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## THE GREEK VOLUNTEERS IN THE CRIMEAN WAR

On the evening of February 21, 1854, at the height of a ball, the Russian ambassador in Vienna Meiendorf had a short conversation with the Austrian Emperor Francis Joseph. After complaining of the hostile tone of the Austrian press and the no less hostile attitude of Foreign Minister Buol-Schauenstein, he added: "There is nothing more absurd and more unjust than to accuse us of revolutionary policy, solely because in Wallachia we have 600 volunteers-Serbians, Greeks or Bulgarians". Further he argued that it was not fair to forbid Russia to receive Christian volunteers when thousands of revolutionaries, chiefly Poles, entered service in Turkey. To Francis Joseph's remark that these volunteers constituted a danger for Austria which set great store by the preservation of the status quo, Meiendorf pointed out that it was not right to place on the same footing the movement of the oppressed Christians and revolutionary manifestations. The conversation continued in the same vein and obviously was not leading to any positive result. Moreover, the Emperor resorted to a direct attack: "I know that you are getting ready to cross the Danube and I know that 16,000 rifles earmarked for the Christian population have been delivered to Bucharest". Meiendorf replied that it was not at all certain that the Serbian population would rise en masse against the Turks and the Bulgarians would be withdrawn by the Turks beyond the Balkan mountains on the approach of the Russian troops so that there were no grounds for fear concerning the future of the Ottoman Empire. It was then that Francis Joseph made a rather pointed statement: "I myself thought like you until the arrival of Count Orlov whose mission, as you know, gave me genuine pleasure, but with the very first statements he made I saw clearly that your projects had already been decided in spite of all that at the time Emperor Nicholas said in Olmütz and Warsaw. I was overwhelmed with amazement, but for this reason I had to take the appropriate measures. So far I have counted on shutting myself in strict neutrality. My present behaviour is not the result of any secret negotiations, such as between Prussia and Britain. I have no obligations whatever either to Britain or to France, but the vital interests of my Empire are at stake, and I cannot deviate from the duties they impose on me".

This brief episode, reported by Tarle in volume I of his "The Crimean War"<sup>1</sup>, in a nutshell and with great accuracy presents some of the major problems and contradictions of the Eastern Question at this stage of its development. Here is fixed also the turn in Russia's policy with respect to the Balkan peoples, and the attempt at its ideological substantiation; the turn being prepared in Austria's position, which in the final analysis proved decisive for carrying through the Russian line and in the long run also for the course of the whole war, is clearly seen. At the same time this conversation was perhaps the only occasion when the question of the Balkan volunteers was raised for discussion. Further on, it ceased to be a subject of diplomatic correspondence.

The existence of a volunteer corps made up of representatives of different Balkan nationalities—Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians, Wallachians and Moldavians—with the Russian army during the Crimean War, although an indisputable fact, is mentioned seldom and in passing even in the most voluminous works dedicated to that war. In the history of the Balkan peoples the Crimean War was doubtless an extremely important event when they once again tried to make use of the military-political conjuncture so as to win independence. On the other hand the Crimean War was also a turning point in the evolution of the Balkan policy of Russia. After a quarter century of fanatical adherence to the principles of conservatism and legitimism, which with respect to the Ottoman Empire was expressed in firm support of the status quo and efforts to forestall any revolutionary outbreak of the oppressed peoples, on the eve of the Crimean War Russia made a volte-face in its policy. This in itself is an extremely interesting question which calls for its explanation and subtle evaluation and which is the subject of a separate study.

In the present paper we have set ourselves a most concrete task: to follow up the history of the volunteer corps from its formation in the Danubian Principalities, during its participation in the Danubian campaign up to the siege of Sebastopol. The attention, moreover, will be restricted above all to the Greek volunteers.

The exacerbation of the Eastern Question at the beginning of the 50s and the outbreak of the Crimean War had enormous repercussions among the Christian population subjected to the Porte. For Greece this meant a possibility to proceed with the immediate realization of the Megali Idea<sup>2</sup>. A

1. E. V. Tarle, *Krimskaya voina* (The Crimean War), v. I, M.-L., 1950, pp. 430-432.

2. *Ιστορία του ἑλληνικοῦ ἔθνους*, Τ. ΙΓ, Ἀθήναι, 1977, σ. 143. (further cited as *Ἱστορία τοῦ...*).

strong movement expanded for the incorporation of Epirus, Thessaly and Macedonia in free Greece.

At the beginning of 1854 there broke out an uprising in these regions which within a short period of time assumed big proportions and enjoyed the active support of the Greek government. A whole series of factors contributed to the unsuccessful outcome of the uprising: bad organization, the overwhelming forces of the Porte, but above all the hostile position of Britain and France. With the occupation of Piraeus, the declaration of neutrality by Otto and the formation of the new cabinet of Mavrocordatos in May 1854 an end was actually put to the hopes for the liberation of the territories in revolt, and Greece ceased to play an active role in the ensuing course of events<sup>3</sup>.

The rising of the Greek population under Turkish rule was not limited only to the uprising in Epirus, Thessaly and Southern Macedonia. The Balkan volunteers, the Greek ones in particular, were namely another form of political activity.

Excluding the book of the eminent participant in the Greek volunteer corps Aristidis Chrisovergis "History of the Greek Legion"<sup>4</sup>, which has become a bibliographical rarity, the volunteers in the Crimean War have been forgotten in both past and present historiography<sup>5</sup>. Chrisovergis' book, by the way, is rather an apology of the activity of the legion than a systematic history.

The influx of volunteers to the Russian army was a strongly spontaneous phenomenon and began most probably with the entry of the Russian troops in the Danubian Principalities (June 21/July 3, 1853). It gained particular impetus with the declaration of war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire in early October. Unfortunately there is no detailed information how the enlistment of the volunteers proceeded, when and how specifically the idea had taken shape in the Russian command for the establishment of a separate body of Balkan volunteers. In any case, at the end of December 1853 Prince Gorchakov<sup>6</sup> initialled with the word "Approved" the prepared "Regulations

3. D. Dakin, *The Unification of Greece. 1770-1923*. L., 1978, p. 84.

4. *Ιστορία της ελληνικής λεγεῶνος* (Ἀριστείδης Χρυσοβέργης). Τ. 1-2, Odessa, 1887-88 (further cited as *Ιστορία της...*).

5. Thus, for instance, in the bibliography to the part 'Ο Ἑλληνισμός καὶ ὁ Κριμαϊκὸς πόλεμος (1853-1856) in *Ιστορία τοῦ...*, σ. 545, there is not a single work dealing with the volunteers. All the works with the exception of the book by Δ. Δοντῆ which examines the policy of the Great Powers towards Greece in the Crimean War, are dedicated to the uprisings in Epirus, Thessaly and Macedonia.

6. M. D. Gorchakov - commander of the Danubian army (1853-1854), and commander

for the Formation of a Battalion of Volunteers in the Danubian Principalities”<sup>7</sup>.

