt that read or even wrote in newspapers of Cyprus, like a person writing in 1895 from Alexandria that, in spite of not being to his “native birthplace” for 30 years, he frequently read most of the Cypriot press,²⁰⁶ it might have been exaggerating to argue that “the Cypriots of Egypt acted as if they lived in Cyprus”,²⁰⁷ in spite of the proximity to Egypt. Even if Greek newspapers from Athens and other places with a Greek population were broadly read in Egypt, distance might furthermore increase the possibility of misperceptions, as evident by an example mentioned by Tsokopoulos, drawn from his personal experience after he moved to Egypt; there, he met Greeks as well as non-Greeks with exaggerating or wrong impressions about Greek political developments, asking him for information regarding Athens that one would ask only for Abyssinia, as Tsokopoulos commented, or perceiving a simple change of government to be a bloody revolution,²⁰⁸ not so hard to understand if one has an experience of the “shouting” style front-pages and of the exaggeration of most columnists of Greek newspapers at that time as well. Satiric papers, “from which politicians in Greece suffered hell on earth, without knowing it!”, were also existing in Egypt, whereas telegrams usually reported the unpleasant and not the positive things going on in Greece, contributing to a general pessimism and grumble of local Greeks, according to what Amantos later recalled;²⁰⁹ Timoleon Filimonas, a Greek politician visiting Egypt in 1895, commented that newspapers in Greece often exaggerated in their generalizing critic to Greek politicians, suggesting that their readers in Egypt should be more cautious when reading critical texts about them.²¹⁰

The first Greek newspaper of Egypt appeared in the 1860s, even if printed in Athens;²¹¹ until that time, Greek migrants, at least those who could read Greek, would rather prefer Athenian newspapers.²¹² By the end of the century, not only was press from the Greek state widespread, but many Egyptian Greek newspapers circulated as well and it was estimated that the three major daily Alexandrian Greek newspapers

²⁰⁶ Foni tis Kyprou, 03/15.11.1895.

²⁰⁷ Theocharidis, Ioannis: I symvoli, p. 508.

²⁰⁸ Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou 1897, pp. 284-285.

²⁰⁹ Amantos, Konst[antinos] I.: Mikra meletimata, p. 243.

²¹⁰ Omonoia, 04/16.04.1895.

²¹¹ Konstantinidis, Apostolos G.: I elliniki en Aigypto dimosiografia, p. 10.

²¹² Tsihlakis, T[ilemachos] M.: O en Aigypto Ellinismos, p. 69.

sold about 1000 to 1500 papers per day.²¹³ Tsokopoulos commented that most reporters were ignorant, with the exception of the directors of daily newspapers,²¹⁴ whereas similar were the expectations of a journalist at his first years in Egypt, warned from a more experienced colleague about the limited expectations of the readers, who bought the newspapers mainly to see the column of the stock exchange; later, however, the young journalist concluded that there were some Greeks in Egypt demanding a better quality than that offered by most local Greek journalists.²¹⁵ By the turn of the 20th century, the Egyptian Greek press was still consisted mostly of compilations from different Athenian and other non-Egyptian Greek newspapers or texts from non-Greek European newspapers translated in Greek, with a few exceptions being the information about the stock exchange and some local Greek news, usually not deserving the front-page story; there is a sarcastic description about how some young Greeks decided to make a newspaper composed by translated texts from non-Greek European newspapers and by the use of “scissors”, i.e. by copying texts from non-Egyptian Greek ones.²¹⁶

Directly or indirectly, the spreading of local or imported Greek press was an important factor that further contributed to the forming of a relatively unique global Greek readership, also in spite of variations in oral communication. There are some rare references to different Greek dialects spoken in Egypt, such as at the case of a young boy originating from Istanbul and being laughed at his “strange” for other Greeks pronunciation.²¹⁷ Already in 1882, the general assembly of the Cypriot Brotherhood in Egypt, which was financing the Greek school system in Cyprus to a great part,²¹⁸ demanded teachers educated in “free Greece” and speaking “the spoken *katharevousa* language” to go to Cyprus and teach the villagers;²¹⁹ as explicated in the 1888 general assembly the goal was, together with the “advancement of letters”, to converse the “*linovamvakoï*” to the Christian faith.²²⁰ A satiric newspaper called *Chorkatis*, i.e. peasant in Cypriot dialect, written in dialect and circulating also in

²¹³ Akropolis, 22.05.1895. According to the Egyptian Press Bureau, in 1929 there were two Greek daily newspapers in Egypt selling 10.000 papers and another four selling from 800 up to 5000 papers. Mentioned in: Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 190.

²¹⁴ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: *Aigyptiakai anamniseis*, p. 27.

²¹⁵ *Nea Zoi*, September 1906, pp. 451-453.

²¹⁶ *Aigyptiakon Imerologion Drakopoulou* 1901, p. 94.

²¹⁷ Pieridis, Giorgos Filippou: *Mnimes kai istories*, p. 16.

²¹⁸ See footnotes 68-79.

²¹⁹ Theocharidis, Ioannis: *I symvoli*, p. 488.

²²⁰ Ebenda, p. 494. About the “*linovamvakoï*” see chapter 9, footnote 60.

Egypt, had to close in November of 1885, after just a few months, since the Cypriots of Egypt proceeded to protests, being laughed at by other “*omogeneis*” because of the “vulgar style of Cypriot dialect”.²²¹ It should not be forgotten that a famous book trying to prove the “Greekness” of Cypriots was financed mainly by Cypriot Greeks of Egypt, to whom the book was also dedicated,²²² similarly to books about the history of Cyprus,²²³ whereas Cypriot Greek theatrical writers usually published their books, with a clearly didactic character and “patriotic” thematic, in Izmir or Alexandria;²²⁴ furthermore, certain Cypriot Greek newspapers, including the first Cypriot newspaper ever to be printed, were financed by wealthy Cypriot Greeks in Egypt and headed by people such as Theodoulos Konstantinidis, a Cypriot teacher who spent many years of his life in Egypt.²²⁵ Rather than a process of “exporting” ideas from Athens or an exaggerated pioneer role of a “Greek diaspora”, a more multidirectional approach taking into account the increased human mobility, the expectations of local agents and the importance of some nodal cities with a considerable Greek presence, besides the mechanisms of Greece, could be useful so as to understand the formation of a global Greek public.

11.4 “Discussing” through the gun

Training migrants through schools and other forms of education contributed largely to the broadening of a global Greek readership with an interest in participating in Greek politics regarding both Greece and their places of origin, one not related exclusively with consuming ideas pathetically, but involving also more active ways of participation. Kitroeff pointed that, even if one accepted a distinction between an irredentist ideology articulated in Athens and containing elements of expansionism and conservatism, on the one hand, and an irredentism in the “unredeemed” areas, having a program of national liberation from an autocratic Ottoman rule, on the other hand, both elements were evident in Egypt, something explained both by the origin of many Greeks from areas out of the Greek state, but also of an identification of many

²²¹ Koudounaris, Aristeidis L.: *Viografikon Lexikon Kyprion*, pp. 67-68.

²²² Loukas, Georgios: *Filologikai Episkepseis*. About this book see also: Herzfeld, Michael: *Pali dikamas*, p. 169.

²²³ Konstantinidis, G[eorgios] M.: *Istoria tis Kyprou*.

²²⁴ Katsouris, Giannis: *To teatro stin Kypro*, pp. 24-26.

²²⁵ *Kypros*, 17/29.08.1878; *Neon Kition*, 22/03.09.1879; *Neon Kition*, 03/15.10.1879; *Neon Kition*, 17/29.10.1879; *Neon Kition*, 24/06.12.1879.

to the “metropolitan nationalism of Athens”.²²⁶ Averoff, one of the wealthiest Greeks in Egypt, together with donations to the Ottoman town of Metsovo, where he came from, offered or left much money to the Greek state as also to Greek communal institutions in Egypt;²²⁷ other wealthy Greeks of Egypt, even if originating from different places not belonging at the Greek state, made donations and / or left a legacy not only to their places of origin or institutions in Egypt, mainly – even if not exclusively – Greek ones, but also to the Greek state.²²⁸ Even if the movement of capital between the Greek state and Greek migrant communities was not only directed from the “diaspora benefactors” to the Greek state, but also went the other way round,²²⁹ wealthy Greeks in Egypt were expected to contribute money, especially during the wars of the Greek state. At a 1918 speech at the *Averofeio High School* in Alexandria, a Greek doctor stressed that “diaspora Hellenism” and especially Greeks in Egypt, who should be leading as the “most thriving” part of it, did not contribute enough to the “fair national struggles”;²³⁰ his argument was supposed, at a first phase, to convince Greeks in Egypt to give money, especially the “thousands unredeemed Greeks of Egypt”,²³¹ similarly to a speech of Krendiropoulos at the inauguration of an Asia Minor Association in June 1918, presenting the example of Germans to suggest that the “individual” can not be seen irrespective of the “nation”.²³²

Such expectations did not refer only to people originating from the specific place in question: in 1896-1897, Crete was a major issue at stake and, according to Greek diplomatic reports, 115.000 francs were gathered for it only in Alexandria, 14.000 in Cairo, while committees were about to gather money from Greeks in smaller towns of Egypt,²³³ with money collected in Ismailia, Mansourah and Alexandria,²³⁴ in Port-Said,²³⁵ even in places of Upper Egypt,²³⁶ not to mention the considerable contributions made by the Cypriot and other brotherhoods.²³⁷ A Cretan

²²⁶ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 50.

²²⁷ Konstantinidis, Theodoulos F.: *Georgios Averoff*, pp. 9-12.

²²⁸ For some examples see: *Alitheia*, 16/28.09.1889 *Tachydromos*, 20/03.05.1905; *Aigyptiakon Imerologion Drakopoulou* 1908, p. 62; Trimi-Kirou, Katerina: *Quel cosmopolitisme*.

²²⁹ Hadziiosif, Christos: *I giraia selini*, pp. 54-62.

²³⁰ Nikolaou, G[eorgios]: *To paron kai to mellon*, p. 18.

²³¹ *Ebenda*, p. 20.

²³² Krendiropoulos, M[iltiadis]: *Patriotismos kai topikismos*, p. 15.

²³³ *HAMFA ακ:γ'*, 1896.

²³⁴ *Empros*, 05.02.1897; *Empros*, 14.02.1897; *Empros*, 17.02.1897; *Empros*, 02.03.1897; *Empros*, 07.04.1897.

²³⁵ Chaldoupis, Dimitrios K.: *Anamniseis kai chronika Port-Said*, pp. 90-91.

²³⁶ *Tachydromos*, 11/23.02.1897.

²³⁷ *Alitheia*, 14/26.06.1896.

paper of 1901 recalled the importance of “diaspora Greeks” in supporting Crete financially, with Egypt especially mentioned as the “inexhaustible donor” with its 268.000 among a total of 677.000 drachmas collected to support Crete.²³⁸ Similarly to the issue of Crete, 1000 golden francs were offered by the Greek Community of Cairo of from different towns in Upper Egypt for the Greeks fighting in Macedonia in 1903,²³⁹ but also for Greek victims of “Bulgarian atrocities”, even in places where mainly islanders lived or from brotherhoods, such as that of the Cypriots,²⁴⁰ according to an estimation, only the Greeks of Alexandria offered more than 200.000 pounds “to the nation” from 1912 to 1927.²⁴¹ Incidents such as the offering of small amounts by a poor tailor in Cairo for the Greek navy,²⁴² or the contribution of money even from poor Greeks migrants in the “depths of Africa”,²⁴³ were mentioned in turn-of-the-century Greek press, among other reasons in order to provide an example for the wealthier Greeks out of, but also in the Greek state; as commented in *Akropolis*, wealthy Greeks of Egypt contributed to the nation, whereas wealthy Athenians were complaining for some money they were asked to pay for the Greek navy.²⁴⁴

Greeks in Alexandrian coffee-shops were reported of discussing anxiously the news from Crete in 1897,²⁴⁵ whereas in the 1910s decade of wars, a reporter described the great occupation of Greeks in Egypt with the war as an everyday activity, since “even the peaceful Anastasis, a typical merchant of Alexandria, whose opinion counted until that time only about the Egyptian market or the gossip about the origin of grocers in Egypt”, would take a map and would explain the changes in the Balkans “with the pomposity of 10 Poincaré’s”.²⁴⁶ Women also had a share in this mobilization and, as reported in 1913, Greek women of Egypt, by that time having a “relaxed, drowsy, sleepy” life, watching themselves in the mirror or reading French popular novels, after the outbreak of the war were transformed, acquiring “patriotic interests”.²⁴⁷ In how far such an interest, reversing even the dominant stereotypes

²³⁸ Kritiki Efimeris, 01.01.1901; Kritiki Efimeris, 17.10.1901.

²³⁹ HAMFA 69.4, 1904; Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: I Elliniki Koinotita tou Kaïrou, p. 38.

²⁴⁰ Empros, 30.08.1903; Chaldoupis, Dimitrios K.: Anamniseis kai chronika Port-Said, p. 119; Salpigx, 27.10.1906.

²⁴¹ Gialourakis, Manolis: I Aigyptos ton Ellinon, p. 181.

²⁴² Tachydromos, 08/21.11.1904.

²⁴³ Akropolis, 18.07.1897.

²⁴⁴ Akropolis, 07.09.1906.

²⁴⁵ Tachydromos, 06/18.02.1897.

²⁴⁶ Akropolis, 27.10.1912. The analogy was probably referring to the important early 20th century French politician, Raymond Poincaré.

²⁴⁷ Akropolis, 05.01.1913.

about Greeks in Egypt, resulted some more constant and even active participation at wars is however another issue; as a correspondent of *Akropolis* from Alexandria commented at about the same period Greeks, having success in their private affairs because of their patience and self-denial, did not possess such qualities when dealing with politics, where occasional paroxysm could be easily turned into indifference.²⁴⁸ It was not just by offering money or discussing Greek politics in the local coffee-shops that Greeks or Egypt were expected to participate in Greek wars; during the 1897 war, *Tachydromos* presented the example of a volunteer, who did not stay drawing plans and expressing opinions at the coffee-shops, but chose to go to “a discussion through his gun, at the place where he ought to discuss”.²⁴⁹ Although one of the many theatrical texts produced in Egypt and having heroic deeds in war events as their subject praised “the volunteer” who placed his homeland above from family,²⁵⁰ there was also a fear about the cost paid by volunteers who managed to survive wars and return to Egypt. Incidents of people who closed their shops in order to go to war and lost their clients by the time they came back, or of people losing their jobs as employees during their absence, were also known,²⁵¹ not to mention of the war veterans going around the streets of Egypt ragged, starving and without a job, even though they claimed that wealthy Egyptian Greeks had promised them one before taking the decision to volunteer;²⁵² the existence of impoverished families of volunteers was also an issue, making the formation of charity institutions especially about them necessary.²⁵³

Giallourakis referred to “hosts of volunteers” who went from Egypt to fight for Thessalia or Crete during the late 19th century, recruited on behalf of the “National Society”.²⁵⁴ During the 1897 war, a ship was reported of arriving in Piraeus with many Greek reservists and volunteers from Egypt, originating from “the best families” there;²⁵⁵ a journalist that participated in one mission of this kind described the volunteers from Egypt as including many “waiters, employees, small

²⁴⁸ *Akropolis*, 28.03.1911.

²⁴⁹ *Tachydromos*, 16/28.04.1897.

²⁵⁰ Antoniadis, Anestis G.: *O ethelontis*. The specific copy of the book detected in E.L.I.A. had a stamp of the library of the Greek communal high school of Alexandria, an indication that such books were accessible for pupils.

²⁵¹ *Empros*, 09.12.1897; Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, p. 44.

²⁵² *Tachydromos*, 17/02.03.1917.

²⁵³ *Empros*, 10.10.1912; Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandria*, pp. 131-133.

²⁵⁴ Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, pp. 163-164.

²⁵⁵ *Empros*, 10.04.1897.

shopkeepers”, but accompanied his narration with many pictures and short stories of employees, doctors, lawyers etc.²⁵⁶ There is an estimation of the volunteers from Egypt and Sudan during the Balkan wars as ranging from 12.500 to 13.000 persons from “all social classes”,²⁵⁷ whereas a 1913 reporter of *Empros* increased the number to 16.000 reservists and volunteers from Egypt, originating from every “free and enslaved” place;²⁵⁸ an *Empros* front-page picture of volunteers from Alexandria was even accompanied with a comment that they were not needed, because of the existence already of sufficient personnel in the Greek army.²⁵⁹ A considerable number of Cypriot Greeks who volunteered in different occasions of wars were either living in Egypt or went to the front from an Egyptian port,²⁶⁰ but it is not known if some of the later were also included to the abovementioned numbers; even if exaggerations are also possible regarding the exact numbers, keeping also in mind the possibility that some might volunteer because of having nothing to loose in Egypt or in the expectation of getting the Greek nationality, the active involvement of many Greeks from Egypt in the 1910s decades of war was significant, especially if one takes into account the size of the Greek migrant community in Egypt at that time, more or less exceeding the number of 100.000.²⁶¹

A 1912 volunteer referred to the different origins of volunteers writing about “Babel”,²⁶² the question being whether participation in wars was a decisive unifying factor for those who survived the war. The encounter of volunteers often departing with enthusiasm from Egypt with the Greek state and its institutions might on the other hand lead to disappointment, as some existing descriptions suggest.²⁶³ One of them faced problems in the Greek army because all Greeks coming from Egypt were considered as *Venizelists* in 1916, something that might cause problems from *anti-Venizelist* army officers; according to a British report, the young Greek mentioned that “Egyptian Greeks in general had a very bad time in Athens and especially in the

²⁵⁶ Peridis, Aristos: *Sta kanonia*.

²⁵⁷ Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandria*, pp. 119-120. Similar numbers are proposed by other authors as well: Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, pp. 172-174; Kitroeff, Alexander: *O “venizelismos” stin Aigypto*, p. 133.

²⁵⁸ *Empros*, 05.01.1913.

²⁵⁹ *Empros*, 11.10.1912.

²⁶⁰ *Syndesmos*, 24/05.04.1897; Stavridis, Foivos (ed.): *Tserkezis*, Savvas: *Imerologion*, p. 50; Papapolyviou, Petros: *I Kypros*, p. 166; Papapolyviou, Petros (ed.): *Ypodouloi eleftherotai*; Papapolyviou, Petros: *Faeinon simeion*, pp. 268-269.

²⁶¹ About different estimations compare chapter 1, footnotes 18-25.

²⁶² Cited in: Papapolyviou, Petros (ed.): *Ypodouloi eleftherotai*, p. 82.

²⁶³ *Empros*, 28.11.1897; Frangkiskos, Isidoros: *Polemikon Imerologion*.

army [being] privately and publicly styled traitors”.²⁶⁴ Prejudice and political passions of the period of the “National Schism”, regarding the question of whether Greece should be involved in the war or remain neutral, might have been a reason explaining why Filippou Dragoumis would write about the “various draft evaders cotton-patriots” of Egypt,²⁶⁵ but in any case, it should not be assumed that all Greeks in Egypt were enthusiastic about joining the Greek army. The Greek 1889 census-takers recognized that their attempt to detect Greek citizens in Egypt faced, among other difficulties, the fear of many migrants that they would have to serve their military service if included to the counting,²⁶⁶ whereas incidents of desertion from the Greek army to Egypt were reported from newspapers,²⁶⁷ in the correspondence of diplomats or priests,²⁶⁸ or by the director of the patriarchic journal, making reference to draft evaders.²⁶⁹ Nevertheless, through the attempts of both the Greek state’s mechanisms and of different individuals related to it in variant ways, a relatively broad mobilization, in one way or another, for the causes of the Greek nation, was achieved among the migrants in Egypt, going hand in hand with expectations from the state claiming of representing Greeks all over the world.

11.5 Summary

In the present chapter, it has been argued that a broadening of the education, not just through schools, but also through other channels, such as sport activities or press, aimed at the formation of a relatively homogenous Greek public in Egypt. This process, which was associated with a specific, monocultural form of being a “proper” Greek, was not just exported from Greece, but was promoted by actors in Egypt as well. The result was the mobilization of a considerable part of the migrants for the causes of the Greek nation, as expressed not just through an interest in theory, but even by means of active participation of some migrants, in cases of wars.

²⁶⁴ BNA, FO series 141/467: Greek Political Situation (in Greece and in Egypt). About the period of the “National Schism” and its impact in Egypt see chapter 12, footnotes 109-111.

²⁶⁵ Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): Dragoumis, Filippou Stef.: Imerologio, pp. 165-166.

²⁶⁶ Ypourgeion Esoterikon: Statistiki tis Ellados, p. 107.

²⁶⁷ Mi Chanesai 585, 1883, p. 2; Syndesmos, 04/16.08.1897; Tachydromos, 02/14.09.1897; Tilegrafos, 16/29.07.1909.

²⁶⁸ HAMFA A/5/I (2), 1918; AIKA ΛΗ/2 290.

²⁶⁹ Pantainos 1908-1909, pp. 403-405.

12. The Greek state and the “real Greece” in Egypt: a story of mutual stereotypes and expectations

By the end of the 20th century, Greeks living out of the Greek state were often praised as an example of both individual “success” and “patriotism” regarding “Greek issues”,¹ a way of representation not uncommon during the long 19th century. In 1888 Alexandros Filadelfefs, an archaeologist originating from Athens, commented that if “the Greek” goes out of Greece, “he is the best”, whereas in Greece “even the most upright characters follow the detestable routine”.² After the Greek military defeat of 1897 which, “from the wealthiest to the poorest”, the “*omogeneis*” of Alexandria had followed with “national fever” through telegraphs, they were praised by a touring reporter of *Empros* as “enjoying the greatest respect in the place [and] maintaining the prestige of Hellenism”.³ Georgios Souris, a popular Greek humorist of that period, explained after a tour he made in Egypt that Greeks there “forget laziness [...] nobody is lying down rubbing its belly or asking for positions and favors by the khedive”, whereas there was also no “electoral turmoil”.⁴ Even Anargyros Simopoulos, a minister of the Greek state at that time, would praise the “Hellenism” of Egypt exactly for being hardworking and patriotic at the same time, having the spirit of associating and aiding each other which was missing from Greeks in the Greek state, as he claimed; Greeks in Egypt constituted, according to his description, “one of the most vigorous and thriving branches of the giant national tree”.⁵ It is not hard to imagine that these Greek visitors of Egypt came to these conclusions, being actually ready in advance to see there a “model” of Greece, which was better than Greece itself.

A major reporter of *Empros* often sent to Egypt, Dimitrakopoulos, introduced a 1901 article commenting that “the land of pharaoh is so familiar to the readers of Greek newspapers and so well explored from the Athenian colleagues”,⁶ five years later, a young colleague of Dimitrakopoulos wrote at a major Egyptian Greek journal, *Nea Zoi*, that “every [Greek] author, every distinguished author, made a trip to Egypt”.⁷ If Egypt was indeed important for different aspects of turn-of-the-century

¹ See chapters 2.2-2.3.

² *Akropolis Filologiki* 5, 28.02.1888, p. 66.

³ *Empros*, 28.09.1897.

⁴ The text was republished from *Romios* in: *Omonoia*, 18/31.05.1901.

⁵ *Empros*, 20.04.1901.

⁶ *Empros*, 01.02.1901.

⁷ *Nea Zoi*, September 1906, p. 452.

Greek life and even formed a part of the process of defining and delimitating a Greek national community, it is interesting to see also which “Egypt” was “known” to Greeks living elsewhere, especially in Greece, what aspects of the local Greeks were overstressed or obscured and whether they constituted rather a kind of “heterotopia”, i.e. “another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled”.⁸ In the Wilhelmine Germany some places, for example in south America, considered as a “giant tabula rasa” in German travel literature, became a place where ideal, reconstituted forms of the German nation were supposed to be established,⁹ whereas a settlement of Russian Germans in the Ottoman Empire was described in 1888 as being composed by “veritable German fellow countrymen”, “pure German families” that preserved “German expressions of life, German love for work, German family life, German discipline”.¹⁰ An anthropologist pointed that Greeks in Sudan have been proud for being themselves Greeks “more than the Greeks of Greece”.¹¹ The major question addressed in the present chapter is not just whether, but also in which ways the Greeks in Egypt were expected to be a “more Greek”, or a “better” version of a Greek community, compared to the inhabitants of the Greek state during the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. A complementary question regards the ways the idealizing modes of representation of the “Greeks Abroad” at that time were related, on the one hand, to specific paths of political critique to Greece, but without, on the other hand, that being at the expense of various demands for a role the Greek state ought to have regarding the Greek affairs in Egypt.

12.1 The “Profit-making Hermes”

In the interwar period, Politis described Alexandria as the second cultural center of “modern Hellenism”, where many intellectuals from Greece started their careers.¹² By the end of the 20th century, the author of a typical book of the “cosmopolitan” trend argued that in the first two decades of the 20th century, “Alexandria was the seat of Greek letters, while Athens was no more than a provincial

⁸ Foucault, Michel + Miscoewic, Jay: *Of Other Spaces*, p. 27.

⁹ Conrad, Sebastian: *Globalisierung und Nation*, pp. 245-246, 261.

¹⁰ Fuhrmann, Malte: *Der Traum*, p. 53.

¹¹ Makris, Gerasimos: *I elliniki paroikia tou Soudan*, p. 410.

¹² Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 2, p. 446.

town doing labour as the capital of a newfound nationalism”.¹³ In spite of the emphasis to a cultural impact of the Greeks in Egypt as part of the “cosmopolitan” legacy, it seems that few among the late 19th century Greek writers of Egypt had the chance to publish something in local Greek journals,¹⁴ underestimated due to stereotypes of them being unable to deal with anything other than the cotton, something that had as a result the preference of those in charge to pay much and publish any author from the Greek state even if, with the exception of authors like Papadiamantis or Mavillis, they might not have such a great talent, at least according to Gkikas;¹⁵ for a number of reasons, including a better payment, Greek journals in Egypt attracted more or less famous authors of the Athenian journals, especially since the turn of the 20th century.¹⁶ Alexandros Ragkavis wrote that the Greek inhabitants of the late 19th century Alexandria would “preferably sacrifice to the Profit-making, as they once [in the antiquity] used to do to the Learned Hermes”,¹⁷ a usual metaphor in texts of that time. Other authors, thinking perhaps of the circulation of their newspaper in Egypt, would be more careful, writing for example that “in spite of the devotion [of people in Alexandria] to the Profit-making Hermes, [they] do not neglect of the Learned Hermes”.¹⁸ Tsokopoulos remembered that by his arrival in Alexandria he was told that he would not find any “*kalamarades*” there, something that filled him with despair, as he explained, both for the contemptuous description of men of letters as also about his life in Alexandria.¹⁹ In spite of some bad experiences he had, such as a reading at a major Greek club of Alexandria, where more than half of the small room was empty and even some of those present did not care about the speaker or even fell asleep,²⁰ Tsokopoulos concluded that there was an excellent group of intellectuals, even if Alexandrians tended to worship the “Profit-making Hermes”.²¹ Gkikas, who also went to Egypt at the same period, later remembered of one of his first experiences there, as he issued a journal and tried to find Greek subscribers in the interior: as he found out, many Greeks, even ignorant people, were willing to support

¹³ Haag, Michael: Alexandria, p. 58.

¹⁴ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: Aigyptiakai anamniseis, pp. 52, 55-56.

¹⁵ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: Peninta chronia daskalos, pp. 121-122.

¹⁶ Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou 1897, p. 282; Nea Zoi, October 1907, p. 688; Daskalopoulos, Dimitris: Logotechnika periodika, pp. 24-27.

¹⁷ Estia Eikonografimeni, 31.07.1888, p. 482.

¹⁸ Empros, 02.11.1904.

¹⁹ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: Aigyptiakai anamniseis, p. 47.

²⁰ Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou 1897, p. 287.

²¹ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: Aigyptiakai anamniseis, p. 48.

any “*kalamaras*”, in opposition to the few well-educated Greeks of the interior, who had an interest and knowledge only about the slight differences of cotton and its varieties and, in case of becoming subscribers, did it with contempt or even anger for the wandering “Learned Hermes” that humiliated their “Profit-making Hermes”.²² Nevertheless, Gkikas argued that there was an intellectual life in Alexandria of late 19th and early 20th century, even if poor in quality of original production and mainly coming – with delay – from Greece.²³ Such descriptions, besides posing questions about the exaggerating descriptions about “the City of Kavafis”²⁴ and the comparisons of Alexandria to Athens perceived as a “provincial town”,²⁵ might be suggesting also of a broadly held impression at the turn of the 20th century that Greeks in Egypt were interested in nothing but material profit, an impression that was only partly undermined by later experiences of people like Tsokopoulos or Gkikas in Egypt.

If other Greeks expected those living in Egypt to be “successful” in economic issues, this was not always appreciated, and not only by authors expecting an interest in cultural activity. An 1889 Greek visitor, after an enthusiastic description of the “moving, actively working, getting richer Greek world” of Egypt, concluded that “Greeks Abroad” satisfied their individual interests, but did not take care about the “interest of Hellenism” unless if pressured by necessity.²⁶ An 1886 report from Egypt mentioned the “initial indifference” of the local Greeks to the debts of Greece due to political passions,²⁷ whereas another text a few days later was critical about Greeks in Egypt who, reading about the difficult situation in Greece while having their coffee, did not show much interest to help materially at a period when “Europe” was pressing the Greek state regarding debts; it would suffice, according to the same text, if three of four Greek merchant houses of London or Alexandria helped, something that would not have a great impact on their properties.²⁸ The specific article was republished by Greek newspapers in Bucharest or Alexandria, received with confirming comments to the critique of *Akropolis*, with the addition that whereas

²² Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: *Peninta chronia daskalos*, pp. 65-66.

²³ Ebenda, p. 94. Compare to a description of the Greek cultural life in Zagazig as being that of Athens in miniature by a 1905 Greek visitor in: *Tilegrafos*, 01/14.07.1905, as also to a similar comment about the Greek press in Egypt in chapter 11, footnote 216.

²⁴ See chapter 2, footnote 94.

²⁵ See footnote 13.

²⁶ *Kleio* 5:6, 1889, p. 83.

²⁷ *Akropolis*, 12.01.1886.

²⁸ *Akropolis*, 28.01.1886.

“ordinary people” were sacrificed, wealthy people were asking for power and glory.²⁹ This kind of texts often formed part of a usual strategy of putting pressure to wealthy Greeks,³⁰ something that might have been admitted in public as well.³¹ The pressure could become more intense through other comparisons, for example with non-Greek Egyptians and their contribution to their loan or to the Ottoman army at the same time the local Greeks, according to the reporter of *Akropolis* in Cairo, confined themselves to “excitement, tears, hurrahs”.³² After the war of 1897, some wealthy Greeks in Egypt were criticized because, even though they had made much money, which they spent for “loose women”, as a reporter of *Empros* commented, they protested of being destroyed by donations for “national struggles”, even those originating from areas ruled by Ottomans.³³ Another newspaper of Athens accused the “Greeks Abroad” because of complaining the whole time about politics in Greece, even though they did not pay taxes or give enough money to assist the Greek army and navy, a text republished by *Tachydromos* with a short, confirming comment.³⁴ What was at stake with such texts was whether the wealthy part of the Greeks living out of the Greek state would feel obliged to contribute to the “needs of the nation”. Ionas Dragoumis described how wealthy Alexandrian Greeks complained to him in 1905 that they were not able to contribute to Greece because of having many other burdens and because the Greek government was always negative when they wanted its assistance; Dragoumis pointed in his journal, with a spice of mistrust he had about the communal leadership in Egypt on a variety of grounds, that they had promised some aid also before the 1897 war, but gave nothing on the excuse that the war was lost, some of them offering just small amounts so as to receive decoration.³⁵ If some wealthy among the “Greeks Abroad” tended to try profiting from a “patriotic image” in order to draw a veil over their speculating activities in the Greek state,³⁶ economic contribution could prove useful also in other occasions, as evident by the case of a volunteer in the Greek army. According to a report of 1916, as Greeks from Egypt were considered by a colonel as being collectively traitors because of correlated to

²⁹ Cited in: *Akropolis*, 22.02.1886.

³⁰ Compare also: *Kairon*, 28/10.12.1876.

³¹ *Akropolis*, 22.02.1886.

³² *Akropolis*, 12.04.1886.

³³ *Empros*, 23.10.1897.

³⁴ *Tachydromos*, 18/01.07.1904.

³⁵ Dragoumis, Ionas: *O ellinismos mou kai oi Ellines*, pp. 60-62.

³⁶ See also: Dertilis, Georges: *To zitima ton trapezon*, pp. 63-64; Dertilis, Georges: *Istoria tou ellinikou kratous* – vol. 1, pp. 33-34.

Venizelos,³⁷ a volunteer responded that it was Egyptian Greeks that had paid for all public buildings of Athens and for the Greek army and navy, a response that turned the colonel to a “curious yellow leaden colour”.³⁸ The wealth of some Greeks in Egypt, a proof of their limited interest in politics for some, could be reversed to an argument of their role in Greek affairs.

On the other hand, complaints were sometimes made about the Greek state, which remembered the Greeks living abroad only when it wanted to collect money from them.³⁹ It was not just the Greek state that was accused of having a perception of Greeks in Egypt as a potential source of quick profit. In 1906, *Omonoia* protested against persons that continuously “sprung up” and actually damaged greatly the “national and patriotic work” by going around in Egypt more or less officially and asking for money from migrants which, as they hoped, would prove sensitive enough to contribute for a better future of Greece.⁴⁰ In 1908, some well-known Greeks in Egypt were presented as asking for better controls about this sort of activity in Egypt, even though the rumors were denied on the argument that nobody from the “*omogeneis*” could have asked for such a thing, since they all used to contribute without asking for further details.⁴¹ The *naiveté* of some Greeks in Egypt was an issue at a 1917 comedy written by a Greek lawyer in Egypt, describing how touring poets like “*Sachlamaras*”, i.e. “Foolish”, “visited” the safes of wealthy “*omogeneis*” in Egypt and Sudan.⁴² A novel of 1929 also described how the interest of many wealthy Greeks in Egypt about political affairs in the Greek state was abused by many Athenian politicians and “*kalamarades*”, something provoking a reaction.⁴³ The stereotypes about the sensitive and wealthy Greeks relatively cut off from affairs in Greece made some people think they could make some easy – even if risky – profits in Egypt, this time from the money of local Greeks.

Already since the mid-19th century, Alexandria was considered as a place where money was “the only idea”, whereas the “ridiculous luxury of new rich [...] trying to show off wealth, which they often don’t have” was also criticized.⁴⁴ Wealthy

³⁷ About the political passions of that period, also in Egypt, see footnotes 111-112.

³⁸ BNA, FO series 141/467: Greek Political Situation (in Greece and in Egypt).

³⁹ *Ethnikon Imerologion Skokou* 1893, pp. 108-109; *Akropolis*, 25.03.1914.

⁴⁰ *Omonoia*, 12/25.10.1906.

⁴¹ *Tilegrafos*, 29/11.09.1908.

⁴² *Farmas, Foivos: To glossikon zitima*, pp. 12-13.

⁴³ *Arvanitakis, G[eorgios] L.: Mia tragodia eis to Kaïron*, pp. 22-23.

⁴⁴ *Typaldos, Georgios K. (yios): Anatolikai Epistolai*, pp. 49, 59.

Greeks in Alexandria and Cairo were described by an 1888 Greek visitor as “spending much” in “entertainment, food and drink”, living in places where one was considered a crazy if speaking for Pindar of Korais instead of money, the “God, which together with Bacchus and Aphrodite, consists the Trinity worshiped in Egypt”.⁴⁵ In 1905, Ionas Dragoumis juxtaposed Athens with its “ideologues” and poets to Alexandria, a boring place without any passions other than the pursuit of profit,⁴⁶ whereas his brother Filippos, also with a short service as a diplomat in Egypt a decade later, considered a church in Cairo as indicating the ostentation of the local new rich,⁴⁷ a comment going hand in hand with his general critique to Egyptian Greeks, not only the supporters of Venizelos, but also to the majority having the “lowest motives” and no shame, compared to people of Athens.⁴⁸ A similar critique could be detected also among Greeks in Egypt when specific goals were at stake, such as a text presenting Greeks in Egypt as “willing to sacrifice thousands of pounds just for momentary ostentations”, instead of supporting Greek schools there.⁴⁹ At the abovementioned 1917 comedy, much critique was addressed to the new rich family of “*Chrimatopliktos*”, i.e. “hitten by money”, a “very familiar type of people” in Alexandria, as explained, the husband being always concerned with the stock market.⁵⁰ Such stereotypes, from the point of view of Greeks staying in Egypt, formed attempts to criticize specific forms of rapid and risky profit unsettling the expected social stability as also to turn the interest of wealthy local Greeks to other priorities. For Greeks visiting or temporarily living in Egypt, on the other hand, these stereotypes could form part of a disappointment caused exactly because of their greater expectations. Georgios Gousios, for example, then a secretary of the “National Society” in Egypt, commented in some of his letters in 1896 that “wealth brings egoism”, described Egypt as a place where “everyone comes to work, to become rich and to go away” and added that he was tired of “doing the beggar for the sake of homeland”.⁵¹ Exaggerated expectations about a material contribution of the stereotypically represented as wealthy and patriotic “Greeks Abroad” could be an

⁴⁵ Akropolis Filologiki 9, 27.03.1888, p. 130.

⁴⁶ Dragoumis, Ionas: *O ellinismos mou kai oi Ellines*, pp. 63-65.

⁴⁷ Ioannou, Giorgos (ed.): *Dragoumis, Filippos Stef.:* Imerologio, p. 127.

⁴⁸ *Ebenda*, pp. 54-55, 190.

⁴⁹ *Metarrythmisis*, 12/24.08.1886.

⁵⁰ *Farmas, Foivos: To glossikon zitima*.

⁵¹ Cited in: Gianoulopoulos, Giannis: “I evgenis mas tyflosis”, p. 74, footnote 11.

explanation for the easiness of being let down, especially when such feelings were combined with political disagreements.

George Fragoudis departed for Egypt in 1895 with the excitement of a person who expected to see the “Greek East, the Great Greece [...] where the pure Greek heart is beating”. When he arrived in Alexandria, however, he described it as a place of materialism, where everyone was trying to get rich and to cheat others, especially the “enslaved [Egyptian] people”, with nothing but “grocers and middlemen, bankers and financiers” who, if they would ever speak about scholars, they did it “with the greatest pity for those people, who occasionally disturb them with their books”.⁵² Different reactions appeared in Egyptian Greek press regarding this description, including not only a comment in *Omonoia* that a “completely independent person” was needed to describe perfectly the negative aspects of Alexandria and its people,⁵³ but also protests, such as a letter in *Metarrythmisis* defending the hard working people of Alexandria and making comparisons to the “lazy” people of Athens, “sitting in the coffee-shops all day long and reading newspapers and discussing about politics and elections”.⁵⁴ Praising “hard working” people and reversing the accusations with stereotypes about the Greeks in the Greek state might have been also a counterargument of the Greeks in Egypt against accusations for materialism, besides their “patriotic” contributions. Generalizations of this kind contributed not only in describing Greeks in the Greek state and the “Greeks Abroad” in an arbitrarily unifying way, constructing an “ideal” Greece out of Greece, underestimating the less “successful” cases of migrants, the considerable human mobility and the multidirectional aspects of cultural production, but often ascribed the “Greeks Abroad” with a unique “voice” regarding Greek politics.

12.2 The “voice” of the “Greeks Abroad”

Gkikas wrote that he had gone to Egypt, similarly to many other Greeks, because of a disappointment with Greek political parties;⁵⁵ at about the same time, Alexandros Ragkavis wrote that the Greeks who hosted him during his visit in Alexandria were speaking about Greek issues just as if they were in the Greek state,

⁵² Akropolis, 17.05.1895.

⁵³ *Omonoia*, 23/04.06.1895.

⁵⁴ *Metarrythmisis*, 31/12.06.1895.

⁵⁵ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: *Peninta chronia daskalos*, p. 30.

the only difference being that they were interested in commerce rather than in politics, especially the politics in the Greek state, constituting for them nothing but personal differences of politicians.⁵⁶ If such impressions seem to confirm the stereotypes about the Greeks in Egypt, which had worshiped the “Profit-making Hermes” and cared only about their individual affairs, the failures of some Greek newspapers trying to deal with topics from Egypt was interpreted as a sign of a limited interest of the Greek readership to anything besides the Greek politics or social life,⁵⁷ whereas even Gkikas commented that Greeks in Egypt read local Greek journals mainly because of an interest in Greek politics.⁵⁸ Flaubert mentioned of having met a Greek “dealer of antiquities” as south as in Luxor and as early as in 1850, with whom he could discuss about the political situation in Greece after that person, originating from the Ottoman Aegean island of Limnos, went to fetch Greek newspapers.⁵⁹ By 1886, a correspondent of *Akropolis* in Cairo described local Greeks as speaking for nothing else than “national issues”,⁶⁰ a comment probably exaggerating in its totality, yet indicating of some interest of local Greeks regarding the difficult economic situation of the Greek state. In 1905 and while visiting the interior of Egypt, Ionas Dragoumis met a person who used to be involved in Greek politics, but left everything due to disappointment and went to Egypt to speculate through commerce, was however still writing in Greek newspapers, in fact giving advices to the Greek state.⁶¹ The generalizing contempt expressed by many Greeks about the politics in the Greek state was not necessarily an indication of indifference regarding politics and of a priority to commerce instead.

The interest in Greek politics was not made in a unique way, even though sources of that time often reproduced a perception of a “voice” of the “Greeks Abroad”. Even critique could be expressed in the Greek press in Egypt, without always being welcomed, as evident from an 1885 incident, when *Omonoia* was closed for a short period because of pressure by the Greek consul.⁶² An 1894 public speech of a Greek lawyer in Alexandria provoked reactions, since the speaker criticized the inhabitants of the Greek state and the king with “inappropriate expressions”,

⁵⁶ Estia Eikonografimeni, 31.07.1888, p. 482.

⁵⁷ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: Ellinikos diakosmos, p. 113.

⁵⁸ Gkikas, Io[annis] A.: Peninta chronia daskalos, pp. 66-67.

⁵⁹ Steegmuller, Francis (ed.): Gustave Flaubert, p. 170.

⁶⁰ *Akropolis*, 12.04.1886.

⁶¹ Dragoumis, Ionas: O ellinismos mou kai oi Ellines, pp. 69-70.

⁶² Foni tis Kyprou, 23/07.03.1885; Foni tis Kyprou, 16/28.03.1885.

according to a report of the Greek consul. The furious audience started to leave the place before the end of the speech and the organizers decided to stop the speaker, who was not arrested by consular authorities only because that would have no “practical result”; as the consul commented, an arrest would make the issue known to a greater audience and also to the foreign communities in Egypt, therefore it was chosen to take care that nothing would be published in press about the incidence.⁶³ In 1907, however, a Greek journalist was arrested by the Greek consular authorities in Cairo because of some “insulting” articles against the king of the Greeks.⁶⁴ It is not known how many similar incidents of critique survived through available sources. An Alexandrian Greek newspaper even explained that it did not publish some letters it received on a dispute regarding communal affairs in Bani Suwayf in order to avoid stirring the fire of the dispute,⁶⁵ something indicating that such selections might have been a common strategy of editors, not always declaring this in public.