With this document it was officially proceeded with the formation of a volunteer corps made up of four companies under the command of Gen. Salas<sup>8</sup> (art. 1-2). All Orthodox Christians, not only inhabitants of Moldavia and Wallachia, were admitted as volunteers for a term chosen by them (art. 3-4). The commander-in-chief of the Russian forces in the Principalities appointed the commander of the battalion and the officers from amongst the volunteers themselves. To the battalion was seconded a Russian officer to act as paymaster and clerk (art. 11). Article 12 provided that the volunteers of one nation were to be put mainly in one company. A number of articles fixed the number of officers, the pay of the different ranks and dealt with the question of punishments, prizes, etc. (art. 7-9, 13-18, 20). The volunteers were to be issued with rifles and cartridges; the requirements with respect to them were to be trained in target shooting, open formation and guerrilla warfare. The use of the volunteers in regular military operations was to be determined by special order of the commander-in-chief (art. 10, 19).

The earliest payroll of the volunteers of February 19, 1854 gives their numbers as follows: “Slav-Bulgarians-502, Hellenic-Greeks-257, Wallachians-100; total-859”. The volunteers were billeted on various villages round Buzau, Focșani, Braila and Galați<sup>9</sup>.

In his diary, published after the war as “Field Notes”, P. Alabin writes for February 25, 1854 that the formation of the volunteer corps of Greeks, Wallachians, Moldavians, Serbs, Bulgarians and Montenegrins was making a strong impression in Bucharest: “The rumour of our government’s intention to form such a batallion had hardly spread when volunteers began to flock from all quarters”. Describing the principles on which the formation of the volunteer corps was based, Alabin notes that all would wear their national costumes, the Greeks with a cross over a crescent surrounded by rays, and the Bulgarians—with their national coat of arms—a gold lion. Alabin is rather sceptical about the real usefulness of the volunteers, particularly as regards the Moldavians, Wallachians and Serbs, but writes in part: “Among the volunteers, however, there are Greeks who have taken part in the Hetairia

of the forces in the Crimea from February 1854 to the end of 1855.

7. *CGVIA* (Central State Archives for Military History - Moscow), F. 9196, op. 285, sv. 4, d. 16, pp. 36-39.

8. Given in the Russian documents as Salos.

9. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 5/263, sv. 2, d. 6, pp. 18-19.

and the war against the Turks for the liberation of Greece; there are also many Montenegrins; it should be expected that they both will fight desperately against the Turks who hate them to such an extent that they are ready to drink their blood"<sup>10</sup>.

The formation of the volunteer corps is reflected very laconically also in the war diary of Baumgarten where the entry for March 15, 1854 reads: "Formation of the volunteers. The Greeks separately, and the Wallachians, Serbs and Bulgarians in another battalion. They are entrusted to Gen. Salas; his aide-de-camp is the Greek merchant Margaritka<sup>11</sup>. Kostandas<sup>12</sup> leaves for Craiova for the formation"<sup>13</sup>.

Be as it may, at the beginning of May 1854 Soymonov<sup>14</sup> sent a report to Kotsebu<sup>15</sup> in Craiova, in which he reported that the Greek volunteers had reached the number of 1,097, distributed into 10 companies<sup>16</sup>. Of them two battalions had already been raised and the third was in the process of formation.

A list of the two battalions from the beginning of September 1854 gives an idea of the command of the corps<sup>17</sup>. Konstantin Zervas was commander of the first battalion. Chrisovergis mentions that he, together with Koroneos, was one of the two assistants of Gen. Salas<sup>18</sup>. The first company of his battalion was led by Nikola Karaiskos. In that company were the chaplain of the battalion Haralambos<sup>19</sup>, an officer—Leonidas Voulgaris and a sergeant major—Georgios Tsimas. Stavros Kostavelos was commander of the second company with sergeant major Nikolaos Nirofildas. The third company was commanded by Stamatis Koromadis and sergeant major Stratis Stratigopoulos.

10. P. Alabin, *Pohodnie zapiski v voynu 1853, 1854, 1855 i 1856 godov.* (Notes on war from 1853, 1854, 1855 and 1856). Pt. I, Vyatka, 1861, pp. 148-149.

11. This name is encountered for the first and last time in the Russian documentation. Chrisovergis does not mention it in his "*History of the Greek Legion*".

12. Lt. Colonel Kostandas is mentioned in Chrisovergis, op. cit., when the latter describes his first meeting with Gen. Gorchakov. Kostandas acted as an interpreter then.

13. A. K. Baumgarten, *Dnevnik 1849, 1853, 1854 i 1855* (Diaries of the years 1849, 1853, 1854 and 1855). *Journal imperatorskogo russkogo voennoistoricheskogo obshtestva.* Spb., 1910, bk 4-5, 1911, bk 1-2.

14. Soymonov - Lt. General, in command of the forces of the right vanguard.

15. Kotsebu - General Adjutant, Chief of Staff of the troops of the 3rd, 4th and 5th infantry corps.

16. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 5/263, sv. 2, d. 6, pp. 113-116.

17. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 5/243, sv. 30, d. 148, pp. 113-128.

18. *Ἱστορία τῆς...*, σ. 4.

19. In Chrisovergis' list it is noted that he died of typhus.

The fourth at that time had no company commander, and Spiridon Dimitropoulos was sergeant major.

The second battalion was under the command of Vasilis Balafas. Panagis Kostolanos commanded the first company, and Evstathios Vandoros was its sergeant major<sup>20</sup>. Sofronios, the chaplain of the battalion, was in this company. The second company was commanded by Sterios Harisis<sup>21</sup>, with sergeant major Kostas Anagnostopoulos. Anthonios Gines was commander of the third company and Savas Konoles its sergeant major. Dimitrios Tandalidis commanded the fourth company.

On the Russian side "for supervising the correct training" were seconded for service with the volunteer corps one field-officer, two instructor captains, 16 sergeants, 8 drummers and 8 buglers<sup>22</sup>.

Outside the two battalions and enjoying, it seems, certain independence, were the companies of Konstantin Doukas and Aristidis Chrisovergis. Very little is known about priest Konstantin Doukas (known as papa Doukas or Papadoukas) in spite of his extremely active part in the history of the Volunteer Corps. Chrisovergis writes that he came from Iasi and that Gen. Salas had appointed him colonel without a regiment. Later on, at the invitation of Gen. Soymonov, with whom he was on friendly terms, papa Doukas went to Giurgiu<sup>23</sup>.

There is every indication that Chrisovergis himself got down to the enlistment of volunteers. He left Izmail for Tulcea together with Gen. Ushakov, the commander of the 7th infantry division. Ushakov gave him a comparatively wide field of action. In Tulcea Chrisovergis got in touch with the Bulgarian-Greek military commission made up of Aslanis Dimitriu, Spiridon Diamandopoulos and the Bulgarian Hadji Hristo. A list for the recruitment of volunteers was opened and the uniforms of the volunteers, similar to those of the frontier troops in Greece, were ordered<sup>24</sup>.

All the volunteers were issued with army weapons with the exception of 58 for whom there was none left, but some came with their own arms. From the fitting-out register of the Greek volunteers it is clear that a comparatively small part had their own weapons. Sixty-one persons had their own rifles, 258—revolvers and 182—sabres<sup>25</sup>.

20. In the list of Chrisovergis it is noted that he was killed.

21. In the same list it is noted that he died of typhus.

22. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 33, d. 219, p. 88.

23. *Ἱστορία τῆς...*, σ. 15.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

25. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 5/263, sv. 2, d. 6, p. 119.