If different kind of critique, at least to some extent, was made regarding the politics in Greece, reporters of Athenian newspapers often gave an idealized picture of Greeks in Egypt, especially when this was serving the goals of the newspapers in periods after a financial crisis or a military defeat. In the period following the 1893 bankruptcy of Greece, Paraskevopoulos went around Egypt to present to the readership of *Akropolis* the “voice” of the Greek migrants, which criticized Greek political parties and corruption in general.⁶⁶ After the defeat of Greece in the 1897 war, a Greek doctor in Mansourah promoted the local Greek community as an example to be followed by Greek governments since, in spite of some initial debts of 800 pounds, after two years of good administration there was a surplus, something indicating for his understanding that the Greek state needed a better leadership.⁶⁷ In 1909, the correspondent of *Empros* reported with enthusiasm the increase of the Greek communal properties in Egypt at a period of crisis,⁶⁸ adding that the communal meetings went on ideally, without shouting and swearing and beating, but in a spirit of brotherly unity and prudence, without the hunting for votes, a characteristic ascribed to the Greek state.⁶⁹ Ionas Dragoumis saw in Greek communal institutions of Egypt a

⁶³ HAMFA αακ/Ε:δ, 1894.

⁶⁴ *Empros*, 19.09.1907.

⁶⁵ About this incident see chapter 10, footnotes 152-156.

⁶⁶ *Akropolis*, 08.01.1895.

⁶⁷ *Empros*, 07.11.1897.

⁶⁸ About the late 1900s crisis in Egypt see chapter 12.3.

⁶⁹ *Empros*, 30.06.1909.

model to be followed and juxtaposed them also with Ottoman Greek communities, at which minor ambitions and misunderstandings between a consul and a bishop caused troubles; in Egypt, went on Dragoumis, communal organization took its “natural form”, with a spiritual authority of the patriarch, a leadership by the communal council and a consul directing according to the politics of the Greek state.⁷⁰ The president of the Greek community was like a king, a notable everybody obeyed, a situation Dragoumis found ideal for the “oligarchic and not democratic” Greeks,⁷¹ in spite of his disagreements with the local Greek leadership.⁷² Such descriptions were often generalizations corresponding to the expectations or wishes of the observer; disputes were not missing by Greek communal institutions in Egypt, especially in periods like the 1860s or the 1910s, not to mention of minor incidents of scandals mentioned occasionally in press, in spite of the tendency of newspapers of small societies to avoid critique of this kind. In Egyptian Greek press, complaints were expressed at a text describing the “*kommatismos*”, i.e. the party politics, from which every Greek club or brotherhood in Cairo was supposed of suffering,⁷³ whereas another supposedly typically Greek phenomenon considered as a problem also in Egypt was “*filarchia*”, i.e. the lust for power, as in the example of 1905 Zagazig, where two Greek clubs existed having the same goals, an “unforgivable luxury”, as a Greek visitor of the town commented, explaining that “we should not forget that Zagazigians are Greeks [and that] clubs nowhere exist without presidents and vice-presidents”.⁷⁴ The “*romeiki*”⁷⁵ disease of seeking high positions in political hierarchy was described as existing even regarding the Greek football life of Alexandria which, as was argued, came second behind that of the “natives” in the period after 1912 because, among other reasons mentioned, everybody wanted to be a president or, in worst case, a vice-president of a team, whereas those who failed to be elected formed a new club.⁷⁶

It was not only oligarchic aspects and a relative consensus, existing or exaggerated, of those participating in migrant institutions, which were praised from

⁷⁰ Dragoumis, Ionas: *O ellinismos mou kai oi Ellines*, pp. 54-55.

⁷¹ *Ebenda*, pp. 68-69.

⁷² See footnote 35.

⁷³ See for example: *Metarrythmisis*, 03/15.09.1888.

⁷⁴ *Tilegrafos*, 01/14.07.1905; *Tilegrafos*, 02/15.07.1905.

⁷⁵ About the negative connotations of “*Romios*” and “*romeikos*” as juxtaposed to a “European” form of “Greekness” see footnote 118.

⁷⁶ Tsivilis, G.: *Mia matia perix tou podosfairou*, p. 24.

non-Egyptian Greeks. “Patriotic” yet not involved in the “corrupted” politics of the Greek state was a common way of presenting the Greeks of Egypt. One such example was when a reporter of *Empros* credited them, in 1910, as having an interest only to “external affairs” of Greece, like the Cretan and Albanian issues, without being influenced by the “everlasting internal concerns” of those living in Greece, especially the pre-electoral ones.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, front-page articles of a Greek newspaper of Alexandria during the period of the 1886 loan kept complaining that Greece was “lacking of political men”,⁷⁸ or that the “salvation of the nation” should not depend on the “Greeks Abroad” but on the Greek state, which should restrain the “bacteria”, the members of the Greek parliament, and concede power to the “governors of the state”,⁷⁹ arguments neither rare nor exceptional, indicating not of an indifference for Greek “internal affairs”, but rather for a specific orientation about it. After the 1897 defeat, *Empros* initiated a series of articles dedicated to the “opinion” of “Greeks Abroad”, sending journalists in Austria and the Balkan states, in England and France, and one of the most prominent of its journalists, Polyvios Dimitrakopoulos, to Egypt. The goal of these texts, that filled the pages of *Empros* for several months, was proclaimed to be the opinion of the “*omogeneis*” about Greece;⁸⁰ as the reporter explained to a “prominent” local Greek, Amvrosios Synodinos, before interviewing him, his newspaper was desperate from people in Greece and wanted to have the opinion of Greeks out of Greece who, as he claimed, would be independent of political parties,⁸¹ but not indifferent, since the same reporter had earlier described how all of them “from the wealthier to the poorer” were brotherly connected and followed all the phases of the “national disaster” in a “national fever”.⁸²

At a first short summary of the investigation in Egypt, it was explained that all kind of Greeks of Egypt were asked and all, in spite of the variety of opinions, blamed the king, some or all the politicians, journalists and inhabitants of the Greek state.⁸³ A doctor in Alexandria commented that the miserable policy of the Greek politicians made Greeks in Egypt blush with shame instead of being pride for being Greek,⁸⁴

⁷⁷ *Empros*, 08.05.1910.

⁷⁸ *Metarrythmis*, 15/27.05.1886.

⁷⁹ *Metarrythmis*, 17/29.09.1886; *Metarrythmis*, 18/30.09.1886.

⁸⁰ *Empros*, 25.09.1897.

⁸¹ *Empros*, 20.11.1897.

⁸² *Empros*, 28.09.1897.

⁸³ *Empros*, 04.10.1897.

⁸⁴ *Empros*, 13.10.1897.

whereas some Greeks in Kafr El-Zayyat expressed similar complaints about journalists and politicians in Greece having no idea what Greeks, especially in the interior of Egypt, suffered because of the jeers of the Egyptian peasants.⁸⁵ Averoff, who was interviewed by Paraskevopoulos at about the same time, named the “party politics” as the main problem,⁸⁶ an understanding common by other Greek notables in Egypt such as Rostovic, promoted by the reporter of *Empros* as an example in the way he presided the Greek Community of Cairo; Rostovic introduced himself also as a person not involved in Greek political parties, since he gave priority to his homeland, as he said, in contrary to those involved in politics in Greece.⁸⁷ Ideas against the “gangrene” of “party politics” were expressed also by less “eponymous” Greeks in smaller towns of Egypt,⁸⁸ although one can not but suspect that the reporter looked especially for the responses the readers of his newspaper would like to read at the specific period of crisis.⁸⁹ Dimitrakopoulos commented that Greeks of Alexandria were ready to sacrifice everything for their homeland, but not for their “dwarfish leaders”,⁹⁰ whereas some Greeks of Mansourah expressed their dissatisfaction with politicians in Athens enjoying promenades and parties, as they probably had read in older issues of *Empros*, at the same time they had been crying and suffering from discreditable characterizations from Egyptian peasants.⁹¹ The unsuitability of politicians in Greece, characterized even as “political infants”, was repeated by the president of the Greek Community in Zagazig, expressing the hope that “Hellenism Abroad” would take charge.⁹² The president of the Greek Community in Port Said promoted on the occasion his own “patriotism”, whereas he further proposed the narrowing of voting rights,⁹³ it was not an uncommon idea, since other well-known personalities such as Komanos, who used to be a doctor of the khedive, proposed the same.⁹⁴ More or less famous Greeks of Kafr El-Zayyat or in Port Said thought that it was a measure that would limit corruption,⁹⁵ it was even suggested that the king

⁸⁵ *Empros*, 20.10.1897.

⁸⁶ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, p. 406.

⁸⁷ *Empros*, 24.12.1897.

⁸⁸ *Empros*, 25.11.1897.

⁸⁹ About the increase of discourses against parliamentarism at turn-of-the-century Greece see in particular: Bochos, Athanasios: *I rizospastiki deksia*.

⁹⁰ *Empros*, 28.09.1897.

⁹¹ *Empros*, 07.11.1897.

⁹² *Empros*, 11.11.1897.

⁹³ *Empros*, 01.12.1897.

⁹⁴ *Empros*, 20.12.1897.

⁹⁵ See respectively: *Empros*, 21.10.1897; *Empros*, 09.12.1897.

should be an absolute monarch,⁹⁶ or that a man with the powers of a dictator ought to be appointed by the king for a period of 5-6 months to prepare reforms and that a senate should be formed to control the corrupted parliament.⁹⁷

The idea of a senate not elected by general voting was proposed by well-known Greeks in Egypt such as Synodinos, Kommanos or Rostovic, with the additional proposal that Greek communities of other countries should also be represented in this senate on the argument that they would be impartial, not influenced by political parties.⁹⁸ A person at Cairo proposed the French example by which, as he claimed, communities abroad participated in the parliament, something that in the Greek case, as further explained, would facilitate cooperation and a better allocation of responsibilities for decisions connected with the future of the nation, especially since the Greeks not living in Greece were once more considered as impartial.⁹⁹ Emmanouil Benakis, after being praised from Dimitrakopoulos, gave an interview expressing his hope that new men with “healthy principles” should replace the disappointing Greek politicians;¹⁰⁰ only a few years later, after receiving once more praising descriptions by *Empros*,¹⁰¹ Benakis initiated his own political career as a candidate of the Liberals in Athens, promoting his “success” in Egypt as one of his qualifications, on behalf of the nation and not of a political party, as pointed out in the front-page story of *Empros*.¹⁰² In *Akropolis*, different “prominent” Greeks of Egypt were also praised and promoted in front-page stories, such as at an early 1906 example, when the views expressed in a letter of a “patriotic voice” from Egypt were supposed of representing what “Hellenism abroad” thought about politics in Greece, i.e. the disappointment and despair when informed about anything from Greece; at the end of the story, it was hoped that the “free state” would realize its responsibility against “the whole of Hellenism” and would elect distinguished men in the parliament.¹⁰³ A few months later, it was written that Greeks in Egypt mostly wished the formation of a parliament by “irreproachable men” and would only then provide their contribution willingly and affluently to the “reorganized Nation”.¹⁰⁴ During a

⁹⁶ *Empros*, 25.11.1897.

⁹⁷ *Empros*, 15.10.1897.

⁹⁸ *Empros*, 20.11.1897; *Empros*, 20.12.1897; *Empros*, 24.12.1897.

⁹⁹ *Empros*, 08.01.1898.

¹⁰⁰ *Empros*, 19.11.1897.

¹⁰¹ *Empros*, 19.06.1905; *Empros*, 09.12.1907; *Empros*, 23.05.1909.

¹⁰² *Empros*, 05.08.1910.

¹⁰³ *Akropolis*, 19.02.1906.

¹⁰⁴ *Akropolis*, 21.07.1906.

visit in Egypt, the chief editor of the same newspaper, after making a comparison of “Greeks Abroad” and Greek inhabitants of the Greek state, suggested that the former could see things with clarity, knew to elect the best, those remaining also after their election incorruptible and working just “for the greatness of their Community, the good of the homeland”;¹⁰⁵ as further explained, the Greek state, which needed to be cured from corruption, could ask for the Greeks living elsewhere for possible ministers, naming Egyptian Greek merchants such as Benakis, Synodinos and Zervoudakis as three potential candidates.¹⁰⁶

After the military movement of 1909 in Greece, 228 Greeks of Cairo were reported signing a message congratulating the officers, declaring their absolute agreement for the “noble and patriotic initiative of the national project and movement”.¹⁰⁷ A few years later, wealthy Greeks of Egypt promised to send some of the voters of Venizelos to Athens by financing steamships,¹⁰⁸ whereas the Greek consul in Alexandria was the first Greek diplomat anywhere in the world to adhere to the government he formed in 1916, followed by an intense mobilization of many Egyptian Greeks in all sort of ways of support for him.¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, not all Greeks in Egypt were necessarily supporting the Liberals of Venizelos. Even if exaggerations are not missing in sources of the period of the “National Schism”, local Greeks not supporting the Greek participation in the First World War on the side of the British suffered in all sort of ways from the later and their Greek friends, experiencing for example deportation, censorship or boycott of their shops;¹¹⁰ as late as in 1919, as pointed out in a letter to Repoulis, then a minister of interior, there was a portion of “mistaken compatriots” in Egypt with activity described as “*antethniki*”, i.e. against the nation, an accusation including critique of the Greek state to foreign communities and authorities.¹¹¹ In spite of different stereotypes, there was a remarkable, often active and passionate interest of Greeks in Egypt about politics in the Greek state, not

¹⁰⁵ Compare to the certainty of an 1892 Greek visitor of Egypt, who assumed that no politician other than Trikoupis would ever be responsible for “Hellenism”, if the “Greeks Abroad” also had the right to vote, at a time when even “*aplytoi*”, i.e. “dirty” people, had that right in Greece: Filadelfefs, Alexandros: *Aigyptiaka skarifimata*, p. 33.

¹⁰⁶ Akropolis, 24.08.1906.

¹⁰⁷ Empros, 17.09.1909.

¹⁰⁸ Empros, 18.04.1915.

¹⁰⁹ Unknown author: *Synedrion ton Ellinikon Koinotiton*; Saktouris, Antonios A.: *Anamniseis*, pp. 123-128; Souloyannis, Euthymios Th.: *I elliniki koinotita Alexandreias*, p. 279.

¹¹⁰ BNA, FO series 141/510.5: Attitude of Greeks in Egypt; Empros, 14.04.1915; Empros, 13.06.1915; Empros, 24.06.1915; Empros, 06.07.1915; HAMFA A/5/IX(1), 1916; Empros, 20.07.1916; Empros, 03.08.1916; HAMFA, A/5/I (2), 1918.

¹¹¹ GAK – Politiko Grafeio Prothypourgou, 504.

necessarily having the same political orientation, a unique one, distinct from that of the inhabitants of Greece. As Dimitrakopoulos admitted in an exceptional comment of 1898, even though initially he had the expectation of going to Egypt and escape temporarily from the heavy atmosphere of Athens, he soon found out that the “*omogenis*” of Egypt was not differing from him or the readers of *Empros*, concluding therefore that mutual stereotypes of Greeks in the Greek state and “Hellenism Abroad” were not valid.¹¹² Multivocality was a characteristic, in spite of the expectations of many inhabitants of Greece, especially in periods of crisis, investing different hopes on what they considered as the impartial “voice” of the “Greeks Abroad”, of those in Egypt in particular, or even using this “voice” in order to promote their own ideas to a readership mostly having an idealized perception of the “Greeks Abroad”. On the other hand, the expectations of the Greeks in Egypt from the Greek state regarding the role of the later in supporting their interests there were also varying, but in any case existing, in spite of the usual praising of the individual “success” of the “Greeks Abroad” and the – often extreme – critique of political affairs in Greece.

12.3 The Greek state and the migrants in Egypt

Skopetea commented that, even if a “self-evidently necessary official national ideology” was produced with the formation of a Greek independent state, this was from the very beginning accompanied by a converse tendency of stressing its insufficiency in the eyes not only of “Europe”, but also of “Hellenism”.¹¹³ This was the case in particular at the turn of the 20th century, a period of extreme low self-esteem due to a lost war and economic difficulties of the preceding years. In 1899, Paraskevopoulos wrote a book about the “Great Greece”, extending from Russia and Romania to Egypt and Palestine. As the same journalist explained at the beginning of the Egyptian part of the book, “the real Greece [...] the Greece honoring our race, raising the Greek name in the conscience of the inhabitants of the five continents [was the one] dispersed all over the world”.¹¹⁴ If an Italian state functionary explained, in a

¹¹² *Empros*, 13.01.1898.

¹¹³ Skopetea, Elli: To “*protypo vasileio*”, p. 233.

¹¹⁴ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: *I Megali Ellas*, p. 399.

1906 report, that the Italian community in Egypt diffused the prestige of Italy,¹¹⁵ Greeks in Egypt were also considered as a part of a “real Greece”, representing how the Greek state should have been, serving as a proof that Greeks could be “successful” and that it was the “Greek state” that was to blame for all failures. Tsokopoulos also described a “great Greece” he saw after arriving in Egypt, a Greece with money and “patriotism”, different from “the trifling, the grumbling, the nervous” Greece he had left in Athens.¹¹⁶ Visiting Egypt in 1904, Tanagras wrote about “a different Greece [...] solid, homogenous, indomitable [...] heir of the ancient civilizing spirit” [but also] young, adolescent, promising”, which he discovered there.¹¹⁷ A 1906 comment of the editor of *Akropolis* visiting Egypt stressed that whereas the “Hellenism” of Egypt was characterized by “deeds, life, action, flourishing, practicality”, Greeks in the Greek state were respectively marked by “words, consumption, plans, decay, wild excitement”, being just the “*paliromeiko*”,¹¹⁸ a place “good to abandon”.¹¹⁹ Such comments, which had been reproducing the model of the “successful Greek Abroad” with an extreme easiness and in a generalizing way, were often not just signs of low self esteem from the inhabitants of Greece, but also part of complaints accompanying demands for support by Greece. A major reporter of Athenian newspapers, Nikolaos Spandonis, explained in 1900 that Greeks in Egypt could achieve much, if the state supported the private initiative.¹²⁰ In 1904, Lampridis not only argued that whatever good happened in Greece or by Greeks out of the Greek state was the result of “private initiative”,¹²¹ but even suggested that the Greek state was damaging the Greeks of Egypt by allowing, for example, products of bad quality, adulterated drinks or hashish to be exported from Greece, just in order to satisfy some profiteers and some cultivators among their voters.¹²² The following paragraphs are an attempt to

¹¹⁵ Ministero Degli Affari Esteri: Emigrazione e Colonie, p. 270.

¹¹⁶ Tachydromos, 17/30.04.1907.

¹¹⁷ Empros, 31.10.1904; Empros, 08.11.1904.

¹¹⁸ Perhaps the commonest of the usages of expressions like “*Romios*” and “*romeiko*” by the end of the 19th century was exactly that self-critique version of a more “Oriental”, as opposed to a proper, “European” way of being “Greek”. See for example an 1896 description regarding the disunity of Greeks in Egypt, grumbling of being “*Romioi*” without taking the decision “to become Greeks”: Metarrythmisis, 12/24.02.1896. Such a distinction is however evident even in 20th century: Herzfeld, Michael: Anthropology through the looking-glass, p. 120.

¹¹⁹ *Akropolis*, 24.08.1906. It was later on in the 1910s, after some successful wars and in the enthusiasm of the reforms promoted by Venizelos, that young authors would rather write the opposite, enthusiastic comments. For one such example see chapter 7, footnote 116.

¹²⁰ Empros, 06.01.1900.

¹²¹ Lampridis, I[oannis]: O en Aigypto sychronos Ellinismos, p. 31.

¹²² Ebenda, pp. 35-42.

map the different perceptions of turn-of-the-century Greeks, in Egypt or related to Egypt, regarding their expectations from Greece.

A historian argued that the distrust of the Italian state has not encouraged the development of a “proudly shared national identity”, something evident in the distrust of Italian migrants, in contrary to the enthusiasm of Greeks, Irish and Poles towards nationalist movements at their places of origin.¹²³ Nevertheless, it should be questioned in how far a “proudly shared national identity” can be correlated to a positive opinion for a specific state, and even more if this would be the case regarding the Greek one. An author as “proud” a Greek as Pinelopi Delta grew up with English or Italian satirical and other journals, in which Greece was not existing or was just a caricature,¹²⁴ something offering her a first opportunity to shape her perception of Greece as small, despised, weak by controversies of political parties, a country that did not count at all, in contrary to the “Greek society”, or at least to what she defined as such through her experiences; an incident presented so as to justify this impression was when her father, Emmanouil Benakis, managed to solve an issue regarding Greek interests by a visit to Cromer, before even the Greek consul requested an audience.¹²⁵ From the point of view of people like Pinelopi Delta, “party politics” were too problematic and the representatives of the Greek state too unimportant. It has been commented that Greeks in Egypt “were conscious of not having the security of a powerful state to come to their assistance should the need arise, as did the British, French and Italians”.¹²⁶ This was the case not only for people like young Pinelopi, but even for an 1868 Greek diplomat in Egypt, suggesting flattery to and acceptance of the “tyrannical” system of the khedive as a better way to defend the interests of Greeks since the cannon, the last word, “to which and only unjust and corrupted governments obey”, could not be used by the Greek state.¹²⁷ Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that Greek warships were sent to Egypt in the summer of 1882, on the pretext of protecting the local Greek community.¹²⁸ In spite of such interventions, however, the mistrust to the possibility of the Greek state to protect the interests of those it claimed to represent, however these interests would be defined, was so strong that in 1909, the usual complaints of a correspondent of *Empros* about the

¹²³ Gabaccia, Donna R.: Italy’s many diasporas, p. 9.

¹²⁴ Zannas, P. A. (ed.): Delta, P[inelopi] S.: Protes enthymiseis, pp. 125, 152, 160.

¹²⁵ Ebenda, pp. 151-152.

¹²⁶ Kitroeff, Alexander: The Greeks in Egypt, p. 25.

¹²⁷ HAMFA 36:1, 1868.

¹²⁸ Kazamias, Alexander: To imperialistiko “fronima tou ethnous”, p. 109

“inadequacy” of Greek diplomats in Egypt were considered important particularly because Greece was not “a significant power to impose its opinion to the foreigners or to solve the respective issues at its own will, based on its army and cannons”.¹²⁹ At a late 19th century text, an author mentioned of how jealous he was of Thiers, Bismarck or Cavour, who would have utilize the [Greek] manpower in Egypt better and more profitable if they were at the position of Trikoupis, a prime-minister of Greece at that time; an example given was that there was not one Greek ship to transport the great number of Greek merchants, travellers and workers going to Egypt,¹³⁰ a situation that would be slightly improved by the beginning of the 20th century.¹³¹ As often, the comparison combined an admiration to “Europe” with a critique of Greek politics and politicians.