To the same report are appended a project for shoulder straps for the different ranks and another for seals of the different battalions<sup>26</sup>. The seals are four in number. On the first of them is depicted a phoenix with spread wings which holds a cross in its beak. The image is encircled by the inscription ΔΙΟΙΚ. Α΄ ΤΑΓΜ. ΛΕΓ. ΕΘΕΛ. ΕΛΛ. 1854—"Headquarters of the First Battalion of the Greek Volunteer Legion. 1854". The other three seals bear the same inscription, for the 2nd and 3rd battalions respectively. The indication of the battalion has been omitted on the fourth seal. The second seal represents the two-headed Byzantine eagle with crown holding a sceptre and orb in its talons. On the third is depicted a cross over a crescent and above it God's all-seeing eye. The fourth is simply a cross on a crescent.

In the process of its formation the volunteer corps practically attracted all the mass of the incoming Balkan volunteers. Besides this a limited number of persons were admitted to Russian service, on the grounds of a special statute which regulated the admission of foreigners to military service. There was a provision for the enlistment on Russian service of persons who had accepted Russian citizenship and chosen the military career, and also people who could produce a permission from their government to enter Russian military service. The conditions for obtaining the corresponding ranks and for commissioning were strictly defined<sup>27</sup>.

Among the documentation from the stocks of the Archives for Military History we came across a file which contains information about some of the persons who had desired to be accepted for Russian service (13 in all). Four of them were Greeks. Konstantin Papandopoulo was a Turkish national who between 1842 and 1849 studied in the corps for naval navigation officers. From 1852 he served with the Composite Training Battalion in the Caucasus, after which he settled in Bucharest. He expressed the wish to be admitted to service, consenting to take Russian citizenship. In May 1854 he was allowed to take an oath for accepting Russian citizenship, but in September Papandopoulo withdrew his application and documents "for personal reasons"<sup>28</sup>. His name is not encountered further<sup>29</sup>.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118.

27. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 27, d. 120, pp. 129-130.

28. *Ibidem*, pp. 1-12.

29. E. Kovalevskii, *Voina s Turciei i razryv s zapadnymi derzhavami v 1853 i 1854 godah* (The War with Turkey and the Rupture with the Western countries in 1853 and 1854). *SPb*, 1868, p. 90, listing the personal exploits of the participants in the battle at Oltenița, he mentions among the others remembered for their heroic conduct also Ensign Papandopoulo. This refers, however, to the time before he put in his application. The battle at Oltenița took place in early November.

Ioannis Vlasopoulos (Ivan Vlasopoulo) was the son of the dragoman at the Russian embassy in Athens and grandson of the Russian consul-general in the Peloponnesus. In Greece he served in the navy. On his arrival in the Principalities he took an active part in recruiting volunteers. Left without funds, in August 1854 he put in an application for appointment in the Tobolsk infantry regiment. His request was granted and after taking the oath he could enter service<sup>30</sup>. Ioannis Vlasopoulos is mentioned once in Chrisovergis, before the events registered in the Russian file. At the beginning of 1854, after his arrival, Chrisovergis looked for a person to translate into the French his report to Gen. Gorchakov and his choice fell on Vlasopoulos whom he knew from Greece and whom he characterizes as a "glorious", honest naval officer"<sup>31</sup>.

A brief mention is made in the file of Konstantinos Alexandros, a Greek, Turkish national, who in December 1854 put in an application to be admitted to Russian service, but his request was turned down and he was offered instead, if he so wished, to be sent to the Crimea, as member of the volunteer battalion<sup>32</sup>. His further fate is not known.

Finally, the documents are included of Vasilis Skarlato, who put in an application in January 1855. He lived in Odessa and belonged to the Skarlato family, confirmed in 1845 as one of the nobility. His name is not encountered in other documents and from the file it cannot be established what happened to his application<sup>33</sup>.

The files in which the documents of the Balkan volunteers are kept contain numerous lists with the names of volunteers. Among them there stand out a few where along with the name some other characteristics of the volunteers, such as occupation, place of birth, etc. are entered. We came across three such lists which refer to Greek volunteers. All the three lists were drawn up in 1854—August, September and November.

The first is a list of the company of Konstantin Doukas (133 men)<sup>34</sup>, the second is a list of the Greek volunteers in the company of Aristidis Chrisovergis of the force of Lt. General Ushakov (100)<sup>35</sup>, and the third—a list of the volunteers wishing to serve under the command of Aristidis Chrisovergis (86)<sup>36</sup>. Two of the lists are drawn up in Russian and one in French.

30. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 27, d. 120, pp. 29-34.

31. *Ἱστορία τῆς...*, σ. 8.

32. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 27, d. 120, p. 136.

33. *Ibidem*, p. 144.

34. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 30, p. 148, pp. 68-72.

35. *Ibidem*, pp. 61-62.

36. *Ibidem*, pp. 182-183.



Even a most cursory glance at the names reveals numerous typically non-Greek names: Stoyan Stefanovich of Bulgaria, Marko Stefanović of Bosna, Vasile Brahanu of Moldavia, Peter Spasov of Bulgaria, Georgi Živković of Serbia, etc. There are others whose names are common for the whole Balkan region and for all nationalities and about whom, judging by their place of origin, there are doubts as to their Greek nationality: e.g. Hristo Ivanov of Karlovo, Ivan Tomas of Montenegro, Nikolai Pavlov of Bulgaria, etc.

It is impossible to differentiate the national belonging by the pronunciation of the names because in most cases they have been brought into line with the corresponding Russian or French version (thus Ioannis throughout the Russian lists is Ivan—Ivan Gatsoulos, Ivan Galanis, etc., in the French it is Jean—Jean Trapico, Jean Hadgissimou; Georgios is Geger, Egor and George; Petros—Pêtr and Pierre; Theodoros—Fêdor and Théodore, etc.).

Irrespective of the direct or indirect indications of the non-Greek origin of one or other of the volunteers, members of the Greek companies, we have adopted as a rule not to separate them in the analysis. We analyse as “Greek” volunteers all those who are entered as volunteers in the Greek battalions. Grounds for this gives us the circumstance that in spite of the existence of a separate Bulgarian and Serbian corps, the volunteers in question had enlisted and served in the Greek one.

True, the time was over of the Hetairia of 1821 when the all-Balkan idea had been the predominant one with the national differences pushed to the background. During the Crimean War the national interests were rather differentiated and notwithstanding the common goals and ideals, each nation had its concretely outlined programme. It was not accidental that the national contradictions compelled the Russian command in April 1855 to divide Bulgarians and Serbs into separate companies, after having been originally put in a joint Bulgarian-Serbian battalion<sup>37</sup>.

In spite of this a large part of the volunteers joined the movement precisely as carriers of a general Balkan consciousness. Aristidis Chrisovergis became the exponent of this awareness. In his memoir “History of the Greek Legion” is described his first conversation with Gorchakov. The Russian general gave him a rather cool reception, fearing that yet another pretender to be leader of the volunteers had appeared. Gorchakov sharply told Chrisovergis that he should realise the plans with which he had come in his own country, Greece. To this remark Chrisovergis replied through the interpreter: “Tell

37. *CGVIA*, F. VUA, d. 5688, pp. 12-13.

the prince (Gorchakov-author's note) that Greece is not my motherland, but the Balkans". He elaborated that in Greece he had developed, had fought for its freedom, had lived and served there, but when Russia was rising up in arms he came to fight with the Russian brothers against the tyrants<sup>38</sup>.