In 1899, Paraskevopoulos commented that the absence of a Greek Chamber of Commerce indicated of how the “narrowness of our enterprising spirit” followed the often proclaimed “narrowness of the limits of our Kingdom”, making Greek merchants apply to France for some information they needed.¹³² Nevertheless, as the Greek one was established in 1901, another journalist with experience in Egypt, Dimitrakopoulos, recalled how the first attempt of forming a Greek Chamber of Commerce in 1891 had failed after two meetings because of the unwillingness of the “*omogeneis*”, which was transformed to willingness only after they had seen the way Chambers of Commerce of other countries had been working.¹³³ In spite of critique and mistrust and as Dertilis also explained, writing about late 19th century “diaspora Greeks” (in fact about the wealthier portion of bankers and merchants among them), even when they were feeling ashamed for what they considered as a weakness of the Greek state, they expected that it would protect their international activities and serve as a refuge of them in their hour of need.¹³⁴

At a story reported from Asyut in 1887 regarding a steamship company formed by Greeks in Upper Egypt, the initiative was praised, with an additional complaint about “poor Greece” needing “a methodical Government”.¹³⁵ Complaints were not made only regarding a weakness of the Greek state to protect business

¹²⁹ Empros, 7.02.1909.

¹³⁰ Akropolis Filologiki 5, 28.02.1888, pp. 67-68.

¹³¹ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: Peri tis Aigyptou, pp. 87-88.

¹³² Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: I Megali Ellas, pp. 419-420.

¹³³ Empros, 01.02.1901.

¹³⁴ Dertilis, Georges: Istoría tou ellinikou kratous – vol. 2, p. 867.

¹³⁵ Akropolis, 18.02.1887.

sufficiently, but might be correlated also with an attempt to negotiate through public pressure more and better protection and demand rights from the Greek state. A number of texts in *Metarrythmisis* repeated the complaints of “Greeks Abroad” having no “centre”, no “protectors”, even though they were successful as individuals in Europe, Egypt or India, complaints that accompanied demands from the Greek state to take care in specific issues, such as education.¹³⁶ On different occasions, Alexandrian Greek newspapers complained about the insufficient protection of Greeks in Egypt, especially if compared to the protection subjects of other European states enjoyed.¹³⁷ A text sent from Egypt to *Akropolis* expressed the anxiety of the “Greeks Abroad” about the failures of the Greek state, commenting that “whereas as a nation we are significant, as a government we are zero”, at the same time, however, it was admitted that “the Egyptian appreciates and is favourable to the enslaved Greek thanks to the free [Greek]”.¹³⁸ During the 1891 negotiations of Egypt and Greece on commercial issues, a comment in *Tachydromos* complained about the policies of all recent Greek governments violating the Greek constitution by not protecting the rights of Greeks in Egypt and demanded that deputies in Greece would raise their issues in the parliament;¹³⁹ this certainly happened at the specific juncture by Filaretos who, in the name of his voters from the area of Pilion, but also of all other Greeks in Egypt, criticized the Greek concessions to British pressures and appealed to the constitution of Greece, stressing in a parliament speech that “the Greeks in Egypt are as if they were in the free Greece and in Greek land, protected by the Greek flag”.¹⁴⁰ For some Greeks in Egypt, the Greek state ought to have a role also because – and not in spite – of its system of government.

At an 1895 text, a specific Greek consul was praised as an exception among the corrupted majority of Greek civil servants in Egypt, with the addition that he was “the second eye of Hellenism in Egypt” after Averoff.¹⁴¹ If for some the Greek state came after the local Greek notables regarding power, the demand for a greater role of the Greek state, being involved in the affairs of Greeks in Egypt even at the expense of the power of the local Greek communal leadership, appeared in a greater number in

¹³⁶ *Metarrythmisis*, 16/28.06.1886; *Metarrythmisis*, 02/14.08.1886; *Metarrythmisis*, 04/16.08.1886.

¹³⁷ See for example: *Tachydromos*, 04/17.08.1900; *Tilegrafos*, 21/04.12.1903; *Tachydromos*, 09/22.12.1904.

¹³⁸ *Akropolis*, 01.12.1885.

¹³⁹ *Tachydromos*, 09/21.06.1891.

¹⁴⁰ Filaretos, Georgios N.: *To Aigyptiakon Zitima*, pp. 34-45.

¹⁴¹ *Akropolis*, 27.05.1895.

periods of crisis in Egypt. Souloyannis mentioned some texts in the 1910s as the first speaking about a crisis of the Greek migrant community in Egypt,¹⁴² but even though the texts he referred to were indeed raising such issues in the specific juncture, they were not the first. In spite of the idealized picture often reproduced, texts about a general crisis of Greeks in Egypt existed in earlier decades, such as in a 1886 text of *Metarrythmisis* about a decline of Greeks in Egypt, explaining that the “natives” were already “taught” by Greeks and were trying to make the position of Greek retailers difficult, associating with each other and avoiding dealings with Greeks; migrants from different parts of Europe were also antagonistic to Greeks, either after having initially worked for Greeks, or representing big companies with great capital from the beginning. If this and other articles of the same newspaper speaking about decline at a period of economic depression emphasized mostly cultural factors, waste, ostentation and the raising of the children of wealthy Greeks with manners and customs “completely foreign to the Greeks”, the need for an increasingly protecting role of the Greek state¹⁴³ was accompanied by appeals to solidarity among Greeks was also pointed as a way to remain antagonistic to joined capitals of non-Greeks.¹⁴⁴ Fears, also accompanied by appeals for a better protection from Greece, were expressed also because of some British reform attempts in the 1890s regarding the future of thousands of Greeks in the interior, the income of which was based among others in the selling of alcoholic drinks,¹⁴⁵ but a possible impact was feared to influence the whole market, which was on the move mainly due to transactions with the interior, as stressed.¹⁴⁶ Texts about a Greek decline in Egypt appeared also in the following years, criticizing both short-term strategies and increased antagonism by non-Greeks; as suggested, the existing Greek capital ought to be invested in industry, something that would not only provide the growing number of Greeks in the coffee-shops with jobs, but would also reverse the Greek decline.¹⁴⁷ Fragoudis repeated in 1895 the great influx of people and capital as an explanation for a decline, since “the Greek grocer or

¹⁴² Souloyannis, Euthymios: I thesi, p. 202.

¹⁴³ See footnote 79.

¹⁴⁴ *Metarrythmisis*, 11/23.09.1886; *Metarrythmisis*, 29/10.11.1886; *Metarrythmisis*, 04/16.11.1886.

¹⁴⁵ About the British attempts to control the selling of alcoholic drinks and Greek arguments of all kind see among others: *Metarrythmisis*, 18/30.10.1891; Skotidis, N[ikolaos]: Meleti, especially pp. 45-62; *Metarrythmisis*, 16/28.02.1893; HAMFA 9.1, 1905; Akropolis, 06.07.1906; Tilegrafos, 06/19.06.1907.

¹⁴⁶ *Tachydromos*, 23/04.11.1893. Even if with some exaggeration, Greeks in the interior were described as “the backbone of Hellenism in Egypt” in economic matters: see chapter 3, footnote 20.

¹⁴⁷ Kipiadis, G[eorgios] I.: *Ellines en Aigypto*, pp. 69, 73-74; Karatheodoris, K[onstantinos] St.: *I Aigyptos*, pp. 113-114.

merchant who wanted to get rich from zero had to gain 50% to achieve that [whereas] the German or Jew capitalist is satisfied by gaining 8% or 10%”,¹⁴⁸ pointing that Greeks, “the first conquerors of Egypt”, were fighting to hold the “conquered positions”.¹⁴⁹ A report from Egypt in a Cypriot Greek newspaper mentioned a few months later of the people losing their jobs, commenting that “those golden years had gone for good”,¹⁵⁰ with similar texts being published also in Egypt, both regarding places in the interior or in the cities, referring to a growing antagonism of non-Greeks as also an employment of non-Greeks with lower salaries,¹⁵¹ something that provided the opportunity to praise once more the need for young Greeks to be “consent and frugal”.¹⁵² The “*filoproteia*” of Greeks, i.e. being antagonistic to former partners in commerce instead of remaining united against the European antagonists, was stressed as a major problem at the turn of the century.¹⁵³ By 1907 Andreadis, himself an economist, was perhaps too enthusiastic to the extent he described how Greeks in Egypt adjusted immediately to the late 19th century changes and gave up retail commerce, formed big companies, bought land, established big industries and planned big banks.¹⁵⁴ Other texts of the same period expressed worries, for example regarding the Greeks which still considered Egypt a “truly Oriental country regarding economic life”, even though it had already become a “European” one, something demanding a reorientation of Greeks involved in artisan or retailing activities.¹⁵⁵

In the early 20th century many Greeks, who had been described as the “soul” of the stock market of Alexandria, found their economic or even real death due to the impact of the international 1907-1908 crisis to Egypt, making “people who went to bed at night as millionaires, to wake up extremely poor”.¹⁵⁶ The economic crisis resulted among others “attempts by employers to reduce or at least freeze wages (which, given inflation, meant a drop in real wages) and to force more work out of

¹⁴⁸ Akropolis, 30.05.1895.

¹⁴⁹ Akropolis, 08.06.1895.

¹⁵⁰ Alitheia, 24/06.12.1895. Compare to similar conclusions and expressions in: Empros, 07.11.1897.

¹⁵¹ See for example: Omonoia, 28/09.06.1894; Omonoia, 11/23.08.1894. Texts complaining about the tendency of Greeks to employ non-Greeks continued also later on. See for example: Akropolis, 05.07.1906; Saktouris, A[ntonios]: Peri tis Aigyptou, p. 348.

¹⁵² Omonoia, 11/23.08.1894. Regarding the perceptions about Greek “frugality” in Egypt, compare chapters 3.2 and 3.4.

¹⁵³ Paraskevopoulos, G[eorgios] P.: I Megali Ellas, pp. 401-402.

¹⁵⁴ O Ellinismos, March 1907, p. 193.

¹⁵⁵ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: Ellinikos diakosmos, p. 127.

¹⁵⁶ Prokopiou, Sokratis: Neoellines, pp. 186-187.

their employees”,¹⁵⁷ affecting Greek institutions as well, in spite of the tendency of Greek banks to mask damages in their balances, with the hope that they would catch up when conditions would be better.¹⁵⁸ The rents of houses and shops were raised and it was predicted that soon “poor people, the working people, perhaps will have to repeat the exodus mentioned in Bible and live in tents”;¹⁵⁹ demonstrations took place regarding rents,¹⁶⁰ whereas prices in other commodities were also increasing in the late 1900s.¹⁶¹ The crisis influenced directly or indirectly the Greek migrants’ choices in the late 1900s and early 1910s, even though other factors also played an important role. The 1910s decade of wars had as a result the departure of many Greeks from Egypt, not always returning back, as also a general retreat in many activities, even if some opportunities appeared due to the presence of a great number of British, Australian and Indian soldiers, in fact saving some of the remaining Greek merchants from bankruptcy since,¹⁶² as a British passing by Egypt during the First World War observed, “it has been the Greek who has scored in most cases”.¹⁶³ In 1909, a correspondent of *Empros* from Cairo commented that more Greeks would have arrived in Egypt if there was not the crisis, which also made many newcomers leave the place soon after they had gone there.¹⁶⁴ According to an official statistic, 1346 passengers from Greece came to Egypt in 1909, whereas only 109 departed with Greece as a destination,¹⁶⁵ but that piece of information should not be examined by itself: the increased possibilities in other destinations must have made the temptation of Greeks to departure from Egypt greater, but not necessarily to the direction of Greece.¹⁶⁶ Columnists of this period would argue that due to increasing antagonism of non-Greeks and the crisis, most people were seeking for surviving and avoiding a bankruptcy rather than for profiting, since Egypt was not the same Egypt it had been “before 20 or 30 years”,¹⁶⁷ would report with the biblical nickname Jeremiah the most

¹⁵⁷ Lockman, Zachary: *Imagining the Working Class*, p. 183.

¹⁵⁸ Hadziiosif, Christos: *I belle époque tou kefalaiou*, p. 340.

¹⁵⁹ *Empros*, 27.12.1905.

¹⁶⁰ *Tilegrafos*, 12/25.05.1908.

¹⁶¹ *Empros*, 09.12.1907; *Omonoia*, 02/15.02.1908; *Tilegrafos*, 10/23.04.1908; Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, pp. 83-85. Compare, however, to the observation of an Ottoman Greek visitor of that period claiming that life in Cairo was not so expensive as in Athens and other big cities: Vaxevanoglou, Kal.: *To Kairon*, p. 25.

¹⁶² *Politismikos Organismos – Dimos Athinaion: Pagkosmios Ellinismos*, p. 190.

¹⁶³ Briggs, Martin S.: *Through Egypt in War-time*, pp. 26-27.

¹⁶⁴ *Empros*, 30.06.1909.

¹⁶⁵ Vallet, Jean: *Contribution a l’ etude*, p. 36.

¹⁶⁶ See chapter 7, footnotes 95-102.

¹⁶⁷ *Empros*, 07.01.1908.

pessimistic predictions regarding the crisis and its impact to most economic activities, but especially to those – mostly Greek – grocers and hotel-owners who had been encouraged by some banks to leave their jobs in order to deal with stock market and speculation,¹⁶⁸ or would reproduce texts of Egyptian Greek newspapers stressing that Egypt should not be regarded as a place, as it once used to be, where everyone could find a job, but rather as a place of expensiveness and unemployment.¹⁶⁹ Such descriptions, serving also as part of the literature against migration of that period,¹⁷⁰ were not the only ones regarding the broad impact of the crisis in Egypt; in the abovementioned comedy about Greek new rich of Egypt in the 1910s, even an increase of divorces and suicides was correlated with the period of crisis.¹⁷¹ Reliable sources on these issues have not been detected and, even if one can assume that suicides related to economic difficulties might have been increased in a period of crisis, the patriarch advised the strict prohibition of a religious funeral to those committing it already in 1897,¹⁷² something that might have been an indication for a problem growing together with the number of Greek migrants with limited means and great expectations in Egypt.¹⁷³ Cases of Greek migrants in Egypt committing suicide were detected in press already before the crisis, also for reasons such as debts, bankruptcy or unemployment,¹⁷⁴ whereas one such incident in 1905 was commented as indicating “an epidemic of suicides” in Alexandria.¹⁷⁵ With the impact of the economic crisis already felt, a young Armenian-Greek couple resolved to commit suicide at a cheap hotel of Alexandria, apparently because of unemployment and poverty,¹⁷⁶ whereas such incidents appeared also regarding Greeks unsuccessfully getting involved in stock market and having a numerous family to support,¹⁷⁷ or elder people that could not further suffer extreme poverty.¹⁷⁸

The different reactions among Greeks in Egypt regarding the growing early 20th century worries and insecurity included demands of a better organization in

¹⁶⁸ *Empros*, 27.01.1908. Compare: Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, pp. 170-171, 478-480.

¹⁶⁹ *Alitheia*, 12.01.1907; *Foni tis Kyprou*, 07/20.08.1910.

¹⁷⁰ See chapter 7, footnotes 69-75.

¹⁷¹ *Farmas, Foivos: To glossikon zitima*, p. 22.

¹⁷² *Sofronios: Egkyklios epistoli*, pp. 14-16.

¹⁷³ See chapter 4.2.

¹⁷⁴ See for example: *Akropolis*, 04.01.1887; *Tachydromos*, 01/13.12.1894; *Tachydromos*, 03/15.02.1895; *Ermis*, 01/13.03.1896; *Tachydromos*, 11/24.03.1902; *Empros*, 29.03.1905.

¹⁷⁵ *Empros*, 21.03.1905.

¹⁷⁶ *Empros*, 14.07.1907.

¹⁷⁷ *Tachydromos*, 20/02.09.1907.

¹⁷⁸ *Tilegrafos*, 16/29.04.1908.

Egypt and a greater involvement of the Greek state in communal affairs. Georgios Mavris, a doctor in Zagazig, conducted a memorandum to be sent to the Greek government in 1911, pointing the need of the later to take care for the communal institutions of the “Hellenism in diaspora”; among other proposals there was one about a federal parliament of all Greek Communities in Egypt presided by the Greek consul, whereas the Greek government was asked to find a legal way to include all Greek communal properties to its possession, in order to avoid a loss similar to that which took place in other Greek migrant communities, such as the examples of Romania, Bulgaria or Austria mentioned by Mavris, who stressed his doubts about a future of the existing, privileged position of foreigners in Egypt, assured by the Capitulations.¹⁷⁹ In 1913, a proposal for the unification and coordination of Greek communal institutions in Egypt was also made by a Greek of Alexandria, writing about a French model to be imitated on that matter.¹⁸⁰ By 1915, another critique was made regarding the exaggerating and indefinite fears of many Greeks about their future in Egypt with the addition that, although some of them would go away, there were also those of them who “do not need to go away, because they are related with the place, because they have interests at the place”.¹⁸¹ As further suggested, a better protection and a centralized organization of Greek communal institutions was needed rather than the “party politics” and the division, serving only to achieving a great number of presidents and other officials;¹⁸² the support of Greeks to other Greeks, rather than being the clientele of non-Greeks, would assure the future of “Egyptiot Hellenism”,¹⁸³ which ought to be regarded as “one polity, unified and independent [but] always morally, mentally and nationally indissolubly related with major Greece, being considered as one particularly large of its communities”.¹⁸⁴ Similar were the 1919 suggestions of Gouriotis, a lawyer and member of the Greek Community of Mansourah, to the Greek ministry of Foreign Affairs, mentioning the cases of Greeks and their communal institutions in Russia, Romania, Austria and Italy as examples to be avoided.¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁹ Mavris, G[eorgios] N.: *Ypomnima*, pp. 10-12.

¹⁸⁰ Akropolis, 14.02.1913.

¹⁸¹ Nikolaou, G[eorgios]: *O aigyptiotis ellinismos*, pp. γ', 3. Nikolaou was referring mainly to a discussion in newspapers of Alexandria at that period, especially *Tachydromos* and *Efimeris*.

¹⁸² Ebenda, p. 22.

¹⁸³ Ebenda, p. 25.

¹⁸⁴ Ebenda, p. 42.

¹⁸⁵ HAMFA 51:3, 1920.

The greater unity and the protection of the Greek state to a “Greek diaspora”, in case the turn-of-the-century current of Greek migration did not stop or would take an orientation towards Egypt,¹⁸⁶ was not the only issue discussed. Some Greeks in Egypt hoped or feared that a growing intervention of Greece could undermine the power of the leading members of Greek communal institutions.¹⁸⁷ When Averoff tried to broaden the basis of participation of the Greek Community of Alexandria, increasing in 1895 the number of members from 139 to 223, his opponents accused him for demagoguery.¹⁸⁸ An increasing number of Greeks at the turn of the century demanded a broader participation to Greek communal institutions. In his abovementioned 1911 memorandum,¹⁸⁹ Mavris mentioned a number of 321 members of the local Greek Community among 40.000 Greeks of Alexandria, a number of 340 in a total of 15.000 to 20.000 in Cairo and a number of 150 from 5000 to 7000 Greeks in Port Said, criticizing those involved for behaving as if the communities were their own property; as he further explained, it was plausible that few migrants would be involved in communal affairs in the period not many “mentally developed” Greeks lived in Egypt, but not any more, proposing that the “narrow oligarchic and deficiently centralized” system should be reformed, even if property continued to be a criterion of participation.¹⁹⁰ At the same period, a memorandum addressed to the Greek consul was published in Alexandria, its author describing himself as a Greek citizen living in Alexandria and being a member of its Greek Community for 25 years, criticizing in particular the “tetrarchy” of Benakis, Zervoudakis, Salvagos and Synadinos, the merchant families controlling the Community.¹⁹¹

There were diplomats who tried to do something in accordance to such demands by Greeks in Egypt, as evident from the service of Mitsopoulos as a consul in Alexandria, being reserved surprisingly little, if any, place in later texts about Egyptian Greeks.¹⁹² A son of a major academic in Athens and member of the Greek Liberal Party, being 45 years old and having seven successful years of service as a diplomat in Rome, according to the praising description of *Tachydromos* by his

¹⁸⁶ About these discussions see chapter 7.3.

¹⁸⁷ See chapter 9.1.

¹⁸⁸ Tsirkas, Stratis: *O Kavafis kai i epochi tou*, pp. 383-384.

¹⁸⁹ See footnote 179.

¹⁹⁰ Mavris, G[eorgios] N.: *Ypomnima*, pp. 4-9.

¹⁹¹ Filippidis, G. F: *Ypomnima*.

¹⁹² One exception was detected in a short 1997 text: *Panaigyptia* 75, May-June 1997, p. 15.

arrival to Egypt, Christos Mitsopoulos arrived in Egypt in 1910.¹⁹³ Even though many people involved in Greek communal affairs in Egypt were friendly disposed to the Greek Liberals, Mitsopoulos faced difficulties, as evident from a long letter he sent to the ministry in Athens in March 21st of 1911, trying to defend from accusations regarding his interventions in communal affairs. As he claimed, the “exemplary cooperation” he was accused of having disrupted was one of only 200 among a total of 50.000 to 60.000 Alexandrian Greeks, the rest actually being excluded from communal affairs. Mitsopoulos described different sort of problems Greeks in Alexandria faced, such as the lack of schools for the poor families scattered in different neighbourhoods of the city or the indifference towards Greeks not having money even to bury their children, writing about an “oligarchic faction” that could afford the contribution demanded for being involved in the local Greek communal affairs. Mitsopoulos referred to different occasions when he realized he was asked not to intervene in communal affairs even though, as he explained, he had a successful experience of solving disputes in communal affairs in his career in Venice, Naples and Tunis. His ideas and suggestions included ways of unifying all Greek clubs or letting all Greek citizens participate in the existing communal institutions as equal members, but he failed because of the reaction of the group in charge of communal affairs, reacting to every possible brotherhood, club or institution to be formed if it was not under their own control, some of them being presidents at the same time to 5 or 6 clubs.¹⁹⁴

Mitsopoulos did not manage to convince his directors or to overcome pressures from the communal leadership of Alexandria and, by the beginning of 1911, he was ordered to depart from his post, something that led to demonstrations against his removal from Egypt.¹⁹⁵ A correspondent of *Empros* reported from Alexandria about two great demonstrations with about 20.000 and 30.000 people supporting Mitsopoulos and turned against the “powerful Alexandrian communal oligarchy”, because they considered the former as a protector of the poor, a benefactor of the Greeks of Egypt or even as a saint; Mitsopoulos addressed a speech to these people, reminding them however that they ought to continue their struggle in legal means.¹⁹⁶ The same correspondent described in detail the plans of Mitsopoulos and the reactions

¹⁹³ Tachydromos, 23/06.12.1910.