The three detailed lists at our disposal cover a total of 319 persons (there is no repetition of names in some of the lists). In this way they give an idea of the composition of the Greek corps on the basis of nearly one-third of the number of volunteers.

Analysing the data on the place of origin of the volunteers we may sum up the results in the following table:

<i>region</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>region</i>	<i>number</i>
Free Greek territories	89	Serbia, Bosna and Montenegro	4
Ionian islands	7	Albania	12
Wallachia and Moldavia	45	European Turkey, Asia Minor, the islands, etc.	53
Epirus, Thessaly and Macedonia <sup>39</sup>	32	Not localized <sup>41</sup>	6
Bulgaria <sup>40</sup>	60	Not indicated	11
<b>T o t a l   319</b>			

As is seen, the largest group of volunteers came from the free Greek territories (both from continental Greece and from the archipelago). Next to them are ranked those from various parts of today's Bulgaria. The next

38. *Ἱστορία τῆς...*, σ. 10.

39. We have deliberately put the three geographic regions as a common area of the 1854 uprising.

40. By this we understand all present Bulgarian lands, i.e. the towns and localities within today's boundaries of Bulgaria are included. The lists separately indicated as "Roumelia" and "Bulgaria" are given here together. Towns which were in Roumelia but outside modern Bulgaria (Adrianople for instance) are grouped in European Turkey.

41. The following places have remained not located: Pivates (No. 17 of the unit of Chrisovergis), Torma (No. 28 of those wishing to serve under Chrisovergis), Tritoris (No. 33 of the same list); a place remains undeciphered (No. 70 of the Chrisovergis unit); we have not included in any group No. 92 of the same unit (Ivan Tomas of "Chernogoria") since we are not certain whether it refers to the region Montenegro or to one of the villages of the same name in Macedonia, Epirus and Peloponnesus; the origin of No. 98 of the unit of Chrisovergis (Anesti Egorov - "Bougazian") has also remained undetermined.

large group is that of the Greeks from Wallachia and Moldavia. The volunteers from the regions of Epirus, Thessaly and Macedonia which had risen in revolt were also numerous.

The table gives the general data on the three units but it should be pointed out that those coming from a region were as a rule included in the same unit, a thing which is quite natural. Thus, in the unit of Doukas were enlisted 40 of the 45 volunteers from Wallachia and Moldavia. In the other two (those who already served under the command of Chrisovergis and the others who wished to pass under his command) were 45 of the 60 men who had come from Bulgaria. This is easy to explain taking into consideration that Chrisovergis himself was born in Nessebur.

Here we should pay attention to the fact that there is no precise differentiation between the place of origin (or birthplace) and the place from which the volunteers came immediately before joining the corps. In the two Russian lists the column which gives the place of origin is headed "where they come from". It is obvious, however, that in many cases the birthplace is indicated, as is with A. Chrisovergis, who had been on military service in Greece, but it is entered that he was from Nessebur. So is the position with all the military who were on Greek service, but originated from one or other place within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire.

A similar distinction is made also in the French list where there are two columns—the one is "patrie", namely the native place, and the other clarifies how long and where the volunteer had been before he enlisted. All the volunteers had been for some time in Moldavia or Wallachia before joining the corps<sup>42</sup>. Forty of them originated from and had always lived in the Principalities. Bearing in mind that the list was drawn in August 1854, we have assumed that all those who had spent one year or less in the Principalities (there are 38 such persons) came specially in connection with the war. The remaining 53 persons, with a stay of more than two years in the Principalities had settled there in connection with their occupation. Such was, for instance the merchant Petros Kotakis (No. 4) of Andros who had lived for 20 years in Wallachia, the carpenter Haralambos Naum of Albania (No. 115), who had already spent 14 years in Wallachia, the merchant Peter Spassov of Bulgaria (No. 81) who had settled in Moldavia 16 years before, and many others.

The examination of the composition of the volunteers by occupation poses certain difficulties. They stem chiefly from the specific terminology used in the lists. While in that drawn up in French the occupations are described

42. There is no information only about two persons.

in considerable detail and are differentiated, and what remains is to distribute them into bigger groups by kind of activity, in the two Russian lists are used some purely Russian terms that have neither linguistic nor social Balkan equivalents.

Such is the case, for example, with the concept “meshchane”. It is known that in pre-revolutionary Russia it included various categories of townfolk—artisans, small traders, house-owners, etc. who, contrary to the merchant estate, incorporated in the first, second and third guilds, paid a capitation tax and were subjected to recruitment. Sixteen people are indicated as “meshchane”. It is obviously a matter of modest town dwellers, but it is impossible to differentiate those engaged in handicrafts or in small-scale trade.

A similar difficulty is raised by the designation “prikashchik”, given to 18 people. This might denote a manager, supervisor or the foreman of some group, etc. We have included this category in the “employees”. In the following table are given the summed-up results for 271 people (the occupation of 43 is not indicated):

<i>occupation</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>occupation</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>
sailors	81	29.9	employees <sup>44</sup>	26	9.6
merchants	61	22.5	“meschchane”	16	5.9
artisans <sup>43</sup>	41	15.1	peasants	14	5.2
military	27	10.0	others <sup>45</sup>	5	1.8
			total	271	100.0

Almost one-third of the volunteers were sailors. There is information about the place of origin of 76 of them. One half came from the free Greek territories—both from the islands and from continental Greece (21 and 17 persons). Eighteen came from islands within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire and 5 from the Ionian islands. The remaining 15 originated from different regions of the Empire (Northern Bulgaria, Thessaly, Asia Minor, etc.).

43. In the Russian lists they are simply “remeslenniki”, but in the French they are described in detail: they include a baker, a shoemaker, a barber, a pastry-cook, carpenters, “sculptors”, stone-cutters, a soap-boiler, a gunsmith, etc.

44. Five of them are servants.

45. These are two priests, two teachers and one student.

Among the merchants there are no data concerning the place of origin of only two persons. The majority of the other 59 is made up by those who had settled in the Danubian Principalities (34); 13 originated from free-Greece and 12 came from various regions of the Ottoman Empire.

Finally, there exists also a short list of 23 persons<sup>46</sup>. The list has no heading and is not dated. Since it has been filed with the documents of 1854, it is most likely that it is of the same period. It is also interesting that it is the only one to give the age of the volunteers. Judging by the names, they were above all Greeks but there were also a few Vlachs (e.g. Kalin Rubesco or Ivan Stoianesco, and others), and one Bosnian (Luka Elakovic). Their age varied from 20 to 49 years, the average being 28.

The military operations in the Danubian theatre of the war after its outbreak at the beginning of October 1853 were limited to a few clashes between the Russian and Turkish forces: the battles of Oltenița (October 23/November 4, 1853), Țetati (December 25, 1853/January 6, 1854), Giurgiu (January 22/February 3, 1854) and Calaraș (February 20/March 4, 1854). In the spring of 1854 the Russian troops switched over to the offensive and besieged Silistra in April.

In the traditional works dedicated to the Crimean War (above all those of military historians and memoirs) a detailed and exhaustive account is given of the course of the Danubian campaign. The diplomatic conjuncture and especially the evolution in the policy of Austria which proved to be the decisive cause of the indecisive, hesitant and even contradictory actions on behalf of the Russian military command are also examined in considerable detail. The positions of and the differences between some personalities and groupings in the Russian ruling circles which in the final analysis led to the imposition of the line of the commander-in-chief of the Western and Danubian forces, Fieldmarshal Paskevich, are also elucidated in depth<sup>47</sup>.

All that time Paskevich emerged not so much as a professional military but rather as a politician and diplomat who considered events in perspective, evaluating military operations above all with a view to their diplomatic repercussions. Fearing Austria's hostile attitude and the build-up of Austrian

46. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 5/263, sv. 2, d. 6, p. 300.

47. See E. V. Tarle, *Krimskaya voina* (The Crimean War), v. I, II, M.-L., 1950; A. Zaionchkovskii, *Vostochnaia voina v svyazi s sovremennoi ei politicheskoi obstanovkoi* (The Eastern War with regard to the contemporary political situation), v. I, II, *SPb*, 1908-1913; Der Feldmarshal Paskiewitsch im Kriemkriege. *Jahrbücher für die deutsche Armee und Marine*, 1874, N. 35, 36.

troops on the western front, in the rear of the Danubian army, in June Paskevich ordered the discontinuation of the siege of Silistra and the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the Danube. In early July Austria sent Russia an ultimatum for the evacuation of the Russian troops from the Danubian Principalities. There followed the Austro-Turkish treaty for joint occupation of the Danubian Principalities. At the end of July the Russian army began to retreat beyond the river Prut. By this in substance was ended the Danubian stage in the development of the Eastern War.

What was the participation by the volunteers in the Danubian campaign and more precisely in the brief period of time between March, when the corps as a whole was formed, and July, when the Russian troops finally withdrew. Information about the participation of the volunteers in the military operations is extremely scanty. There is nothing strange about that when one bears in mind the considerations of the Russian Command at the formation of the corps and the objectives and tasks entrusted to it.

In Kovalevskii there is a more detailed description of the battle at Sulina in June 1854, before the lifting of the siege of Silistra. According to his account British detachments periodically attacked Sulina, looting and harassing the population. A. Chrisovergis, captain of the Greek volunteers, was given permission to recruit a detachment from amongst the Greeks of Sulina and Tulcea. The party (about 25 men) took position in the quarantine house at Sulina. When the next day the British attempted a landing with a cutter and ten boats, in the ensuing engagement the British losses were put at 6 officers and 72 soldiers, whereas the Greeks withdrew without suffering casualties<sup>48</sup>. Chrisovergis also makes brief mention of this episode, but writes that the battle was fought with Don Cossacks, incorporated in the Turkish army<sup>49</sup>.

After the withdrawal of the Russian troops, only individual covering units were left against the forces of Omer Pasha. The 6,000 strong force of Gen. Soymonov had taken position at Giurgiu. On June 23-24/July 5-6, 1854 a strong Turkish corps (some 50,000 men) attacked Soymonov's force, compelling it to retreat in the direction of Bucharest. Papa Doukas, commanding a detachment of volunteers, took part in this engagement<sup>50</sup>.

48. E. Kovalevskii, *Voina s Turciei i razryv s zapadnymi derzavami v 1853 i 1854 godah* (The War with Turkey and the Rupture with the Western Countries in 1853 and 1854), *SPb*, 1868, pp. 231-232.

49. *Ἱστορία τῆς...*, σ. 18, 34.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 15. Chrisovergis, who is an enemy of papa Doukas and presents him in a most unflattering light, only mentions the fact of his participation in the battle at Giurgiu without any details.

The participation by the 3rd company of the Greek volunteers under the command of Sterios Harisis in the battle at the Bulgarian village of Cherna in October 1834, where about 100 volunteers were killed, is also mentioned<sup>51</sup>.

At the end of June 1854 Gorchakov sent a secret report to the War ministry in which among other things he dealt with the question of where and how the volunteers had been used. A unit of some 400 Bulgarian volunteers who in the period when part of the Russian troops were south of the Danube<sup>52</sup>, manned the outpost at Kuchuk Kainardji is mentioned; another unit, made up of Greeks, was used for reconnoitring across the Danube in the area of Giurgiu; the remaining volunteers were attached to Russian units. "Their usefulness", Gorchakov concludes, "was small, but they could have been useful only if we had consolidated on the right bank of the Danube"<sup>53</sup>.

In this rested the meaning of the formation of the volunteer corps. It would have justified its existence and would have been extremely useful precisely in the case of a shift of the military operations south of the Danube, in territories and a population familiar to the volunteers where their experience and skills would have been irreplaceable.

The turn in the course of the war and the withdrawal of the Russian troops beyond the river Prut, brought to the foreground the question of the fate of the volunteer corps. The expedience of keeping these volunteers was questioned, by the way, as early as when it became clear that the war would not expand over the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire. On June 23, 1854 the Emperor sent a letter to Gorchakov in which he ordered the temporary disbandment of the volunteer force, the disarmament of the Wallachian and Moldavian troops, while those who wished to stay could enter Russian service and be distributed to the different regiments.

From Gorchakov's reply of June 5, 1854 it is understood that part of the volunteers expressed the wish to return to their native places<sup>54</sup>. A register has been preserved of the number of volunteers in August 1854 which gives the complement of the corps prior and after the disbandment. Of the two Bulgarian-Serbian battalions which had 898 men, there remained 753; the two Moldavian-Wallachian battalions numbering 1,335 men were fully disbanded; the three Greek battalions remained practically in full strength

51. *Ἱστορία τῆς...*, σ. 23, 24.

52. Besides at the siege of Silistra, from the beginning of 1854 Russian units crossed the Danube and entered the Dobrudja.

53. *CGVIA*, F. 1, op. 1, d. 22013, p. 6/ob.-7.

54. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 30, d. 148, p. 1.

(1,045 of 1,079). In this way the total number of the volunteers of 3,512 was cut by half (1,798) at the expense chiefly of the Moldavians and Wallachians<sup>55</sup>.

Most of the volunteers, however, wanted to continue to serve. Gorchakov thought that they should not be disbanded for the time being, but he was aware that this could become necessary at Austria's insistence. Among other things, the Greeks expressed the wish to go to the Transylvanian frontier, and Gorchakov thought that they could be useful in a possible war against Austria<sup>56</sup>.

In a report of the commander of the Greek volunteers, Lt. Gen. Salas, of July 30, 1854 it is pointed out that the disbandment of the battalion would condemn the men to hunger or, on account of the bad attitude to them of the Wallachian population, they ran the risk to be handed over to the Turks. Besides those living in the Danubian Principalities, the return of the others was inconceivable as all the frontiers were closed<sup>57</sup>.

Actually the majority of the Bulgarians and Serbs had crossed the Danube and most of the Greeks had come by sea. Taking into account their difficult position and the impossibility to earn their living in the Principalities, Gorchakov decided to let them serve at reduced pay<sup>58</sup>.

The two Greek battalions were split into 6 companies and each was attached to some of the regiments of the 5th infantry division. Similar was the fate of the Bulgarian and Serbian volunteers<sup>59</sup>. It seems that quite a few volunteers had been additionally discharged because two lists, one of the middle of August and the second of the beginning of September, give the number of volunteers as 637 and 672<sup>60</sup>.