¹⁹⁴ HAMFA 92.1.3, 1911.

¹⁹⁵ *Empros*, 01.04.1911.

¹⁹⁶ *Empros*, 09.04.1911.

of the “oligarchs”, their tricks to prevent the formation of any institution or their ability to control even the consuls sent from Athens.¹⁹⁷ In *Tachydromos*, a lawyer wrote that the ideas of Mitsopoulos would be “to the benefit of the national interests”,¹⁹⁸ whereas a sarcastic text of an Athenian newspaper was republished in the front-page of *Tachydromos*, including sharp comments about the way Mitsopoulos annoyed the local Greek Community, instead of staying devoted in his consular duties, i.e. “to frequent more in the club; to play all day and night. To borrow money. To sleep. To keep the consulate closed to every Greek and to faithfully do all orders of the different directors of clubs in which the management of Greek interests was assigned”.¹⁹⁹ If the last protests against the departure of Mitsopoulos were described at moderate reports as having 600 or 2000 willing supporters of him,²⁰⁰ there were also other estimations giving, among a population of 50.000 “working” Greeks in Alexandria, a number of 200 to 400, a few hundred recruited trouble-makers in a “socialist” demonstration, according to more critical descriptions, people that could not have been dissatisfied employees or workers with wages causing starvation, since Alexandria was a place where people were paid better than anywhere in the world, according to the same author. As further stressed, the Greek communal institutions in Egypt, even if not perfect, were in any case governed better than any place in Greece only by the contribution of a few and the donation of even fewer, whereas Mitsopoulos was presented as a clown, a demagogue against plutocracy and a person with a great ego, misled by some local Greeks.²⁰¹ In the general assembly of the Greek Community of Alexandria in April 1912, the successor of Mitsopoulos mentioned that before his appointment in Egypt, he had read some “not very pleasant things” about Alexandrian Greeks being divided between oligarchic supporters of the Greek Community and their furious, dissatisfied opponents, but his experience on the spot soon made him realize that those rumors were a product of “false perceptions”, even if he had to admit that there were differing tendencies regarding the way Greek communal affairs ought to be run.²⁰² Even if the estimation about the supporters of

¹⁹⁷ Empros, 13.04.1911; Empros, 16.04.1911; Empros, 18.04.1911.

¹⁹⁸ *Tachydromos*, 05/18.04.1911.

¹⁹⁹ *Tachydromos*, 07/20.04.1911. About the attitude of many Greek diplomats to Greeks of lower social strata in Egypt compare chapter 8, footnotes 48-49.

²⁰⁰ *Tachydromos*, 01/14.04.1911; *Tachydromos*, 30/12.05.1911.

²⁰¹ *Akropolis*, 13.04.1911; *Akropolis*, 14.04.1911.

²⁰² GCA 6, 1906-1915, pp. 235-236.

Mitsopoulos might have been exaggerated, it seems plausible that the successor of Mitsopoulos wanted to be careful in his expression in order to maintain his position.

12.4 Summary

In the present chapter, it has been seen how different descriptions of a “successful” and “patriotic” community of the “Greeks Abroad” went hand in hand with different paths of critique regarding politics in Greece. From the perspective of many Greeks in Egypt, a role of the Greek state was welcomed and in many cases, critique came not in spite, but actually because of the expectation of an even greater role of Greece regarding the migrants’ affairs, especially in periods of crisis. What has been further stressed was that the role of Greece in Egypt or of the politics in the Greek state were perceived differently from various agents in Egypt, in spite of the tendency of late 19th and early 20th century Greek authors to speak in the name of the “Greeks Abroad”, as if they constituted a unique group of people, with just one “voice”.

13. The emergence of the “Egyptiots”: Greek responses to early 20th century evolutions in Egypt

“I am a Greek by blood, a Turk by birth, and an American because my uncle made a journey”; Elia Kazan presented himself in this way at the opening scene of the 1963 movie “America, America” after the protagonist, a character based on the uncle of the famous director, in spite of various difficulties, managed to cross the Atlantic, to enter the United States of America and even get an “American” name. Biology and luck are beyond the scope of the present study, but if much has been explained so far about the way a global Greek national community was formed, the identification choices of individuals who “made a journey”, in the case they stayed long enough, constitute a further issue to be examined. Together with other aspects making challenging a comparison of turn-of-the-century Greek migration towards Egypt and the United States of America, the major destinations of that period,¹ important is also the spectrum of choices by migrants there, a spectrum related also to the policies of the US-American and Egyptian, but also of the Greek authorities towards Greek migrants. A scholar named the logic of the Greek government and the will of the Egyptian national movement as the double obstacle in making Egypt a “second homeland” for Greeks.² The United States of America came to be much more than a “second homeland” for many Greek migrants in the long run, even though the logic of the Greek government was not decisively differing regarding the turn-of-the-century migrants there,³ whereas local Greeks occasionally faced prejudice or even violent attacks, caused by racial arguments, antagonisms in labor market and a low grade of integration.⁴ The different evolution regarding integration in Egypt and the United States of America demands an explanation and the double obstacle of the Greek government and the Egyptian national movement does not suffice, leaving little space for questions about the Greek migrants and the attempts they might have made to negotiate their presence in Egypt.

¹ See chapter 7, footnotes 47-52.

² Ilbert, Robert: *Qui est Grec*, p. 160.

³ About some first attempts of the authorities of Greece to cope with transatlantic migration and the fears about losing members of the Greek nation see chapter 7.2.

⁴ Tachydromos, 07/20.07.1907; Akropolis, 10.02.1909; Tilegrafos, 18/01.05.1909; Marketos, Mpampis I.: *Oi Ellinoamerikanoi*, pp. 55-57, 63-67; Moskos, Charles C. Jr.: *Greek Americans*, pp. 16-17; Georgakas, Dan: *The Greeks in America*, pp. 22, 26; Kitroeff, Alexander: *I yperatlantiki metanastefsi*, pp. 159-165; Laliotou, Ioanna: *Diaschizontas ton Atlantiko*, pp. 340-341; Kalogeras, Giorgos: *Ethnotikes geografies*, pp. 40-43; Papadopoulos, Giannis: *I metanastefsi*, p. 51.

It was especially since the interwar period that the Greeks in the United States of America started to consider seriously the idea of “Americanization”, still not a process for which a uniform strategy was accepted and promoted in an undisputed way.⁵ It is interesting that the process has been considered as the alternative to the model of the Greeks in Egypt. A Greek-American scholar, for example, wrote that if the model of the Greeks of Alexandria was followed by those in the United States of America, that would have led to “a part of a permanent diaspora [...] retaining a distinctive culture [as] Greeks in America, not Greek Americans, and, most certainly, not Americans”.⁶ Different attempts to “adjust”, whatever that might mean, were made in Egypt since the interwar period, with limited success.⁷ The beginning of the 20th century was already a period of a growing Egyptian national movement, but also of strikes and other protests combining sometimes demands of different kind. In the following paragraphs, the question is how Greeks in Egypt responded to these evolutions, whether some of them found ways of coping with the Egyptian national movement, if workers’ movements and organizations constituted a path overcoming other boundaries and which forms of “Egyptianization” were selected by Greeks in turn-of-the-century Egypt.

13.1 Greeks and Egyptian nationalism

Formally, Egypt remained an Ottoman province up to the outbreak of the First World War. In the late 1850s, when Typaldos visited a monastery in Egypt, he received a promise that the king of the Greeks would be commemorated by the monks, but only in a low voice “for fear of the Jews”.⁸ Typaldos also recalled of a celebration of the 25th of March, the official independence day of the Greek state, in the church of *Evangelismos* in Alexandria, the city from which thousands of soldiers and sailors had departed to destroy the Greek revolutionaries in 1827, as reminded in his journal; the Greek flag was unfurled in the church and thousands of Greeks were gathered, including army officers in their uniform and a crowd repeating

⁵ Compare: Marketos, Mpampis I.: *Oi Ellinoamerikanoi*, pp. 127-130; Kitroeff, Alexander: *I yperatlantiki metanastefsi*, pp. 165-170; Kitroeff, Alexander: *Emporikes paroikies kai metanastes*, pp. 371-383; Kalogeras, Giorgos: *Ethnotikes geografies*, pp. 99-113; Karpozilos, Kostis: *Ellinoamerikanoi ergates*.

⁶ Georgakas, Dan: *The Greeks in America*, pp. 7-8.

⁷ See chapter 2.

⁸ Typaldos, Georgios K. (*yios*): *Anatolikai Epistolai*, p. 22.

enthusiastically after the Greek consul the wish “long live the king [of the Greeks]”.⁹ During the same celebration in 1865, Greek flags decorated the Greek coffee-shops, restaurants and other shops of Alexandria, even though a police officer of Greek origin had to ask for the celebrations to remain orderly so that the “foreigners” would not accuse “us” [the Greeks], whereas a young person distributing leaflets about Crete was arrested;¹⁰ after all, it was a period when, according to estimations of Greek diplomats, a number of 10.000 soldiers was sent from Egypt to support the Ottoman attempts to suppress the Cretan revolt.¹¹ After 1882, the British presence made the Ottoman status of Egypt less evident, but some Greeks in Egypt would still be afraid to express a public opinion on Greek politics under their own name in 1897, because of being at a country “directly related to Turkey”.¹² In 1896 or even as late as in 1911, the Egyptian authorities might arrest Greeks which ought to serve the Ottoman army, in spite of protests from Greek authorities and press, claiming about the existence of agreements allowing their exception;¹³ an invitation to join the Ottoman army circulated in Egypt even in the patriarchic journal of 1914.¹⁴

Mehmed Ali retained an Ottoman cultural identity, even though himself fighting against Ottoman power;¹⁵ a process of “Egyptianization” only gradually turned the Ottoman elite of Egypt to a more localized Ottoman and, by the end of the 19th century, to an Egyptian one.¹⁶ The 1882 revolt in Egypt, taking into account the Ottoman mistrust, in spite of some sympathies ‘Urabi had in Istanbul and of his official declarations of loyalty,¹⁷ is a further evidence of how Egypt was gradually transformed, even if common religious faith was a reason for many Egyptians to be sympathetic to the Ottomans at least until the First World War.¹⁸ Commenting the 1882 “Egypt for the Egyptians” slogan, an Italian author remarked that in all sort of places a “native” would be defined as a Copt, a Muslim, or a Jew, but never as an Egyptian.¹⁹ Even if this was logical at a time religious definition was still important in

⁹ Ebenda, pp. 40-41.

¹⁰ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, pp. 44-46. About the Cretans who took refuge in Egypt during that period see chapter 1, footnote 71.

¹¹ HAMFA 36:1, 1866.

¹² Empros, 04.10.1897.

¹³ Tachydromos, 12/24.11.1896; Tilegrafos, 14/26.11.1896; Tachydromos, 17/02.03.1911.

¹⁴ Pantainos 1914, pp. 458-459.

¹⁵ al-Sayyid Marsot, Afaf Lutfi: *Egypt in the reign of Muhammad Ali*.

¹⁶ Toledano, Ehud R.: *State and Society*.

¹⁷ Deringil, Selim: *The Ottoman Response*, pp. 19-20.

¹⁸ Wendell, Charles: *The Evolution*, pp. 17-18, 20-21.

¹⁹ Malmignati, Perollari P.: *L' Egitto senza Egiziani*, p. 157.

many European countries²⁰ and when great part of the population even in the *par excellence* nation-state of the long 19th century, France, would hardly define themselves in national terms,²¹ such comments were sometimes the result of European orientalist thought, as for example when a British journalist assured in 1907 that “the sense of patriotism or even of nationality is wanting”, the only “binding link in the East” being common faith,²² a comment ignoring many transformations of turn-of-the-century Egypt and the appearance of authors and politicians with more or less secularist and nationalist ideas.²³ If ‘Urabi was the leader of a “national” party already in the early 1880s, the use of the Egyptian term “*umma*” as equivalent of the French term “nation” increased by the turn of the century, especially from a generation of young nationalist activists like Kamel, even if the term might still be used also for the Muslim community.²⁴ Jurji Zaydan, himself of Syrian origin, published in 1906 a text accepting the importance of religion for defining Egyptians, but adding that non-Muslims could also be Egyptians through “the common bond of homeland [or] of language”, the first precondition probably referring to Copts and the later apparently to Syrian and Iraqi people in Egypt.²⁵ In 1907, it was explained that the Egyptian Liberal Party had “friendly” intentions towards “foreigners resident in Egypt, of all nationalities and creeds”, recognizing to them the same rights and duties.²⁶ In 1909, Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid would accept people of foreign origin that permanently lived in Egypt and had their activities and wealth there in an Egyptian community, repeating that rights and duties should be equal for all Egyptians, even those of foreign origin,²⁷ whereas in 1913, he would name Greeks, among others, as possible Egyptians, only if they rejected any attachment to any other homeland than Egypt.²⁸

Even though some possibilities for a Greek participation to the Egyptian national project did exist from an Egyptian point of view, the way religious faith was still perceived by many as also the demand for exclusivity were factors making this

²⁰ About European conflicts during the 19th century related with the role of religion in politics, law and public space see: Clark, Christopher + Kaiser, Wolfram, Introduction, pp. 1-10.

²¹ Weber, Eugen: Peasants into Frenchmen.

²² Dicey, Edward: The Egypt of the future, p. 143.

²³ Chalcraft, John T.: The Striking Cabbies, pp. 160-190.

²⁴ Gershoni, Israel + Jankowski, James P.: Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs, p. 7; Lockman, Zachary: Imagining the Working Class, p. 182.

²⁵ Mentioned in: Wendell, Charles: The Evolution, p. 22.

²⁶ BNA, FO series 371/249: Number 31019.

²⁷ Wendell, Charles: The Evolution, pp. 8-10.

²⁸ Ebenda, pp. 259-260; Gershoni, Israel + Jankowski, James P.: Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs, pp. 13-14.

difficult, let alone different prejudices regarding Greek migrants in general. In 1903, 30 “natives” were mentioned of entering a cemetery during a funeral of a Greek, throwing stones at the Greeks present there and insulting “their” religion.²⁹ Religion, however, was not always the reason, but rather the pretext or an additional factor for such incidents. In 1895, Fragoudis mentioned that Greek retailers “in direct contact to Arabs” had their establishments, which he called “*listiria*”, i.e. “places of stealing”, in the “Arab neighbourhoods”;³⁰ an 1898 incident between “natives” and a Greek living in a poor neighbourhood of Alexandria, caused by the temporary absence of a child and the suspicions against the Greek, made the “wild instincts of the native crowd, its fanaticism and its hatred to foreigners”, according to the description of *Tachydromos*, to be demonstrated “for a thousandth time”, with insults against (Christian) religion and (Greek) consular authorities.³¹ Even if the press often exaggerated, such incidents with similar descriptions were not missing from daily reportage, increased in periods the Greek state was at war against the Ottoman Empire. The war events of 1897, for example, had as a result not only a growing interest of Greek migrants in Egypt regarding affairs in Greece and Crete, but also the reappearance of different more or less exaggerated rumors regarding the Egyptians of Muslim faith as planning for massacres, writing “provocative” texts about Greek violence during the war in newspapers distributed for free in the villages and causing irritation among villagers, who probably had other reasons to be dissatisfied as well,³² towards local Greeks.³³ In August 1897, on the occasion of a quarrel of an Italian with a “native” selling watermelons in Alexandria, other people were involved and, as the former used his knife against one from the crowd, causing a bigger unrest, insults and violence were practiced against “Christians” and “Europeans” in general, including attacks of groups of people bearing clubs against Greek shops.³⁴ An experienced Greek diplomat, Antonios Saktouris, reminded Wassif Ghali in 1924 that “on each occasion on which there had been wars or rumors of wars between the Greek and the Ottoman Governments, Greeks had been massacred in Egypt (notably in 1897 and 1912) and

²⁹ *Tachydromos*, 04/17.11.1903.

³⁰ *Akropolis*, 17.05.1895.

³¹ *Tachydromos*, 16/28.07.1898.

³² About the Greek presence in the Egyptian province, including also aspects of exploitation, see chapter 3.

³³ See for example: *Akropolis*, 16.03.1897; *Tachydromos*, 17/29.03.1897; *Syndesmos*, 17/29.03.1897; *Empros*, 20.03.1897; *Tachydromos*, 20/01.04.1897; *Syndesmos*, 20/01.04.1897; *Empros*, 24.03.1897; *Syndesmos*, 24/05.04.1897; *Akropolis*, 28.03.1897.

³⁴ *Tachydromos*, 04/16.08.1897; *Akropolis*, 11.08.1897.

that in any case in the event of troubles in this country it was always the Greeks who became cadavers first”, an argument used in order to explain why Greeks appealed to the British army to protect the lives and properties of Greeks in 1919 and 1921, something Saktouris called “only natural”.³⁵

Kamel, the leader of the Egyptian National Party, in spite of making a speech in June of 1897 arguing on the tolerance regarding the free manifestations of Greeks against the Ottomans in Egypt, a “Muslim land”, as he explained, referred to “intruders” as another enemy of Egypt besides the British,³⁶ whereas at the same period he mentioned of the existence of some Greeks positively disposed to the “national politics” of Egypt and having an understanding for the need of Egyptians to be on the side of the Ottomans.³⁷ By the end of the year, after the lost war of Greece against the Ottoman Empire and a few days before the signing of peace would make also the diplomatic relations of Greece and Egypt possible again,³⁸ a reporter of *Empros* with contacts and experience in Egypt appealed to the Greek government to contribute to the conciliation of Greeks in Egypt with the Egyptian authorities in the name of the “great interests” of 100.000 Greeks, at a period the trust of Egyptians was at stake, because of both the fanaticism of the “native element” and the gradual progress of educated Egyptians.³⁹ If there were voices promoting a mutual understanding, there were also Greek complaints regarding Egyptian manifests of fanaticism in celebrating Ottoman military victories in Thessalia,⁴⁰ or the ascent of the Ottoman sultan in power, accompanied by the replacement of the cross by a crescent at a Greek flag and many damages of Greek shops with the tolerance of the policemen.⁴¹ Incidents attributed to “the fanaticism of the natives” by the Greek press did not take place only in villages but also in Cairo, as in 1901, when one of the five young Greeks entertaining themselves at a tavern of Cairo made a joke, according to the Greek version of the story, to a “native” that was also having his drink there; even if the comment was meant as a “joke” from the Greek side, the “native” reacted by insulting “all of our nation and our religion”, as explained in *Omonoia*, whereas very

³⁵ BNA, FO series 141/510.5: Attitude of Greeks in Egypt.

³⁶ Kamel, Moustafa: *Égyptiens et Anglais*, pp. 161-165.

³⁷ Kamel, Moustafa: *Lettres Égyptiennes Françaises*, p. 44.

³⁸ *Empros*, 01.12.1897; *Empros*, 15.12.1897.

³⁹ *Empros*, 13.11.1897.

⁴⁰ *Tachydromos*, 06/18.09.1897.

⁴¹ *Tachydromos*, 21/02.09.1897; *Syndesmos*, 28/09.09.1897; *Empros*, 01.09.1897; *Alitheia*, 01/13.09.1897; *Syndesmos*, 08/20.09.1897.

soon more than two thousand “natives” gathered and hit badly the Greeks, something interpreted as a sign of “how the native ignorant crowd had been fanaticized lately even in the capital city and how much was the leprosy of fanaticism transmitted to everyone”.⁴² The number of such incidents detected is not great enough to draw conclusions, but the easiness a crowd would be gathered and the descriptions in Greek press regarding “natives” might be indications of how an incident like that would be perceived, depending on point of view, as part of reactions against the “intruders”, or as a proof of the “fanaticism” of the “natives”. Four years later, a collision of two carts in Alexandria, one of an Arab and one of a Greek, ended with a fight, whereas many passing by Arabs entered the fight and, as a result, the Greek driver and his two friends were mauled; *Tachydromos* mentioned a comment of the *Egyptian Gazette* according to which, “whenever there is a dispute between a European and an Arab, other Arabs joined the fight totally indifferent if that concerned them or not”.⁴³

A greater fight took place in Alexandria just a few months later, starting by a duel of two Greek gamblers in a Sunday morning and an accidental, according to Greek descriptions, shooting that hit a prominent Arab; as the news spread, outraged Arabs decided to take revenge and attacked Greek shops and coffee-shops, some of the Greeks also resorting to violence with guns and knives.⁴⁴ The fight, with dozens of injured persons mentioned from both sides, lasted nine hours, before the police managed to take control.⁴⁵ Even though the Egyptian authorities deliberately tried to downplay any correlation with religious fanaticism,⁴⁶ there is information from eyewitnesses about people shouting for a holy war against Christians,⁴⁷ whereas the governor of Alexandria called the major Muslim leaders and asked them to advice Muslims to live in harmony with the Europeans.⁴⁸ Such a fight was expected when an opportunity would come and the Greeks had been warned by the governor of Alexandria to remain cool.⁴⁹ Egyptian press, as presented in *Omonoia*, would attribute violence to Greeks of the lower social strata,⁵⁰ demanding the control of the right of

⁴² *Omonoia*, 06/19.11.1901.