As has been mentioned, the six Greek companies were attached to different regiments of the 5th infantry division: the company of Stamatis Karamadis—to the Smolensk infantry regiment, that of Nikola Karaiskos—to the Mogilev infantry regiment, of Dimitris Tandalidis—to the Vitebsk chasseur regiment, of Sterios Harisis and of Aristidis Chrisovergis—to the Polotsk chasseur regiment (in 1854 the two companies were merged under the command of Chrisovergis)<sup>61</sup> and of papa Doukas—to the 5th rifle battalion<sup>62</sup>.

55. *Ibidem*, pp. 18-19.

56. *Ibidem*, p. 1/ob.

57. *Ibidem*, p. 14.

58. *Ibidem*, pp. 45-46. Gorchakov to the War Minister, August 11, 1854.

59. *Ibidem*, p. 105. Nepokoichitski to Kotsebu, September 1, 1854.

60. *Ibidem*, pp. 55, 113-128.

61. To be more precise, the remnants of the company beaten at the village of Cherna were added to the men of Chrisovergis (*Ιστορία τῆς...*, σ. 32).

62. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 33, d. 224.



The position of the volunteers proved a rather complicated problem because in the autumn the question of their fate was raised again. At the end of October 1854 Gen. Lieders<sup>63</sup> reported that with the passing of the last Russian troops from the right to the left bank of the Danube the units of the Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian volunteers were found to be unnecessary and their support a burden for the treasury. Unaccustomed to military discipline, they also diverted from the regular army to keep order among them. Lieders, therefore, insisted on the volunteers being discharged, finding some other way of looking after them, but outside the service<sup>64</sup>. His suggestion was not accepted by Gorchakov who again pointed out that by keeping them on service he was guided solely by the consideration to ensure them a livelihood. He advised that the volunteers should be used for standing guard and for reconnaissance in the mouths of the Danube<sup>65</sup>.

Everything indicates that this situation satisfied neither the volunteers nor the Russian Command because the most suitable form of their use continued to be sought. Thus, from a secret letter of Gen. Kotsebu at the beginning of September 1854 it is understood that the Emperor regarded it possible to attach the Greek volunteers who could not return to their native places to the Balaklava Greek Battalion<sup>66</sup>. In this connection Kotsebu addressed the acting governor-general of Novorossiisk and Bessarabia so as to ask for his assistance and counsel how to carry out this transfer, taking into consideration that the Balaklava Battalion was formed on a different principle<sup>67</sup>.

The Greeks themselves literally bombarded the Russian Command with pleas to be sent to the front in the Crimea where in the meantime the military operations had moved<sup>68</sup>. Lieders, on the day when he received the refusal of the commander-in-chief of the Danubian army to discharge the volunteers, sent a fresh report. In it he recounted the plea of the commander of the Greek companies to be sent to the Crimea. Lieders warmly approved of their wish and asked permission to send them towards Sebastopol at the disposal of Menshikov who at that time was commander-in-chief of the land and naval

63. Lieders, Gen. Adjutant, commander of the 5th infantry corps.

64. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 30, d. 143, p. 161. Lieders to Kotsebu, October 20, 1854.

65. *Ibidem*, p. 162. Kotsebu to Lieders, October 22, 1854.

66. Regrettably, we were unable to find more information about the Balaklava Greek Battalion, but everything shows that it was made up of Greeks who were Russian subjects.

67. *Ibidem*, pp. 49-50.

68. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 33, d. 219, pp. 1, 40-41; F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 30, d. 143, pp. 52-53, 158.

forces in the Crimea<sup>69</sup>. Moreover Lieders was of the opinion that at the end of the war it could be offered to the Greeks to settle in the Crimea<sup>70</sup>.

It seems that precisely the last argument played a definite role because as early as November 3, 1854 the War Minister, Prince Dolgorukov, notified Gorchakov that the Emperor approved of this measure, "the more so that the Greek immigrants could be settled in the lands left by the Tatars who had surrendered to the enemy"<sup>71</sup>.

Actually at the end of December 1854 the chief of staff of the 5th infantry corps Gen. Nepokoichitski reported to Kotsebu that the five companies of Greek volunteers (a total of 823) had been dispatched from Izmail to Odessa<sup>72</sup>. On December 24, 1854 (old style) the volunteers left Izmail and on January 5, 1855 reached Odessa. The Odessa Greek merchants, like the Greek merchants in Izmail, collected funds in aid of the volunteers<sup>73</sup>.

It was proceeded with a new recruitment of volunteers who wished to go to the Crimean theatre of war. These were chiefly the volunteers who had been disbanded earlier, but there were also people who for the first time succeeded in joining the volunteer units. For instance, an undated application was sent to the military governor of Izmail Gen. Lekhner by the Greeks (Greek and Turkish subjects) with temporary residence in Izmail. They wanted to be sent as volunteers to the Crimea so as to strengthen the Russian army "since this war broke out namely for the Orthodox creed, they cannot remain indifferent inhabitants". To this application was appended a list with the names of 105 people, expressing the hope that the number of the applicants would soon reach 500<sup>74</sup>.

In Izmail seamen landed straight from merchant ships and wanted to be enlisted in the volunteer corps. Such were Georgios Pourikas of Hios, Georgios Moukazis of Samos, Ioannis Petros and Anthonios Christos of Constantinople, Georgios Kalergis of Crete and many others. In connection with this a special permission was issued to admit also Turkish subjects in the number of the Greek volunteers<sup>75</sup>.

Captain Anthonios Gines, who had been commander of the 3rd company

69. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 33, d. 219, p. 1. Lieders to Gorchakov, October 22, 1854.

70. *Ibidem*, pp. 1/ob.-2.

71. *Ibidem*, p. 5.

72. *Ibidem*, pp. 32-37.

73. *Ἰστορία τῆς...*, σ. 42-46.

74. *CGVIA*, F. VUA, d. 5688, pp. 3, 17, 17/ob.

75. *Ibidem*, pp. 31, 43, 46, 94.

of the 1st Greek battalion and who after August 1854 had retired, was entrusted with the recruitment of the volunteers.

The opinion was taken in advance of Menshikov whether, besides the five Greek companies already dispatched, he was interested in a further 500-600 volunteers who would like to go to the Crimea<sup>76</sup>. Menshikov expressed his consent for admitting 600 men, asking that they should make up three companies so that when they were added to the five companies already there, two battalions could be formed<sup>77</sup>.

The method of recruiting the volunteers is described in a report of February 1855. Captain Gines was accommodated in Kishinev in a large house placed at his disposal by a local Greek. In this house, used as barracks, Gines was to make his choice from among the volunteers who had come and dispatch them to the Crimea in groups of 60 or so<sup>78</sup>. The order was that only those of the former volunteers who had discharge tickets with favourable testimonials should be accepted for service. They should, moreover, be told that after the end of the war they would be able to settle in the Crimea<sup>79</sup>.

Prince Mourouzi, a Greek living in Moldavia, was appointed commander of the Greek volunteers in February 1855<sup>80</sup>. At the end of 1854 he had been compelled to withdraw with the Russian troops to Bessarabia where he expressed the wish to take over the command of the volunteer corps<sup>81</sup>.

From the documents it is impossible to ascertain the exact number of the volunteers recruited in Izmail and Kishinev. There are only individual pieces of information and lists of volunteers sent in groups to the Crimea, for instance the data on 125 men sent from Izmail at the end of May and some others<sup>82</sup>. The recruitment of volunteers continued until September 1855 when Captain Gines was himself ordered to leave for Sebastopol<sup>83</sup>.