⁴³ *Tachydromos*, 29/11.08.1905.

⁴⁴ *Empros*, 02.12.1905; *Empros*, 03.12.1905; *HAMFA* 42.2, A/8/2, 1906.

⁴⁵ *Empros*, 02.12.1905; *Empros*, 03.12.1905.

⁴⁶ *Empros*, 18.12.1905; *HAMFA*, 42.2, A/8/2, 1906.

⁴⁷ *HAMFA*, 42.2, A/8/2, 1906.

⁴⁸ *Empros*, 12.12.1905.

⁴⁹ *HAMFA*, 42.2, A/8/2, 1906; *Salpigx*, 17.12.1905; *Alitheia*, 07.01.1906.

⁵⁰ Compare to descriptions of some Greek protagonists of the incidence as “profligate” by Greek diplomats: *HAMFA*, 42.2, A/8/2, 1906.

Greeks to bear arms, whereas their protection due to the Capitulations was once more criticized.⁵¹ In the following weeks, when a group of Arabs attacked Greeks in Cairo shouting about a holy war, at least as Greek texts assured, the Greeks remained cool,⁵² but it was obvious that the climate was turbulent and that this would not always be the case. The incident of Dinshawai in the summer of 1906, when five British officers went pigeon shooting and shot pigeons belonging to villagers and a local woman as well, can be considered as a turning point serving both as a symbol for Egyptian nationalists as also for those demanding their dynamic confrontation; as Vlasis Gavriilidis commented, the “whip” should be used against the “awakened fanaticism of the peasants”, since there were “superior and inferior races”, the former needing to beat the later.⁵³

At an 1886 clash of Egyptian villagers and soldiers in Tanta, a reporter of *Metarrythmisis* had commented that it was the [British] government to blame because “it wanted to grant freedom to people, which only the blessed whip could bring to reason”.⁵⁴ The argument denying the ability of Egyptians to articulate a political argument and demand the rights of the “civilized nations” was older than 1906, evident already in most Greek descriptions of the 1882 revolt.⁵⁵ Early 20th century’s Egyptian nationalists with European studies might have been praised, such as when Kamel was called the Rigas Feraios⁵⁶ of the Egyptians and used as an example for young Greek students going to Europe, but preferring beers, café chantants, women, gambling and some “nebulous” ideas rather than attending good universities and be engaged in “patriotic” activity.⁵⁷ Comments expressing sympathy for Kamel and his ideas, especially if compared to the other Egyptians, considered as more fanatic against foreigners, were detected also in other Greeks texts of that time.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Greek diplomats in 1913 might still consider that the recent appearance of “the idea of nationalism” in Egypt would demand many years and generations, before the Egyptians would be in position “of understanding the national idea”; in this context, the religious fanaticism of part of the educated Egyptians did not cause much

⁵¹ Omonoia, 31/14.12.1905.

⁵² Empros, 27.12.1905.

⁵³ Akropolis, 04.07.1906.

⁵⁴ Metarrythmisis, 19/31.08.1886.

⁵⁵ Compare to chapter 6, footnotes 39-48.

⁵⁶ Rigas Feraios was a late 18th century author and activist against the Ottomans.

⁵⁷ O Noumas 294:4, May 1908, pp. 2-3.

⁵⁸ Tilegrafos, 04/17.10.1906; Tilegrafos, 14/27.02.1909.

worries, since it was considered that the appearance of a British military force would suffice for the elimination of any “irritation”.⁵⁹ In 1919, a year Greeks had suffered violent attacks in Egypt,⁶⁰ Dendias was quite optimistic when pointing the absence of “*miselliniko pnevma*”, i.e. of hatred against Greeks, speaking about nothing but some “demonstrations of short-lived religious irritation”.⁶¹ Even if there were Greek diplomats considering Kamel as responsible for irritating Egyptians with his texts,⁶² for most early 20th century Greek texts it was mainly the “crowd” that was feared and, in most of the cases, the application of “old-school traditions” in “suppression”⁶³ was considered as sufficing. The wars of the Ottoman Empire against Italy, in 1911, or in the Balkans since 1912, provided some additional opportunities for irritation by part of the non-Greek Egyptians, celebrating Ottoman victories and attacking Europeans in Egypt.⁶⁴ Incidents of tearing the Greek flag from moored steamships were mentioned, with “satisfaction” demanded and provided from a group of soldiers,⁶⁵ whereas the British authorities tried to control Egyptian Greek press, considering that the reports about Greek battles against Turks in 1921 were irritating the “Egyptian opinion”.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, the motivation of Egyptians might have been more complicate than just some loyalty to the Ottoman Empire or than the “religious irritation” of a “crowd”. In 1914, for example, a non-Greek Egyptian journalist in Mansourah wrote about the ungratefulness of Greeks to the khedive, mentioning among other arguments that Greeks had poisoned the Egyptians with hashish and that, with Egyptian money, Greeks made a fortune and even bought the Averoff battleship.⁶⁷

13.2 Overcoming the boundaries?

An Italian state functionary commented about the Italian migrant community in Egypt that “the various classes that compose it preserve unity and proceed unanimously”,⁶⁸ a wish rather than a description, if one takes into account the

⁵⁹ Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, pp. 25-26.

⁶⁰ See chapter 2, footnotes 1-2.

⁶¹ Dendias, Michail G.: *Ai ellinikai paroikiai*, pp. 78-79.

⁶² HAMFA 42.2, A/8/2, 1906.

⁶³ See chapter 6, footnote 58.

⁶⁴ Empros, 20.10.1911; Akropolis, 27.10.1912; Akropolis, 03.11.1912; Empros, 04.02.1913.

⁶⁵ Empros, 13.05.1914; Empros, 07.06.1914; Akropolis, 09.06.1914.

⁶⁶ BNA, FO series 141/510.5: Attitude of Greeks in Egypt.

⁶⁷ HAMFA Δ/101:γ, 1914; Akropolis, 13.02.1914.

⁶⁸ Ministero Degli Affari Esteri: *Emigrazione e Colonie*, p. 270.

powerful organization of anarchists and other Italians striving for the improvement of the conditions of Italian workers in Egypt.⁶⁹ Kitroeff pointed that Greek workers in Egypt had no qualms about striking even against Greek employers;⁷⁰ furthermore and in spite of the hegemonic discourse of modern Egyptian historiography resting on the dichotomy of “Egyptian” and “foreign” as two homogeneous groups, such an absolute distinction is problematic regarding workers, with cases of cooperation between Egyptian and foreign workers existing as well.⁷¹ Egyptian urban centers were described as “regional nodal cities”, i.e. cities that “harbored and brought together political exiles and militants from different parts of a region or an empire, guaranteed the circulation of printed materials, and provided spaces for different radical networks to encounter one another and exchange ideas”;⁷² such global networks included Syrian, Greek, Italian and Armenian workers plugged into networks of social contestation in Egypt, in their places of origin as also in other places in the world.⁷³ Anarchists or other people involved in workers’ movements had a mobile life between Greece and Egypt because of deportations or attempts to escape pressure from authorities,⁷⁴ whereas Greeks were involved in the first communist groups in turn-of-the-century Egypt.⁷⁵ The following paragraphs are an attempt, not only to see the supposed unity of the “Greeks Abroad” once more in a critical way,⁷⁶ but also to check whether the early 20th century left-wing activity in Egypt contributed in overcoming the hierarchies and divisions between Greek and non-Greek Egyptians already described.

Kitroeff argued that, if the norm for the Greek petty bourgeoisie was to form associations appealing both for intra-professional and ethnic support, Greek workers generally formed class-based unions;⁷⁷ on the other hand, not only did some Greek brotherhoods of workers with rather modest aims of mutual assistance exist in Egypt since the 1860s and until the early 20th century,⁷⁸ but it seems that a number of them

⁶⁹ Khuri-Makdisi, Ilham: *The Eastern Mediterranean*, pp. 114-119.

⁷⁰ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 107.

⁷¹ Gorman, Anthony: *Foreign workers in Egypt*, pp. 237-259.

⁷² Khuri-Makdisi, Ilham: *The Eastern Mediterranean*, pp. 27, 134.

⁷³ Ebenda, p. 156.

⁷⁴ Kordatos, Gianis: *Istoria*, p. 176; Souloyannis, Euthymios: *I thesi*, p. 199; Gorman, Anthony: *Foreign workers in Egypt*, p. 244.

⁷⁵ Ismael, Tareq Y. + El-Sa’id, Rifa’at: *The communist movement in Egypt*, p. 12.

⁷⁶ Compare also to chapter 12.

⁷⁷ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, p. 140.

⁷⁸ Gorman, Anthony: *Anarchists in Education*, pp. 304-305; Gorman, Anthony: *Foreign workers in Egypt*, p. 241. For some examples confirming these conclusions, see: *Elliniki Ergatiki Etaireia*:

was sponsored by Greek industrialists or the Greek Chamber of Commerce.⁷⁹ Addressing a Greek Society of workers in 1876, the patriarch mentioned of goals resembling rather to a charity institution,⁸⁰ whereas a union of workers in 1909 made explicit the goal, among others, of forming the worker “in a patriotic way with the strengthening of the national morale”, including the creation of a defending force “military trained and capable at any time to fight for the accomplishment of every legitimate goal useful for the homeland”.⁸¹ Even if not all forms of workers’ organization had an orientation to demands including non-Greeks as well, attention should be paid as well, since one of the strategies of the Egyptian Greek press was to downplay Greek involvement in radical activities of any kind. In a 1907 case, for example, as three Russian anarchists were arrested in Egypt, even though some Greeks signed a protest against the conduct of the local police,⁸² Greek reporters stressed that Greeks were not involved in the demonstrations, exhibiting their indifference or even their disapproval.⁸³ In 1909, as the famous anarchist Francesco Ferrer was arrested in Spain, the correspondent of *Empros* in Egypt mentioned that some local Greeks were also protesting together with Italians, Spanish and Russians, but added that most of the former were involved because of curiosity or in order to join their colleagues.⁸⁴

In 1910, Grigorios Papamichail published a study with arguments against Greeks studying in the West and bringing with them “foreign” to Greeks ideas, from Hegel to Darwin and from Proudhon to Marx.⁸⁵ That a major theologian considered it necessary to include Proudhon or Marx to his anti-Western argumentation is an indication that some Greeks might have been attracted to radical ideas, not necessarily in a superficial way or just because of curiosity. A number of radical publications commenting issues in Egypt, Greece or elsewhere, was published by Greeks in Egypt, especially anarchists.⁸⁶ The Greek Left in early 20th century Egypt included people

Kanonismos – 1876; *Elliniki Ergatiki Etaireia*: Kanonismos – 1881; Protopsaltis, E. G.: Kanonismos; Fragkoulis, K[ostas] N.: *I symvoli ton Ellinon*, p. 49.

⁷⁹ Kordatos, Gianis: *Istoria*, p. 175; Gorman, Anthony: *Foreign workers in Egypt*, pp. 248, 254.

⁸⁰ *Elliniki Ergatiki Etaireia*: *Epeteios tis Etaireias Teleti*, p. 11.

⁸¹ *Ellinikos Ergatikos en Alexandria Syndesmos o “Kerveros”*: *Katastatikon*, article 2.

⁸² *Tilegrafos*, 24/06.02.1907.

⁸³ *Empros*, 20.01.1907; *Omonoia*, 08/21.01.1907.

⁸⁴ *Empros*, 24.10.1909.

⁸⁵ Papamichail, Grigorios: *Sosialismos kai christianismos*.

⁸⁶ Dumas, Nikolaos: *Apo tin zoin ton vasanismenon*; Kouchtsoglous, Stavros: *Kato i maska*; Kordatos, Gianis: *Istoria*, pp. 174-176; Noutsos, Panagiotis (ed.): *I sosialistiki skepsi*, pp. 457-460;

like Georgios Konstantinidis, better known with his nickname “Skliros”, i.e. “tough”, an Ottoman Greek that spent many years in Russia and Germany, before coming to Egypt because of health and also financial problems. Skliros wrote what is considered to be the first Marxist study written in Greek and, even during his years in Egypt, his interest was oriented to Greece, where he would prefer to stay, as he explained,⁸⁷ Egypt being hardly present in any of his analysis.⁸⁸ A shoemaker of Athenian origin and anarchist background, author of a 1910 text on the hardships of workers, commented that capitalists had a homeland because “they could cross lands and seas in just a few hours and arrive at the place they were born”, whereas the workers “unfortunately know our homeland only then, when we go to get killed for the interests of the plutocrats”.⁸⁹ Whether the ideas of such authors were helping in overcoming boundaries, or in making a stronger identification of Greeks with Egyptians possible, is a question due to their interest, often turned to affairs in Greece. It is therefore necessary to distinguish between a physical presence in Egypt and an active involvement regarding affairs there, let alone the question of whether such an involvement would overcome any boundaries.

Further posing in question the supposedly harmonic and internally homogeneous world of “diaspora Greeks”, strikes were an activity provoking the harshest reactions and potentially providing space to Greek and non-Greek Egyptians to act together. In 1901, the insistence of the tailors of Cairo for a “riotous protest” might deprive them, as warned, from sympathies regarding their “reasonable grievances”.⁹⁰ Such a comment was a modest one compared to that of a correspondent of the same newspaper in Cairo a few days later, questioning whether strikes of shoemakers were a result of the influence of Jewish to Greek workers unintentionally serving the interests of the – mainly Jewish – shop-owners selling shoes imported from Europe,⁹¹ whereas a text in Athens referring to a strike of cigarette workers in Egypt warned both the industrialists and the workers, to a great extent Greeks, that their insistence was only facilitating “foreigners” coming to replace Greeks at “one of

Gorman, Anthony: *Anarchists in Education*, p. 305; Gorman, Anthony: *Foreign workers in Egypt*, p. 250.

⁸⁷ Stavridi-Patrikiou, Rena: *O G. Skliros stin Aigypto*, pp. 20-21.

⁸⁸ Axelos, Loukas (ed.): *G. Sklirou. Erga*, p. 54.

⁸⁹ Dumas, Nikolaos: *Apo tin zoin ton vasanismenon*, pp. 13-14.

⁹⁰ *Tachydromos*, 22/05.12.1901.

⁹¹ *Tachydromos*, 27/10.12.1901.

the greatest industries of the [Greek] Nation”.⁹² The abominable passions and violent methods of strikes were criticized as a leprosy spread in Egypt,⁹³ diffused also from big Egyptian cities to smaller towns like Tanta,⁹⁴ or from better organized workers’ unions, such as that of the cigarette workers, who were not only numerous,⁹⁵ but also relatively educated, skilled workers,⁹⁶ to other professions, such as to the tailors.⁹⁷ Strikes of cigarette workers in particular were described as coming from a Europe “living in sin”, not to mention of the possibility that “myriads of Arabs” would take the jobs of those on strike.⁹⁸ A few months later, the same newspaper repeated warnings, this time regarding workers in the Suez Channel which, according to the reporter, had been slandered as being troublemakers because of being Greeks, to conclude that “it was not a proper time for such movements”, i.e. strikes;⁹⁹ as mentioned at the following day, Greek workers were already replaced by Italians,¹⁰⁰ whereas the need to form a Greek workers union so as to defend the rights of all Greek workers in Suez was stressed as a more effective way to avoid strikes, mass dismissals of Greeks and their replacement by more disciplined and cheap “native”, Italian and Maltese workers.¹⁰¹ At the same period, Greek cigarette makers were mentioned as being on strike in Cairo, with *Omonoia* commenting that many Greeks lost their jobs in this way, since “native” workers were preferred by Greek industrialists;¹⁰² local workers were used as strikebreakers in many turn-of-the-century strikes of mainly Greeks and other European workers, even if the cooperation of forces of the local police or army might be needed,¹⁰³ but according to correspondents of another Alexandrian Greek newspaper, there were also violent incidents due to the attempt, also by some “natives” that were also on strike, to hinder other “natives” from breaking the strike.¹⁰⁴ In 1905, it was attempted to bring

⁹² Pyrros, 21.12.1903.

⁹³ *Omonoia*, 20/01.09.1894.

⁹⁴ *Metarrythmis*, 20/02.07.1894.

⁹⁵ Saktouris mentioned the existence of 2500 Greek workers at the tobacco industry of Cairo: Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, p. 469.

⁹⁶ Kitroeff, Alexander: *The Greeks in Egypt*, pp. 105-107; Charitatos, Manos + Giakoumaki, Pinelopi: *I istoria tou ellinikou tsigarou*, p. 129.

⁹⁷ *Tachydromos*, 13/26.11.1901.

⁹⁸ *Omonoia*, 28/09.06.1894.

⁹⁹ *Omonoia*, 11/23.08.1894.

¹⁰⁰ *Omonoia*, 12/24.08.1894.

¹⁰¹ *Omonoia*, 05/17.01.1895.

¹⁰² *Omonoia*, 31/12.06.1894.

¹⁰³ See for example: *Metarrythmis*, 27/09.07.1894; *Empros*, 27.12.1901; Beinin, Joel + Lockman, Zachary: *Workers on the Nile*, pp. 50-55; Gorman, Anthony: *Foreign workers in Egypt*, p. 248.

¹⁰⁴ *Metarrythmis*, 20/01.06.1894; *Metarrythmis*, 08/20.06.1894.

cigarette workers from Cairo to break a strike in Port Said, but they also united to the striking workers when they realized that they were brought for this purpose.¹⁰⁵ If some workers perceived unity to other workers as a priority, questions of ethnic antagonism in the labour market were a threat to the unity, an aspect stressed by the Greek press.

Strikes were not just considered as “leprosy” and a bad European influence, but also as a danger for the “good name” of Greek workers in Egypt and a threat for a Greek unity there. Greek diplomats or even the patriarch would resort to admonitions,¹⁰⁶ but diplomats might also give their consent for the deportation or arrestment of leading Greek strikers in Egypt,¹⁰⁷ a hard but imperative action, according to Dimitrakopoulos, explaining that Greeks were only “hosted” in Egypt and should not be involved in “troubles”.¹⁰⁸ In 1898, as a great number of Greek workers was fired in Suez Channel and demanded just compensation and the fare to return to their places of origin, they were mentioned in local Greek press as an example worth to be imitated since, having shown their good behavior, they would be requested everywhere.¹⁰⁹ Even if some Greeks were thinking in a short-term perspective about their presence in Egypt, about 1500 workers “of any nation and from different factories” participated at the rowdy scenes of a 1903 strike of cigarette workers in the industry of one of the more famous Greek industrialists in Egypt, Tsanaklis.¹¹⁰ Some of the first workers unions and socialist organizations in Egypt included Greeks, especially in their leading positions,¹¹¹ whereas it was mostly Greek and Italian workers that were considered as “much more violent and troublesome” from a British civil servant commenting 1911 strikes in Cairo.¹¹² If this kind of

¹⁰⁵ Tachydromos, 11/24.06.1905.

¹⁰⁶ Imerologion ton Dodeka 1936, pp. 137-139; Chaldoupis, Dimitrios K.: *Anamniseis kai chronika Port-Said*, p. 85.

¹⁰⁷ *Metarrythmisis*, 20/01.06.1894; *Metarrythmisis*, 08/20.06.1894; *Empros*, 21.12.1901; *Empros*, 24.12.1901; *Empros*, 27.12.1901; *Empros*, 31.12.1901; *Empros*, 10.01.1902; Saktouris, A[ntonios]: *Peri tis Aigyptou*, p. 470; Khuri-Makdisi, Ilham: *The Eastern Mediterranean*, pp. 239-240, footnote 174.

¹⁰⁸ *Empros*, 22.02.1902.

¹⁰⁹ *Syndesmos*, 04/16.05.1898.

¹¹⁰ Tachydromos, 17/30.11.1903.

¹¹¹ Maragkoulis, Manolis: “Kairos na sygchronisthomen”, pp. 52-55; Iordanidou, Maria: *San ta trela poulia*, pp. 68-80; Bein, Joel + Lockman, Zachary: *Workers on the Nile*, pp. 109, 139; Ismael, Tareq Y. + El-Sa’id, Rifa’at: *The communist movement in Egypt*, p. 12; Lockman, Zachary: *Imagining the Working Class*, p. 186; Gorman, Anthony: *Foreign workers in Egypt*, p. 245.

¹¹² BNA, FO series 371/1115: Number 32405: Cotton Work. Tramway Strike. About the turn-of-the-century fears of British and Italian diplomats regarding an impact of Greek radical ideas to indigenous workers see also: Khuri-Makdisi, Ilham: *The Eastern Mediterranean*, pp. 158-159.

activity further contributed in making Greeks unwanted for Egyptian authorities, added to the existing stereotypes about “Levantines”, it was not just the authorities that might dislike Greek workers in Egypt. The arrival of migrant construction workers from southern Europe with rare skills in 19th century Egypt and of artisans not paying professional taxes, less subject to various regulative restrictions than their local counterparts, were some unpopular aspects of the European presence in the late 19th century.¹¹³ According to 1870 estimations, even inferior Greek workmen received 3-5 shillings per day, compared to 2 shillings given to Egyptians,¹¹⁴ whereas the threat of bringing Maltese and Armenians was applied against protesting Egyptian coalheavers in spring of 1882.¹¹⁵ A scholar pointed that a role of Greeks and other Europeans in the Egyptian workers’ movement should not be overstressed, since a combination of prejudice and labor market competition was often the case in the relations of indigenous and nonindigenous workers in Egypt.¹¹⁶ A question is whether together with such antagonisms, the growing Egyptian nationalism had a decisive impact and made a unity of workers of different origins, skills, political ideas and salaries difficult.

Egyptian nationalism grew in the early 20th century in “a real, if still tentative, alliance between middle-classes and urban workers”,¹¹⁷ not to mention of how a member of the Egyptian National Party might perceive a revolt of villagers in Aswan as a “strange mixing between those who demand independence and those who demand food”.¹¹⁸ It was not always an easy co-existence, not to mention of non-Greek Egyptian complaints about strikes which, similar to Greek arguments, were described as “a new disease exported by the West to the East” and criticized as “a bad and harmful imitation” for Egyptian workers.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless in the late 1900s, a period Egypt was hit by crisis,¹²⁰ the livelihoods of Egyptian artisans and craft workers were increasingly threatened by the influx of foreign manufactured goods and competitors,

¹¹³ Chalcraft, John T.: *The Striking Cabbies*, pp. 47, 64-65.

¹¹⁴ Cole, Juan R. I.: *Colonialism and Revolution*, p. 310, footnote 8.

¹¹⁵ Beinin, Joel + Lockman, Zachary: *Workers on the Nile*, pp. 29-30.

¹¹⁶ Khuri-Makdisi, Ilham: *The Eastern Mediterranean*, pp. 162-163.

¹¹⁷ Lockman, Zachary: *Imagining the Working Class*, pp. 177, 183; Chalcraft, John T.: *The Striking Cabbies*, especially pp. 196-197.

¹¹⁸ El Saiid, Refaat: *History of the socialist movement*, p. 58.

¹¹⁹ Ebenda, pp. 76-77; Beinin, Joel + Lockman, Zachary: *Workers on the Nile*, p. 55; Lockman, Zachary: *Imagining the Working Class*, pp. 171, 174-175; Khuri-Makdisi, Ilham: *The Eastern Mediterranean*, p. 135.

¹²⁰ See chapter 12.3.

providing Egyptian nationalists with more arguments.¹²¹ Similarly to various cases in the post-Ottoman Balkans and the late Ottoman Empire,¹²² examples of ethnic and / or national difference having an impact on the grievances of workers were present also in Egypt. An 1894 strike at the tobacco industry of Tsanaklis in Cairo ended after the owner made a speech, convincing most of those present with the exception of some “Arabs and Syrians”.¹²³ In 1910, a strike that started with all railway workers united, but non-Muslim workers – including Greeks – were reported as running away when the police and the army went to break the strike.¹²⁴ In May 1921, thousands of Egyptian rioters, including some of its former workers, attacked a large soap and vegetable oil factory in Alexandria managed by a Greek, being a target “because it was associated with Greeks, because it was foreign-owned, and because its workers had specific grievances against its management”.¹²⁵

The unity of the workers was not a given, the origin often playing a role and being added to other factors, such as the short-term prospects of some migrants, mutual prejudice, different skills and salaries correlated to origin, as also the possibility that Greek workers might be influenced by Greek industrialists and press. The spread of the ideas of Egyptian nationalism made a common struggle of workers, irrespective of origin, more difficult, but the choices and priorities of many Greeks also made unity harder to be achieved. An author trying to argue against the “insularity” of the post-1945 Greek Left in Egypt had to admit of the problematic relations existing with non-Greek Egyptians, in many cases being consisted of nothing but Greek solidarity to or cooperation with the Egyptians, rather than an actual participation of Greeks as Egyptians.¹²⁶ Left-wing voices in the novels of Tsirkas, in spite of occasional critics to those “Westernized” Greeks in Egypt which had “no feelings” for Egypt as “their country”,¹²⁷ would speak about “the new Greece” they were about to build, where there would be “bread for all” and “this age-old diaspora, this hemorrhage would end at last”,¹²⁸ or insisted that “Greeks from Greece and

¹²¹ Lockman, Zachary: *Imagining the Working Class*, p. 183.

¹²² See: Avdela, Efi: *O sosialismos ton “allon”*; Tunçay, Mete + Zürcher, Eric Jan (eds.): *Socialism and Nationalism*.

¹²³ *Metarrythmisis*, 03/17.07.1894.

¹²⁴ Lockman, Zachary: “Workers” and “Working Class”, p. 102.

¹²⁵ Beinin, Joel + Lockman, Zachary: *Workers on the Nile*, pp. 126-127.

¹²⁶ Gorman, Anthony P.: *Egypt’s Forgotten Communists*.

¹²⁷ Tsirkas, Stratis: *Drifting Cities*, p. 444.

¹²⁸ *Ebenda*, p. 567.

Greeks from Egypt [...] they share a common destiny – the destiny of Greece”.¹²⁹ All these signs of the following decades further indicate that even Greeks of left-wing, i.e. internationalist, orientation in theory, did not always manage to be identified with non-Greek Egyptians in practice. The insufficient integration to the Egyptian society has been mentioned by different Egyptian Greeks as a major factor explaining the decline of the Greek presence in Egypt, with the characteristic example of ignorance or limited knowledge of the Arabic language;¹³⁰ it is interesting, that even among those involved in politics and having a left-wing perspective, it was very unusual to hold a meeting or a discussion of political ideas in Arabic.¹³¹ If even left-wing orientation hardly contributed in overcoming the boundaries, a question is whether there had been other Greek attempts in the late 19th or the early 20th century so as to achieve an identification as Egyptians and not only as Greeks.

13.3 The “Egyptiots” and the Egyptians

A Greek author originating from Egypt argued that Egypt, the “second homeland”, could not accept the “Greekness” of local Greeks, that assimilation was not possible because of religious difference, and that Greek attempts to “adjust” failed because of Egyptian chauvinism;¹³² as the same author argued, the awakening of the Egyptians “was natural to displace sooner or later the foreign element” and it was “inevitable” that those migrant communities, which could not be assimilated, would be dispersed.¹³³ Also writing at the first years after the massive exodus of Greeks from Egypt, one of them recalled of the “modern Alexandrians”, who grew up in a place where the tone was given by the European communities and could not predict “the course of history” leading to the loss of the “cosmopolitan Alexandria”, when the “exception” would be absorbed by the “rule”.¹³⁴ A “course of history” approach has the danger of understanding the presence of Greeks in Egypt as impossible in the long run in a teleological way, not even questioning of the possibility of Greeks finding a

¹²⁹ Ebenda, p. 605. About the ways the writing of the trilogy of the “Drifting Cities” was related to the Greek Left in Greece and Egypt see: Pechlivanos, Miltos: *Apo ti Leschi*.

¹³⁰ Roukounas, Emmanouil: *Pame sta nera*, pp. 50-51; Kazamias, Alexander: *The “Purge of the Greeks”*, pp. 22-23; Chrysostomidis, Sophianos: *The Left, Nasser, and the Exodus*, p. 158.

¹³¹ Gorman, Anthony P.: *Egypt’s Forgotten Communists*, p. 18.

¹³² Gialourakis, Manolis: *I Aigyptos ton Ellinon*, p. 388.

¹³³ Ebenda, pp. 141, 186-187.

¹³⁴ Malanos, Timos: *Anamniseis enos Alexandrinou*, pp. 364-365.

way of living in Egypt in any way, if the “tone” was not “given” by the “European communities”. If approaches in different periods and contexts tried to disconnect the Greek presence from the negative aspects of a colonial past,¹³⁵ a statement that Greeks had created “Greek islets in a foreign country” without thinking that the reign of British might not be eternal¹³⁶ was on the other hand an interpretation hardly leaving a chance of any Greek presence in Egypt not related with the British. A Greek journalist originating from Egypt argued that “irrespective of ‘handling’ the [Greek] migrant community, as an institution or as a historical phenomenon, had completed its trajectory” and that “with or without Nasser, its end could have been not different than that of the once flourishing Greek migrant communities in Odessa, Vienna, Trieste or elsewhere”.¹³⁷ From different perspectives, approaches of this kind considered as self-evident that Greeks could not be identified with Egyptians and therefore could not have any place as such in an independent Egyptian state. Having seen the way early 20th century Greeks tended to underestimate Egyptian nationalism and the difficulties of those with a left-wing orientation to articulate a common, non-nationalist front with non-Greek Egyptians, the question in the following paragraphs is whether there had been any early 20th century attempts by Greeks to identify with the Egyptians.

A scholar explained that Pinelopi Delta “which considered herself and wanted to be a Greek, was perhaps more than anything else also an Alexandrian”, since Alexandria was present in some of her texts.¹³⁸ The description of Delta as Alexandrian “more than anything else”, however, does not suffice, not only if the presence of Alexandria in her work is compared, for example, with that of Macedonia, but also when the kind of the presence of different aspects of Alexandria at her work is taken into account; Kazamias included Delta, with her racist references to the Arabs, to the “colonialist”, “separatist” and “Eurocentric” part of an “Egyptian Greek identity”.¹³⁹ The same author wrote about another current, categorized as “humanist”, “anti-colonial”, “integrationist” and “supportive of Egyptianisation”, which also formed part of the “Egyptian Greek identity”. The examples given by Kazamias in the category of “integrationist”, though, were either a result of overinterpretation, such as

¹³⁵ See chapter 2.3.

¹³⁶ Malanos, Timos: *Anamniseis enos Alexandrinou*, pp. 373.

¹³⁷ Chrysostomidis, Sophianos: *Elliniki paroikia Aigyptou*, p. 118.

¹³⁸ Navet-Grémillet, Marie-Cécile: *Pinelopi Delta*, p. 330.

¹³⁹ Kazamias, Alexander: *Between Language, Land and Empire*, pp. 187-188.

the inclusion of turn-of-the-century Greek anti-British, but not necessarily anti-colonial critique to this category,¹⁴⁰ or referred to specific sympathies of mid-20th century left-wing Greek authors, such as Pieridis or Tsirkas.¹⁴¹ Signs of an “integrationist” approach, especially regarding the period preceding the independence of Egypt, can not easily be found.

At the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the detected patterns of identification, or at least of expected identification, of Greeks with Egypt, usually referred to the European administration there. In 1913, the remark that relatively few Greeks participated in the administration of Egypt was mentioned by a correspondent of *Akropolis* in Egypt as one of the mistakes made by Greeks in the previous decades, remaining “foreigners to the interior life of Egypt”, even though they should perhaps be “its heart”.¹⁴² Even though a text demanding the easier acceptance of Greeks in government positions was published already in 1891 by a person signing as “Filodikaios”, i.e. fair,¹⁴³ according to an 1899 estimation regarding the Egyptian Civil Service, with the exception of those serving under the War Office, there were 92 Greeks, mostly in low-paid positions, in a total of 11.870 people.¹⁴⁴ If prejudice against Greeks could also be a factor, at least according to texts such as that of “Filodikaios”, this was probably not the only reason for the relatively small number, especially since Greeks often gave the impression to non-Greeks that they did not take part in the public life of Egypt, being rather “intensely interested in all Greek questions”.¹⁴⁵ The only place in the administration with a considerable Greek presence was the Municipality of Alexandria,¹⁴⁶ but even there, municipal elections were mostly perceived by the local Greek press as an opportunity to show the power of Greeks to the “foreigners” in Egypt, i.e. to the British, French or Italians.¹⁴⁷ A Greek candidate that withdrew his candidature in order to support another Greek candidate was praised for his [Greek] patriotism,¹⁴⁸ the need for Greek unity was

¹⁴⁰ About a critical approach to some of the texts included to the “humanist notion” of the “Egyptian Greek identity” by Kazamias see chapter 6, footnotes 195-204.

¹⁴¹ Kazamias, Alexander: *Between Language, Land and Empire*, pp. 181-185.

¹⁴² *Akropolis*, 24.01.1913; *Akropolis*, 14.02.1913.

¹⁴³ *Tachydromos*, 16/28.04.1891.

¹⁴⁴ White, Arthur Silva: *The Expansion of Egypt*, p. 190.

¹⁴⁵ Harris, Murray: *Egypt under the Egyptians*, p. 174.

¹⁴⁶ Tsokopoulos, G[eorgios] V.: *Aigyptiakai anamniseis*, p. 67; Lachanokardis, Iraklis: *Palaia kai nea Alexandria*, pp. 114-116.

¹⁴⁷ *Omonoia*, 18/30.01.1895.

¹⁴⁸ *Metarrythmis*, 12/24.02.1896. Compare to comments on a similar case in: *Tachydromos*, 08/21.02.1902.

stressed,¹⁴⁹ whereas examples, when the needs “of a community or the whole society” were both mentioned as important, were not easy to detect in Greek press.¹⁵⁰

A 1906 text in *Tilegrafos*, positive to some ideas of Kamel,¹⁵¹ promised the sympathy of “the Scot industrialist”, “the French and German merchant”, “the Greek toiler”, “the Italian importer and artisan” and of every liberal in Egypt or elsewhere, provided that Egyptian nationalists would assure commerce and personal security and accept the privileged status of the “foreign interests”, important also for the progress and future “political restoration” of Egypt; this would be assured, according to the same text, by accepting that half of the members of a future parliament in Egypt would be elected from migrant communities.¹⁵² In December of 1908, a letter signed by “Greeks, Copts, Syrians, Armenians etc. living in Egypt”, including at least one name identified as Greek, declared to the British their demand that, if any kind of constitution was ever granted to Egypt, representatives of the communities mentioned should be represented as well so as to assure their rights and safety in a country where they had “lands, factories, hotels, business firms etc.” or had been “good cultivators, contractors, physicians, merchants etc.”¹⁵³ These signs of a conciliation with the forthcoming Egyptian formal independence were still made in the name not of the potentially equal “future citizens” of Egypt, that might have been of Greek or whatever origin, but in a way assuring and reproducing segregation. There were Greek interests located in Egypt and, as a Greek doctor explained in 1915, some Greeks in Egypt were “related with the place, because they have interests at the place”,¹⁵⁴ but even if Greeks were identified at all to Egyptian forms of political organization, actual or potential, their participation was rather perceived as a means of assuring the particular Greek interests in Egypt in a way, which would hardly be accepted by most non-Greek Egyptians. Greeks in Egypt were thus found in the same difficult position with Syrians or Albanians regarding Greek federalist projects: being excluded, or included in terms they would mostly dislike, they demanded of a status

¹⁴⁹ Omonoia, 12/24.02.1896; Tilegrafos, 13/25.02.1896.

¹⁵⁰ Omonoia, 04/16.02.1898. For a critical overview regarding limitations and achievements of the Municipality of Alexandria see: Reimer, Michael J.: Urban Government, pp. 292-298.

¹⁵¹ See footnotes 36-37.

¹⁵² Tilegrafos, 04/17.10.1906.

¹⁵³ BNA, FO series 371/452: Number 44194: Egyptian Legislative Council, Provincial Councils, & Constitution.

¹⁵⁴ Nikolaou, G[eorgios]: O aigyptiotis ellinismos, p. 3.

assuring their particularity not just in cultural, but also in political terms, but that could hardly be accepted by the non-Greek Egyptian majority.

In 1892, a commentator of *Omonoia* signing as “Ulysses” referred to the discussion of whether “foreigners” or “Egyptians” should be sent as representatives of Egypt in scientific and technical conferences in Europe, suggesting that “Egyptiots”, i.e. not “natives”, should also be sent accompanied by “Egyptians”, when no “Egyptian” was in the position to go alone; this usage of the term “Egyptiot”,¹⁵⁵ chronologically the first I have detected, was clearly indicating an existing yet limited identification with Egypt.¹⁵⁶ A few months later, the same person referred positively to the attempts of the British to broaden the participation of the “natives” in the administration of Egypt, accompanied by a remark that migrant communities with a contribution to the progress of Egypt, apparently the Greeks being one of them, should not be “systematically excluded” by the British; as further explained, Egypt was essentially a “multinational, multilingual and mixed” country, where [Greek] migrants would be useful and necessary, irrespective of the “extend of civilization” of Egypt, the conclusion being that “Egypt [should be] for the Egyptians, but also for the Egyptiots”.¹⁵⁷ The term “Egyptiot”, even if remaining rare, was used also in other occasions at the turn of the 20th century, if not always as a term clearly excluding the “native”, i.e. the “Egyptian”,¹⁵⁸ in any case as a description possibly distinguishing between “Egyptians” and “Egyptiots”,¹⁵⁹ the later being more or less a term for recent migrants to Egypt, but not including the British colonial administration. In 1915, a text had for the first to my knowledge time referred not just to “Hellenism” or the “*omogeneis*” in Egypt, the usual descriptions by that time, but to a possible future orientation of “Egyptiot” Greeks,¹⁶⁰ a term that was established since then.¹⁶¹

In a later text and comparing three major Greek communities living out of the Greek state during the 20th century, Kitroeff mentioned of examples “proving the adjustability of Greek [migrant] identity”, selected mainly from the cases of Greeks in

¹⁵⁵ On the slight yet important distinction between “Egyptiot” and “Egyptian” see chapter 1, footnote 65.

¹⁵⁶ *Omonoia*, 15/27.06.1892.

¹⁵⁷ *Omonoia*, 11/23.11.1892.

¹⁵⁸ See for example: *Omonoia*, 21/03.10.1894.

¹⁵⁹ Oddis, F[erdinando] F.: *Ellinikos diakosmos*, p. 99.

¹⁶⁰ Nikolaou, G[eorgios]: *O aigyptiotis ellinismos*.

¹⁶¹ See for example its use in other titles and subtitles, such as: Michailidis, Evgenios: *O aigyptiotis ellinismos*; Politis, Athanasios G.: *O Ellinismos kai i neotera Aigyptos* – vol. 1 (with the subtitle: “History of the Egyptiot Hellenism from 1798 until 1927”).

the interwar United States of America and Soviet Union; the only example which was named regarding Egypt was the use of the description “Egyptiot Hellenism”, considered as one of “the best examples of syncretism that Greek culture went through with cultures of the countries hosting it”.¹⁶² Nevertheless, rather than a sign of the famous, but manifold Greek “adjustability”, the specific description of Greeks in Egypt could perhaps be a proof of an inability to find a meaningful way of being an Egyptian and a Greek at the same time, overcoming the colonial hierarchies and the existing boundaries of all kind, and undermining, in the long run, any attempts to achieve an “Egyptianization” in a way similar to the “Americanization” seek regarding the Greek migrants since the mid-20th century.

13.4 Summary

In the present chapter, it has been argued that most Greeks in early 20th century Egypt tended to underestimate Egyptian nationalism as an expression of “fanaticism” by the “natives”. Even those with a left-wing orientation did not always manage to overcome boundaries, often having other priorities, facing persecution, various accusations as also the mistrust by non-Greek Egyptians. The poor signs of an identification of Greeks with Egyptians, as expressed through the term “Egyptiot”, which prevailed, suggest rather of a distance retained from both the “natives” as also from the British, even when particular Greek interests in Egypt were at stake.

¹⁶² Kitroeff, Alexander: *Emporikes paroikies kai metanastes*, pp. 388-389.

14. A giant global “tree”

A first goal of the present study was to offer some versions of the story of the “Greek diaspora” in a less celebrating than the usual way, without on the other hand making comments in a moralizing way or replacing positive to equally problematic negative generalizations, from which migrant communities often suffer. The point was to provide sufficient evidence in order to destabilize the usual conceptions about the Greeks out of Greece and especially those of the “Greek East”, suggesting that there was also a considerable number of Greek migrants there, newcomers in specific periods of a long 19th century human mobility, not always and self-evidently “successful”, whatever was meant by that,¹ or “successful” because of opportunities sometimes associated with exploitative aspects or at the margins of legality during the violent expansion of a specific form of European “order”. It would have been an oversimplification to imply that the postcolonial current of migration to Europe is in a direct continuity the effect alone of the Greek activity in Africa. It has been attempted, though, to revisit the core of the – largely forgotten in the enthusiasm of the last couple of decades – arguments of authors of the decolonization period with a critical perspective, in spite of their various weaknesses and generalities,² so as to stress the need for critical studies in the field of Greek colonial history, some chapters of which still remain relatively unexplored.

Great hopes about the world of global migration were expressed in the late 20th century, combined often with an unjustified enthusiasm about a future beyond the nation, whatever might be meant by that; the result, however, was hardly a world of mutual understanding and of greater equality. Great fears about such a perspective were also shared by many people but proved exaggerated, since migration in fact contributed to a world where, similarly to what has been argued regarding similar arguments in the late 19th century, “the expectation of uniqueness has become increasingly institutionalized and globally widespread”.³ Another major point made in the present study was, without implying of an overall fluidity, to provide material and questions regarding the specific unifying and excluding at the same time process of forming a global national community, a process neither linear nor monodirectional.

¹ As often stressed in the present study, what was considered as “success” in political or economic terms for some agent could be perceived as a “failure” for another one.

² In more detail about the arguments of that period, as also about their weaknesses, see chapter 2.1.

³ Robertson, Roland: *Glocalization*, p. 28.

The greater homogenization of people was associated to a newly perceived notion of a national community as the “*dimos*” of democracy, with expectations from the Greek state and with demands for a broader participation of middle and lower social strata, provided they were “trained” and “moralized” properly. The constantly negotiated limits of this new form of community extended beyond the borders of the state claiming to represent the Greek nation, in different places of the world, making thus possible the existence of a global national community, a “giant national tree”, according to a 1901 description.⁴

Critical scholarship insisted not only that the politically constructed dichotomy of “colonizer” and “colonized” should not be taken as a given, but rather as “an historically shifting pair of social categories that needs to be explained”, but also that the internal differences of each colonial community and the different ways they were related to colonialism and colonial practice should not be underestimated, in spite of the importance of the sharp distinctions dividing those who were ruled from those that were ruling.⁵ The increasingly hierarchical division of the world in “Europeans” and “non-Europeans” in the long 19th century, evident also in Egypt, was important in the process of delimitating the Greek nation, even if the meanings and delimitation of the definitions of “European” were shifting and depended on perspective. A further factor that led to the inclusion or exclusion from the national community was the willingness of a decisively influential portion of people to be a part of a specific, monocultural project of “Greekness” that prevailed, often on their initiative. The experiences in migrant institutions proved decisive in the way some migrants were homogenized and others, including some among the potentially “future citizens” of Greece, faced different difficulties and were practically excluded from the Greek national community. It is beyond the scope of the specific study to suggest solutions for the future and potentially better forms of organizing human societies, maintaining both cultural plurality and social cohesion and also avoiding hierarchical relations, inequalities and exclusions, a desired goal, however, has been to provide the preconditions for such a discussion to be made from a better point of view, historicizing the process of forming a global Greek national community.

The stereotypes about Greeks and generally “Southerners”, often expressed in public by non-Greek Europeans in the context of the recent European crisis, suggest

⁴ Empros, 20.04.1901.