By the beginning of February 1855 the five companies of Greek volunteers (some 700 men) had already reached Eupatoria. On February 5/17, 1855 the Greek volunteers took part in the battle at Eupatoria. Against the 35,000 troops of Omer Pasha Menshikov sent the 19,000 strong force of Gen. Khrulev.

76. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 33, d. 219, p. 74/ob. 21.I.1855.

77. *Ibidem*, p. 78. Menshikov to Gorchakov, February 6, 1855.

78. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 30, d. 148, p. 244.

79. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 33, d. 219, pp. 42-45.

80. *Ibidem*, p. 180; F. 9196, op. 5/263, sv. 5, d. 24, p. 6.

81. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 5/263, sv. 5, d. 24, p. 1.

82. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/243, sv. 33, d. 219, pp. 84-84 ob. Gorchakov to Menshikov, February 19, 1854.

83. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 11/270, sv. 4, d. 4, pp. 3-27.

The attack of the Russian troops was beaten off, with the Russians suffering, according to Chrisovergis, some 1,500 killed and wounded. The number of the casualties among the volunteers was about 60, including two captains—company commanders and one senior-lieutenant—deputy company commander, who were wounded<sup>84</sup>.

After the battle at Eupatoria the volunteers were ordered to set out for Sebastopol to strengthen the garrison there<sup>85</sup>. At the end of February they reached Sebastopol. In the report of Prince Urusov, appointed provisional commander of the Greek legion, to Prince Vasilchikov<sup>86</sup> of February 27, 1855, it was reported that the Greek legion with a complement of 823 men had been received. Urusov complained that there were no accurate documents at all and that complete disorder reigned in the legion: "There exists neither discipline nor any organization. The volunteers absent themselves from distant hospitals and arrive here without any document whatever; the other ranks do not obey the officers; the company commanders, of whom no responsibility is sought, are only in formal command of the companies". Urusov suggested that regulations should be drawn up about the authority of the commander of the legion, the rights of the various ranks, duties, punishments, etc<sup>87</sup>.

It was also pointed out that the volunteers should be issued with suitable weapons, bearing in mind that they were designed for operations in line formation and should be good marksmen. At the moment half of their weapons consisted of flint locks and there were considerable difficulties in connection with the supply of cartridges<sup>88</sup>.

Mourouzis and Vasilchikov were instructed to draw up a report on the rights and duties of the volunteers. In his communication to Vasilchikov of March 19, 1855, Mourouzis suggests that for important crimes and offences involving criminal liability the volunteers should be tried by the Russian law. At the same time Mourouzis submits information about the strength of the Greek legion which at that time had 743 men, of whom only 585 were present. Nearly 200 were hospitalized<sup>89</sup>. This was due chiefly to the outbreak in February 1855 of an epidemic of typhus which seriously affected the volunteer corps and drew the attention of Pirogov who at that time was on the Crimean front<sup>90</sup>.

84. *Ἱστορία τῆς...*, σ. 17-23.

85. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 285, sv. 4, d. 16, p. 3.

86. Vasilchikov - chief of staff of the Sebastopol garrison, aide-de-camp to the Emperor.

87. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 285, sv. 4, d. 16, p. 26.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

89. *Ibidem*, pp. 48, 84.

90. *Ibidem*, pp. 8, 55. The list of those killed and wounded, drawn up by Chrisovergis

After the death of Emperor Nicholas I the Greek volunteer corps was renamed "Greek Legion of Nicholas I"<sup>91</sup>. The grave conditions, epidemics and above all the clear awareness that the war would not spread south of the Danube and that the cause of the liberation of the Balkans was again postponed until an unknown future naturally cooled the militant enthusiasm among a certain part of the volunteers. Moods of leaving the corps gained ground and resulted in some 100 men putting in their resignations<sup>92</sup>.

At the end of March 1855 the Greeks withdrew from the town proper to the surroundings of Sebastopol. The aim of the commander of the legion P. Mourouzis was to reorganize the corps, to introduce discipline, regular training, etc. The battalion was divided into two regiments the one of which was entrusted to Papa Doukas and the other to A. Chrisovergis<sup>93</sup>.

Describing the contradictions in the regiment most of which were based on personal intrigues and rivalries, Chrisovergis among other things speaks of a difference on principle. Mourouzis and many other officers insisted on the Greek volunteers wearing greatcoats and uniforms close in appearance to the Russian ones. Their argument was that the national costume of the Greeks was not suitable for military conditions. Chrisovergis strongly opposed this and refused to take off the fustanella<sup>94</sup>.

In May 1855 Mourouzis was ordered to detach 30 men from the legion who, under the command of Chrisovergis, were to be sent in aid of the Sebastopol garrison<sup>95</sup>. The Russian command intended to use the volunteers for services which had been formerly executed by the Plastuns<sup>96</sup>. Mourouzis was willing to detail a further 100 men, but his proposal was declined<sup>97</sup>.

in March 1855 on their arrival in Sebastopol includes 96 persons who died of typhus (*Ιστορία τῆς...*, σ. 71).

91. *Ιστορία τῆς...*, σ. 58-59.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

93. *Ιστορία τῆς...*, σ. 60.

94. *Ibid.*, pp. 51, 60.

95. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 285, sv. 4, d. 16, p. 91.

96. Plastuns - riflemen, recruited among the Black Sea Cossacks, used chiefly in ambushes and reconnaissance.

97. *Ibid.*, pp. 123-125. Chrisovergis relates this episode in a slightly different manner: the Russian command wanted a Greek company under Chrisovergis to form part of the garrison and be changed every month. Mourouzis objected, however, since he thought that detailing one company for the Sebastopol garrison would mean the disbandment of the corps and sent only 17 men. Chrisovergis tried to convince him that the dispatching of 100 men could save the honour of the legion, but Mourouzis interpreted this in the sense that Chrisovergis wanted to destroy his legion. Such an elucidation of the events by Chrisovergis is

At the beginning of July, leading the detachment entrusted to him, together with Cossacks and Russian volunteers, Chrisovergis attacked the French lines. Having distinguished himself in this operation, Chrisovergis was decorated and appointed commander of part of the defensive line of Malii Kurgan<sup>98</sup>. In August a shell killed his assistant, Andreas Koutoufas, and Chrisovergis himself suffered a contusion in the head and was carried to the hospital in Simferopol<sup>99</sup>.

Shortly afterwards the Russian troops withdrew from Sebastopol. By the end of 1855 the military operations had in fact been discontinued and the military negotiations in Vienna renewed. The congress of the belligerent states opened up in Paris and the Peace Treaty of Paris was signed on March 18/30, 1856.

With the termination of the defence of Sebastopol the Greek legion was practically disbanded. At the end of November, after an incident in the corps, Mourouzis was replaced by Grigorios Kantakouzin. The latter tried to cope with the dissatisfaction of the volunteers, urging them to sign the regulations and to introduce discipline in their ranks. Only 150 men, headed by Papa Athanasopoulos, signed though<sup>100</sup>. The others refused to obey and were disarmed and discharged<sup>101</sup>.

The majority of the Greek volunteers headed for Odessa; many settled in Bessarabia where they waited for the end of the war, helped chiefly by the local Greeks<sup>102</sup>. They were obviously compelled to live a wretched existence because the files of the Russian war ministry are full of pleas by Greeks and Bulgarians from the beginning of 1856 who, left penniless, begged for a job or assistance.

These applications among other things are valuable because they give an idea of the individual fates of the volunteers, something that is lost in the general documents. Among them is the petition of monk Kostandis Kladiano,

fully explicable when one bears in mind the disapproval with which he describes any measure taken by Mourouzis and the patently unfriendly relations between the two. (*Ιστορία τῆς...*, σ. 61-62).

98. *Ιστορία τῆς...*, σ. 62.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 63; *CGVIA*, F. 9196, sv. 4, d. 16, p. 142.

100. The name of Papa Athanasopoulos is not encountered in the Russian documents, but he occupies an important place in Chrisovergis' account of the history of the Greek legion. Chrisovergis proposed him as commander of the battalion prior to the departure of the volunteers for the Crimea. Later Papa Athanasopoulos got down to the reorganization of the battalion after its withdrawal from Sebastopol.

101. *Ιστορία τῆς...*, σ. 65-67.

102. *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

a Greek subject, who was abbot of the monastery of St. John the Baptist near Lepanto. When the war was declared he went to the Principalities where he helped in the recruitment of the volunteers and paid for the equipment of many of them. Later he travelled to the Crimea. Left without funds, Kladiano turned with the plea to be attached temporarily to some sacred monastery in Russia, for instance the Greek monastery of Saint Nicholas<sup>103</sup>.

The signing of the Peace Treaty of Paris once again raised the question of the volunteers' future. Their official discharge was ordered and the following measures were provided specially for the Greek volunteers of the Nicholas I Legion: those living in Bessarabia, some 500 people, were to assemble in Odessa, and those who had settled in the Crimea, to gather in Sebastopol and from there to be dispatched in small groups to Greece or Constantinople, according to their wish<sup>104</sup>. In connection with this a contract was concluded with the skippers of several Greek merchant ships to transport the volunteers<sup>105</sup>.

Over 300 men arrived, indeed, in Piraeus in June, but the authorities did not allow them to land. Persiyani, the chargé d'affaires of the Russian embassy in Athens made repeated but unsuccessful demarches before the Greek government. In a statement to Persiyani foreign minister Alexandros Rangavis explained why Greece could not accept the returning volunteers, but only those who had before been Greek subjects. The majority of these people, Rangavis explained, were without shelter, family, trade and means, they would feel as aliens and would constitute a threat to the peace at a time when on the part of the Greek government such efforts were made for preserving tranquillity. Rangavis was above all afraid that the volunteers would prove to be engaged in underground actions in the Ottoman areas bordering on Greece. In his comments on the stand of the Greek government Persiyani wrote that it would have been ready to receive the volunteers had there not been the Anglo-French occupation. In these circumstances Persiyani turned to Gen. Lieders who was dealing with the sending of the volunteers from Russia to take the necessary steps before the Russian government for admitting the volunteers back<sup>106</sup>.

In point of fact, already in August an imperial decision was obtained for the Greek volunteers to be able to settle in Russia<sup>107</sup>. It is believed, however,

103. *CGVIA*, F. 9196, op. 2/245, sv. 2, d. 9, p. 11 et seq.

104. *AVPR* (Archives for the Foreign Policy of Russia-Moscow). F. Glavnii Archiv, I-9, d. 11, pp. 296-300. The draft of the same order, dated June 4, 1856 is kept in *CGVIA*, F. 9198, op. 1/249, sv. 17, d. 160, pp. 19-20.

105. *CGVIA*, F. 9198, op. 1/249, sv. 17, d. 160, p. 44 (May 29, 1856).

106. *AVPR*, F. Glavnii archiv, V-A<sub>2</sub>, d. 67, pp. 2, 23a.

107. *AVPR*, F. Kancelariya, d. 7 b, p. 505.

that a small number of them would make use of that, with the majority choosing to return to their native areas in the Ottoman Empire. Earlier the volunteers had above all feared the persecutions by the Turkish authorities, but art. 5 of the Treaty of Paris granted them an amnesty. Russia believed, therefore, that the question would be settled only with the formal intervention of the Russian mission<sup>108</sup>.

Some of the volunteers who wanted to return to their mother country asked in advance for Russian citizenship so that they could enjoy the protection of the Russian consuls. It should be pointed out that although the Russian authorities in principle adopted the position to grant Russian citizenship to those wishing to obtain it, they did not particularly encourage such a tendency. As is noted in a confidential letter of the Russian war minister of May 1856, "though under the custom existing in Turkey the foreign consuls have so far placed even Turkish subjects under their protection, the application of this custom with respect to persons who are envisaged under art. 5 of the Treaty of March 18 of this year would have among other things the inconvenience that it would prompt other states towards such measures concerning our subjects who have fled to Turkey"<sup>109</sup>.

The list of Greek volunteers (271 men) who wished to return to their motherland via the Principalities has been preserved. Of them 171 left for Moldavia, 52 for Wallachia, 3 "for the Principalities" without further specification, 23 for Turkey, 21 for Serbia and one for Montenegro<sup>110</sup>.

Another list of 86 volunteers has also been preserved. Of them 39 expressed the wish to remain in Russia, settling in the Greek colonies near the town of Mariupol (the present Zhdanov). Five stayed with their relatives in the Crimea, seven settled in Kishinev and two in Odessa (the one of the last two was Captain Anthonios Gines). The remaining 33, headed by Leonidas Voulgaris, wanted to return to their motherland<sup>111</sup>.

The volunteers were issued with discharge tickets which, like the applications for granting assistance, are a valuable source of the personal biographies of the volunteers. Such a discharge ticket has been preserved of Captain Rigas Paleolog, born in Syra. He had recruited about 400 volunteers and at his own expense brought them to Galați and then to Bucharest where they enlisted as

108. *AVPR*, F. Glavnii arhiv, V-A<sub>2</sub>, d. 66, pp. 8-9. Unfortunately there is no information about the later fate of this group of Greek volunteers, and we do not know what part of them settled in Russia and what returned to their homes.

109. *CGVIA*, F. 9198, op. 1/249, sv. 17, d. 160, pp. 186-191.

110. *Ibid.*, pp. 267-272.

111. *Ibid.*, pp. 181-183.



volunteers under the orders of Gen. Salas. From the beginning of 1854 he took part in the marches against the enemy; in May 1854 in forcing the crossing of the Danube at Braila; in May 1854—in Lt. Gen. Soymonov's force in repulsing the Turks from Radoman island, and in September and October of the same year in the outposts in the Babadağ area. After the withdrawal of the Russian troops he stayed on in Odessa and did not participate in the operations of the Greek legion in the Crimea<sup>112</sup>.

A late application of 1865 brings us back to one of the principal figures of the volunteer corps: Aristidis Chrisovergis. It becomes clear from it that Chrisovergis lived in Kiev and was obviously in reduced circumstances. The major of the former Greek legion of Nicholas I, discharged as Lt. Colonel of the Azov Cossack Regiment for wounds received at Sebastopol, now turned to the government with the plea for financial assistance needed for medical care<sup>113</sup>.

Thus was concluded an episode as heroic as it was tragic in the efforts of the Balkan peoples to attain their national independence.

112. *Ibid.*, pp. 247-250.

113. *CGAOR* (Central State Archives of the October Revolution - Moscow), F. III otd., 1 exp., d. 21, pt. 1, p. 98.