⁵ Stoler, Ann Laura: Rethinking Colonial Categories.

of the long way a potentially broadened European project needs to go, overcoming not only issues of decision-making, but also various concepts broadly held among the citizens of the European Union still in the late 2000s. In the early 1990s, at another period when part of the Balkans formed the protagonist in international media in a negative way, it was made clear that there were some people which “by being geographically inextricable from Europe, yet culturally constructed as ‘the other within’ [have served as] a repository of negative characteristics against which a positive and self-congratulatory image of the ‘European’ and the ‘West’ has been constructed”.⁶ If non-Greeks in Egypt tended to include Greeks to the “Levantines”, a usual “repository of negative characteristics” in a similar way, Greeks themselves mostly argued of being part of the “Europeans”, at least in as far this was related to the right of sovereignty and of being part of the “civilized world”, even when self-critique might reproduce the argument of an incomplete “Europeanness”. Belonging – even if potentially – to the “Europeans” in the long 19th century was a crucial factor in delimitating the “proper” Greeks in Greek mental maps or in priorities regarding choices related to migration, but also in undermining the attempts for a meaningful identification of Greeks as Egyptians. Even Greeks critical to the British or showing some understanding for non-Greek Egyptians were hardly identified with the later and the description that prevailed was that of the “Egyptiot”, which signified a “Europeanness” as compared to the “natives”.

This “Europeanness” claimed by the “Egyptiots”, however, was also supposed to differentiate them from other Greeks or the Greek state. At a case with some important similarities to that of the Greeks of Egypt, a scholar pointed that attention should be paid to the exclusive nature of the question of being “either Greek *or* Turkish” regarding the “*Rum Polites*”, for example, in the case of which “a wider cultural sense of ‘belonging’ based on a cosmopolitan notion beyond the nation” existed. For these people, went on the same author, “ethnic nationalism” was considered as “the biggest evil” for unifying “the Greeks and the Turks within themselves and against each other”, whereas their mere existence was supposed to demonstrate how wrong that was; as one of them explained, “they [the Turks] think of us as Greeks [*Yunanlı*], but we are different, we are *Rum*, not the regular Greeks”.⁷ Even if the intentions of going beyond exclusivity were in the right direction, the

⁶ Todorova, Maria: *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 188.

⁷ Örs Romain, İlay: *Beyond the Greek and Turkish Dichotomy*, pp. 81, 84.

question is not to replace a set of exclusions and hierarchies with another one, but how to provide a version of multiple meaningful non-exclusive identifications. As suggested also in the present study, neither Greek inhabitants of the Greek state, Ottoman Greeks or Greek migrants in Egypt had been homogeneous groups or unrelated from each other at a period of intense human mobility, nor were “regular Greeks” by definition nationalists, unlike to the “cosmopolitans” of the “Greek East”. Similarly to being a “*Rum Politis*”, being an “Egyptiot” is often perceived as different not only from “Egyptians”, but also from those considered as the “regular” Greeks, carrying with it not a memory of common experiences alternative to those of an exclusive “Greekness”, but often class-based differentiations, selectively idealized descriptions about Greeks living out of the Greek state and a contemptuous perception regarding both non-Greek Egyptians as also the inhabitants of the Greek state in general or the state itself, by its nature and not due to specific points that could be considered as problematic. As stressed in the present study, generalizations of all kind often constitute a tool for policies of the present or form the outcome of a tendency of people to idealize some aspects of the past. Some times the prospect of peace and cooperation of people, hopes for a better future or the positive reevaluation of discriminated groups might be at stake, but generalizations do not just contravene the sensibilities of a historian, but have as a further result a vicious circle of possible selective uses of the past rather than an attempt to provide justifiable and solid arguments about the present. My intention with the present study is not just to show how unstable the base of many generalizations has been, but also to stress the need to overcome their usage in political debate or their careless reproduction by social scientists. In more intensity due to the crisis, people in Greece are bombed with stories from the past or from other places in the present not in a way providing a basis for discussing comparable data and specific problems, but mostly trying to “teach” people or suggest “solutions”, producing or reproducing “heterotopias” of different kind as examples of “success” of the “Greeks Abroad” in a generalizing and superficial way. This is when historians are needed, so as to scrape the idealizing layers and offer a critical understanding.

A general and indefinite “Europe” or the migrants, the weakest “others” available, form easy targets of overreaction in periods of crisis, as some Greeks in Egypt also had the opportunity to find out. Such reactions may be related to problems connected with specific European institutions and policies or with certain processes

related to some migrant individuals, but definitely in more complicate ways than those often assumed, definitely not because of insuperable and given cultural differences and mostly not without different indigenous shares of responsibility, especially regarding institutional weaknesses. People are living in a gradually growing global scene, even if the ways and extent of global interconnections may differ considerably in each case.⁸ It is not clear what results an advanced “image of communion” of people in different forms of international cooperation or through a growing human mobility and manifold contact may have in the future. I am definitively not sharing an uncritical enthusiasm, often ignoring how and to what extent a globalizing process is proceeding and avoiding to ask whether it is rather about the creation of some isolated “fortresses”, with people in or out of them being excluded, or about opportunities in a broader scale for some, opportunities which are at the same time the cause of problems for others, inside or outside of the “fortresses”. Migration is not a problem *per se*, nor an irregularity of human history, but is also not automatically going to make all nationalistic symptoms, prejudices as also inequalities of all kind disappear. From such a perspective, the example of the Greeks in Egypt during the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the supposedly golden era of “cosmopolitanism” in a number of nostalgic or enthusiastic texts and references, is not a successful model that mysteriously disappeared in the 20th century because of some hardly defined “nationalisms”, unrelated to the Greeks in Egypt themselves. It remains to other texts to discuss concrete solutions, from the local to the global level, regarding the preconditions for making human mobility in the present and future a possibility of free choice, helping in extending equality and mutual understanding, or about the ways different notions of community may develop in a less exclusive and hierarchical form, but also broadening rather than undermining the emancipatory aspects their application has had since the long 19th century. The decisive question and challenge for the future is not how to restrict all kinds of human mobility or reproduce different hierarchical divisions of the world, but rather how a growing interrelation and a greater participation of people in local as well as in global politics can increase a broader “image of communion” and decrease various

⁸ See the critical observations regarding the absence both of a historical depth in most recent discussions about globalization, but also of a focus to the specific structures and the limits of the connecting mechanisms in: Cooper, Frederick: What is the concept, pp. 189-213.

inequalities, so that future historians may conduct studies about a “giant global tree” of multiple meaningful, non-exclusive and non-hierarchical identifications.

Maps

Map 1: Selection of northeastern Mediterranean places mentioned in the present study



- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1: Agios Efstratios | 21: Macedonia |
| 2: Andros | 22: Metsovo |
| 3: Athens | 23: Mytilini |
| 4: Chios | 24: Naousa |
| 5: Corfu | 25: Naxos |
| 6: Crete | 26: Patra |
| 7: Cyprus | 27: Peloponnisos |
| 8: Dodecanese Islands | 28: Pilion |
| 9: Folegandros | 29: Piraeus |
| 10: Ioannina | 30: Rhodes |
| 11: Ionian Islands | 31: Samos |
| 12: Ipeiros | 32: Sterea Ellada |
| 13: Istanbul | 33: Syros |
| 14: Izmir | 34: Thessalia |
| 15: Kasos | 35: Thessaloniki |
| 16: Kastellorizo | 36: Thiva |
| 17: Kefallonia | 37: Thraki |
| 18: Korçë | 38: Tripolis |
| 19: Leros | 39: Volos |
| 20: Limnos | 40: Ydra |

Map 2: Selection of places in the Nile Delta (Lower Egypt) mentioned in the present study



- 1: Alexandria
- 2: Cairo
- 3: Damanhur
- 4: Damietta
- 5: Dinshaway
- 6: Ismailia
- 7: Kafr El-Zayyat
- 8: Mahallah El-Kubra
- 9: Mansourah
- 10: Mit Jabir
- 11: Mit Khayrun
- 12: Port Said
- 13: Samannoud
- 14: Shibin El-Kawm
- 15: Suez
- 16: Tanta
- 17: Tell El-Kebir
- 18: Zagazig
- 19: Zifta

Map 3: Selection of places in the Upper Egypt and Sudan mentioned in the present study



- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| 1: Aswan | 8: Luxor |
| 2: Asyut | 9: Maghaghah |
| 3: Atbara | 10: Minya |
| 4: Bani Suwayf | 11: Omdurman |
| 5: Cairo | 12: Suhaj |
| 6: Fayyum | 13: Tallah |
| 7: Khartoum | |

Short biographical note

Marios Papakyriacou was born in the Republic of Cyprus in January of 1980. Since 1999, he studied in the University of Crete in Rethymno, completing a master in Modern and Contemporary Greek and European History in 2007. Since then, he has been a Ph.D. student in the Free University of Berlin in History with a focus in Southeastern Europe.

German summary

Am Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts gab es eine kleine griechische Gemeinde in Ägypten, bis zu den 1870er Jahren aber hat sich die Zahl der dortigen Griechen mehr als verdoppelt, und bis zur Jahrhundertwende gab es schon mehr als 100.000 Leute, die in verschiedenen Quellen und mit unterschiedlichsten Kriterien als die Griechen Ägyptens beschrieben wurden. Trotz der Existenz einer großen Menge an Quellen aller Typen bezüglich der Griechen Ägyptens gibt es eine relativ begrenzte Zahl von Studien zu diesem Thema. Diese Studien wiederum haben sich überwiegend mit Aspekten der dortigen griechischen Institutionen, bei denen nur ein paar hundert Leute tätig waren, oder mit den ökonomischen Tätigkeiten einer ziemlich kleinen Gruppe beschäftigt. Eine weitere Schwäche ist, dass Studien über die Griechen Ägyptens kaum die Frage stellen, wer eigentlich als Grieche definiert wurde oder werden konnte. Dazu wird meistens auch die Komplexität der kolonialen Erfahrungen und der vielfältigen Definitionen „Europas“ und des „Europäers“ vernachlässigt.

Trotz einer kritischen Welle in der Dekolonisierungsphase gibt es eine Reihe von Texten, besonders seit dem Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts, die erneut einer idealisierten Beschreibung der „griechischen Diaspora“ als einer „Erfolgsgeschichte“, besonders im „griechischen Osten“, anheimfallen. Unter anderem dienten solche Darstellungen der Vergangenheit und der „Diaspora“, deren Mitglieder „kosmopolitisch“ und gleichzeitig „patriotisch“ gewesen sein sollen, als ein Gegenmodell zu Aspekten der heutigen griechischen Gesellschaft, passten aber auch zu den Hoffnungen des späten 20. und frühen 21. Jahrhunderts auf eine griechische ökonomische Expansion auf dem Balkan oder dem östlichen Mittelmeer. Während die „Diaspora-Griechen“ – und besonders diejenigen im Ägypten des 19. Jahrhunderts – dieser Literatur zufolge „erfolgreicher“ in individuellen Angelegenheiten und „europäischer“ als alle anderen Griechen waren, blieben sie gleichzeitig nah an der lokalen Bevölkerung und unbelastet von den negativen Aspekten der europäischen Kolonialgeschichte.

Die kritische Untersuchung solcher Tendenzen fängt an mit den „heroischen“ Griechen der ägyptischen (und sudanesischen) Provinz, die in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts die erste massive griechische Migrationswelle bildeten und als das „Rückgrat“ der Griechen Ägyptens galten. Trotz verschiedener Beschreibungen des „Griechen“ als anpassungsfähiger und sogar „freundlichster Fremder Ägyptens“, was

besonders in der Provinz der Fall sein sollte, standen diese Leute aus unterschiedlichen Gesichtspunkten der lokalen Bevölkerung meistens nicht näher als die „anderen Europäer“, oder nur insofern, als manche von ihnen die Chance nutzten, um möglichst schnell zu profitieren und sich dann anderswo anzusiedeln.

Eine zweite große Welle von griechischen Migranten kam am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts und blieb meistens in den zwei größten ägyptischen Städten, Alexandria und Kairo, oder in den Städten in der Nähe des Suezkanals, wo es schon in der Mitte des Jahrhunderts eine griechische Präsenz gab. Auch wenn es oft in der griechischen Öffentlichkeit in Bezug auf die heutigen Migrationswellen nach Griechenland wiederholt wird, dass die Griechen als Migranten immer „legal“ und „gesetzeskonform“ im Ausland lebten, war eine große Menge von griechischen Migranten in Ägypten nicht „erfolgreich“, egal was darunter verstanden wurde, und oft auch nicht „legal“ und „gesetzeskonform“. Leute, die an verschiedenen Beschäftigungen, von Bettler- und Prostitutionsnetzwerken bis zum Haschischhandel und anderen kriminellen Organisationen partizipierten, gehören auch zur Geschichte der Griechen Ägyptens und wurden von einem griechischen Reporter sogar als „noch nicht wirklich zivilisiert“ beschrieben.

Die Griechen im „griechischen Osten“ werden oft als ein perfektes Beispiel der „Europäizität“ im Vergleich zu den Griechen Griechenlands dargestellt, dennoch gab es auch unter den Griechen Ägyptens unterschiedliche Tendenzen, sogar antiwestliche. Zudem waren die „westlichen“ Einflüsse in bestimmten Bereichen des Lebens nicht ein exklusives Merkmal eines „kosmopolitischen“ Ägyptens, sondern ein Zeichen der Verbreitung einer bestimmten Bildung bei den neuen Mittelschichten in Städten mit einer großen Zahl von griechischen Einwohnern, nicht nur im „griechischen Osten“, sondern auch in Griechenland. Was aber in Griechenland als eine „moralische Gefahr“ verstanden wurde, wurde oft auch als eine Gefahr für die griechische Nation in Ägypten wahrgenommen, besonders wegen der Art und Weise, wie die Kinder und vor allem die griechischen „zukünftigen Mütter“ ausgebildet wurden. Anstelle einer unproblematischen Aufnahme des Westens bei den Griechen Ägyptens gab es bei diesen genauso wie unter den Griechen von anderen Orten verschiedene Arten, „westliche“ Aspekte auszuwählen, zu übernehmen, zu verhandeln oder abzulehnen.

Einige der griechischen Tätigkeiten in der Provinz oder den Städten Ägyptens und besonders die Kapitulationen, die im Laufe des 19. Jahrhunderts mit der

Straflosigkeit der Migranten und der Ungenauigkeit der Nationalität verbunden waren, hatten zur Folge, dass die Griechen im Allgemeinen von einem entscheidenden Teil der Lokalbevölkerung feindlich wahrgenommen wurden. Aus griechischer Sicht wurde die „Europäizität“, in diesem Zusammenhang die Möglichkeit sich „selbst“ zu regieren, im Fall Griechenlands trotz einer oft extremen Kritik nicht hinterfragt; bezüglich Ägypten aber wurde diese „Europäizität“ angezweifelt. Auch wenn einige Griechen, meistens mit einer geringen Beziehung zu Ägypten, es für manche Muster bewunderten, waren diese Muster eher verschiedene „europäische“ Einflüsse, die „sogar“ in Ägypten erfolgreich waren, und daher ihrer Meinung nach auch in Griechenland eingeführt werden sollten. Für die Griechen des langen 19. Jahrhunderts, in Ägypten oder mit einer kleineren oder größeren Beziehung zu Ägypten, sogar für diejenigen mit einem gewissen Verständnis für die Ägypter, blieb Ägypten immer ein Ort, der nur von „Europäern“ regiert werden konnte beziehungsweise sollte.

Die Erfahrungen der Griechen Ägyptens um die Jahrhundertwende waren in vieler Hinsicht nicht sehr viel anders als die von griechischen Migranten in Amerika. Die zwei Phänomene waren nicht nur vergleichbar, sondern auch miteinander verbunden. Der größte Unterschied in dieser Zeit, der sogar eine Rolle bei verschiedenen Vorschlägen spielte, die Mobilität von griechischen Migranten vielleicht anderswohin umzulenken, war die Dichotomie zwischen „Europäern“ und „Nicht-Westlichen“ und deren Folge auf die Ideen einer möglichen Assimilation der griechischen Migranten.

Im Gegensatz zu vielen Texten, die sich kaum mit solchen Fragen beschäftigen, ist die Frage der Definitionsmöglichkeiten der Griechen Ägyptens, die aus unterschiedlichen Orten und Staaten kamen, im zweiten Teil der vorliegenden Dissertation zentral. Nationalität war ein Faktor, besonders nach der Gründung eines Staates im Jahr 1830, der alle Griechen der Welt repräsentiert sollte. Wer aber als ein Bürger Griechenlands in Ägypten anerkannt wurde, war ein dauerhaftes Thema von Streitigkeiten mit den ägyptischen Behörden und der Verhandlung der Migranten mit den griechischen Behörden. Dazu noch waren die Leute mit einer Loyalität zur griechischen Nation oder die ethnischen Griechen Ägyptens im Allgemeinen nicht unbedingt identisch mit denjenigen, die einen Anspruch auf eine griechische Nationalität erhoben, was es schwieriger für die damaligen Diplomaten und späteren Autoren machte, die Griechen irgendwie als eine konkrete Gruppe abzuschätzen.

Eine weitere Herausforderung für Historiker besteht darin, dass die Griechen trotz ihrer im Laufe des 19. Jahrhunderts verstärkt zugeschriebenen nationalen Rolle in orthodoxen christlichen Institutionen, auch in Ägypten, nicht unbedingt identisch mit den Orthodoxen Christen waren. Zum einen gab es in Ägypten Orthodoxe Christen, die andere nationale Identifizierungen bevorzugten, zum anderen Nicht-Orthodoxe und sogar Nicht-Christen, die als Griechen beschrieben wurden und ihre Loyalität zu griechischen nationalen Projekten äußerten, auch wenn, oder gerade weil sie von manchen christlichen Mitgliedern der griechischen Nation nicht akzeptiert wurden. Die Abgrenzung war stärker im Fall der Muslime, insbesondere derjenigen, die aus christlichen Familien stammten und zum Islam wechseln wollten. Auch wenn religiöse Vorurteile nicht unterschätzt werden dürfen, solche Schwierigkeiten hatten oft weniger mit Religionen *per se* zu tun, und lassen sich eher mit weiteren politischen Antagonismen und hierarchischen Vorstellungen des langen 19. Jahrhunderts erklären.

Auch bei den Orthodoxen Christen Ägyptens war es aber nicht immer selbstverständlich, wer als ein Grieche verstanden werden konnte. Aus verschiedenen Versuchen, eine homogene griechische Nation auszubilden, hat sich eine bestimmte, monokulturelle Version durchgesetzt. Auch mögliche Mitglieder wie Syrer oder Albaner orthodoxen christlichen Glaubens wurden manchmal aus griechischer Sicht als „*omogeneis*“, das heißt als Mitglieder der griechischen Nationalgemeinschaft anerkannt, aber in einer solchen Art und Weise, dass eigentlich entweder ihre Assimilation zu einer monokulturellen Version der griechischen Nation oder ihre Inklusion durch stark hierarchische Modelle gemeint war, was am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts auch zum Scheitern von solchen Projekten führte. Relativen Erfolg gab es eher, wenn ein entscheidender und auch einflussreicher Teil der Migranten von bestimmten Inseln oder Regionen die monokulturelle Version akzeptierte. Auch in solchen Fällen aber führte die Ausbildung von „richtigen“ Griechen nicht immer sofort zum Erfolg.

Die Griechen Ägyptens beteiligten sich an einem multidirektionalen Prozess, in dessen Verlauf eine relativ homogene, als „national“ beschriebene Kultur entstand, produziert durch Schulen sowie durch andere Wege. Indem sich die vorliegende Untersuchung von solchen Interpretationen distanziert, welche extrem die Rolle einer „Diaspora“ oder eines griechischen „Nationalzentrums“ hervorheben, wird versucht, die verschiedenen Beziehungen und Einflüsse in einem globalen Raum zu zeigen. Das

griechische Publikum, das sich an unterschiedlichen Orten der Welt an einer relativ gleichartigen Bildung beteiligen und sogar ähnlichen „didaktischen“ Unterhaltungsveranstaltungen genießen konnte, sollte bereit sein, nicht nur durch die gleiche Zeitschriften an Diskussionen über die Zukunft Griechenlands, sondern auch an Kriegen im Namen der griechischen Nation teilzunehmen.

Es gab verschiedene Stereotypen und Erwartungen zwischen den Griechen Ägyptens, die oft als eine ideale griechische Gemeinschaft dargestellt wurden, und dem griechischen Staat, der manchmal als permanent schwach und auch politischer Streitereien wegen ungenügend „europäisch“ beschrieben wurde, von dem aber unterschiedliche Interventionen erwartet wurden. Auch wenn oft nach der „Stimme“ der „Auslandsgriechen“ gefragt wurde, gab es eigentlich auch Streitereien und jedenfalls mehr „Stimmen“, als es oft aufgrund von verschiedenen vereinigenden Stereotypen seitens der Griechen außerhalb Ägyptens erwartet wurde.

Die „Auslandsgriechen“ wichen von einem im Laufe des 19. Jahrhunderts herrschenden Verständnis von „Griechentum“ nicht entscheidend ab, dienten aber oft als eine idealisierte Form von Griechen und Europäern. Auch infolge solcher Verständnisse aber war es schwer, eine potenzielle Identifizierung der Griechen Ägyptens mit den nicht griechischen Ägyptern zu erreichen. Die Griechen Ägyptens gegen Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts beschrieben sich meistens selbst als „*Ägyptioten*“, ein Begriff, der sowohl zu einer Abgrenzung von der britischen Herrschaft als auch von den Ägyptern diente. Dazu noch stellt dieser Begriff einen unter mehreren Belegen für den Misserfolg der ägyptischen Griechen dar. So wurden diese zwar oft wegen ihrer „Anpassungsfähigkeit“ während des langen 19. Jahrhunderts gelobt, waren indessen nicht imstande, sich den Änderungen am Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts anzupassen und aus den hergebrachten hierarchischen Dichotomien herauszutreten.

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