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**The Migration of Pontic Greeks
from the Russian Caucasus to Macedonia (1912-1914)¹**

In the early 1870s, the members of *Xenophon*, a Greek association in Trebizond founded in 1872, were profoundly alarmed by the continuing departure of the Greeks from the area of Pontus for Russia. Although the migration fever was showing signs of abating, having increased dramatically since the end of the Crimean War, there was good reason to fear a resurgence now. The leaders of the Greek community (higher clergy, scholars, and merchants) perceived in the mass migration the very real danger that the Greek element in north-east Asia Minor would enter a severe demographic and economic decline. Their concern should also be considered in relation to the widespread anti-Slav feeling that had developed both in Greece as well as among the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire as a whole, following the clear evidence of Russia's partiality towards Bulgaria. Little wonder then that the members of *Xenophon* were now in a quandary as to whether it would be better for the local Greeks' to migrate to Greece or to stay in their ancestral homes, or, if they were obliged to migrate, whether it would be better to go to Greece² or to Russia. The outcome of the debate was: it was "more

1. This text which consists a part of an extensive research of mine in the subject is a revised version of a paper delivered at the international conference on *The Diaspora of the Greeks of the Pontus*, which was collectively organised by the French School in Athens, the Centre for Pontic Studies, and the *Centre national de la recherche scientifique* (France), and took place in Athens on 29-31 March 1995. The aim of the study is: i) to determine the circumstances in which the idea came to fruition that Pontic Greeks who had emigrated to the Russian Caucasus (chiefly the Kars area) in the 19th century should re-emigrate to Greece (1913-14); ii) to follow the process and the pace of their migration to Macedonia; and iii) to record where they eventually settled. Apostolos Vacalopoulos' brief paper, "L'émigration des Grecs du Caucase en Macédoine", in *Les Relations entre les peuples de l'URSS et les Grecs, fin du XVIIIème - début du XXème s.*, Thessaloniki 1992, pp. 210-17, is based on known published sources and does not exhaust the subject.

2. It was the first time that this possibility had been mooted.

advantageous" for the Greeks to stay in the areas they had preoccupied for centuries; but if they were forced to go, anywhere would be preferable to Russia³.

All the same, before the end of the decade the pace of the Greeks' flight from the Russo-Turkish marches had quickened. The annexation of the former Ottoman areas of Batum, Kars, and Ardahan after the Russian victory in the war of 1877-8 led to the departure of the Moslem populations (particularly those who had been involved in the anti-Russian risings) and prompted Christian populations (Armenians in particular) once again to move *en masse* eastwards. These exchanges of populations were assisted by the special Russo-Turkish accords (included in the Constantinople Protocol of 8 February 1879) that provided for the emigration of the inhabitants of the transferred territories in the two adjacent states. Indeed, in the spring of 1880 the whole of the Pontus was agog with rumours of an almost universal determination on the part of the Greeks and the Armenians in the areas between Samsun and Kerasun to migrate to the now Russian Caucasus. According to the British consul in Trebizond, Alfred Biliotti, this general agitation was due as much to the Moslems' and Christians' discontent with the region's long-standing, chiefly economic problems, which the government did not seem disposed to resolve, as to the general perception, verging on belief, that the Russians would soon be occupying the whole of the Black Sea coast. The Christians also believed that migration would bring them relief from the Porte's financial demands, from the exploitation inflicted on them by the powerful local Moslem (and some Christian) elements, and finally from the insecurity aroused by the increased banditry and violence that had followed the arrival of thousands of Circassian and Laz refugees in the region⁴.

This general climate of excitement further fuelled the notion that Greek émigrés from the Pontus should settle in Greece. It seemed a promising move, especially in view of the prospects offered by the annexa-

3. The risk that Greeks who migrated to Russia would be russianised was outlined in an interesting memorandum submitted by Greek citizens who were permanent residents of Trebizond to the Greek Foreign Ministry in May 1872: Artemi Xanthopoulou-Kyriakou, "Μεταναστεύσεις Ελλήνων στον Καύκασο κατά τον 19ο αιώνα" (Greek migration in Caucasus during the 19th century), *ΔΚΜΣ*, 10 (1993-4), 118-19, incl. relevant literature.

4. Xanthopoulou-Kyriakou, *op.cit.*, 122-24.

tion of Thessaly to the Greek state (1881-2). Indeed, Aristidis Papadopoulos, the Greek consul in Trebizond (1881), in complete accord with his British counterpart Biliotti⁵, made specific proposals to the Greek government, though they met with little response. All the same, it is interesting to note that, despite the unfavourable conditions, two Greek clergymen, from Karahissar and Ordu, visited Greece as the representatives of 300 families to investigate the possibility of their settling there permanently.

In contrast to the, up to a point understandable, obtuseness of the Greek authorities, the Russians introduced a number of incentives that drew the great majority of the Greek émigrés to the new Russian acquisitions in the Caucasus, particularly in the Kars area. A further incentive for these populations was the fact that the areas in which they settled were familiar and closer to their old homes and that they were moving to a country with the same religious faith. Characteristically, their response to their clergy's desperate efforts to dissuade them was: "We shall go where our faith is"⁶.

Between 1890 and 1900, very few families took their chances with the much-touted migration to Greece. For most of them, the venture, which was essentially unsupported by any kind of government planning⁷, ended either in an inglorious return to their adopted homeland or in death⁸.

5. For a brief account of his activities during his term of office in Trebizond (1873-85), see Xanthopoulou-Kyriakou, *op.cit.*, 122f.

6. The same consideration seems still to have taken priority early in the 20th century. A contemporary scholar from Kromne noted in frustration: "In vain would one strive to prove to them that Russia is the enemy of Hellenism in that it persecutes the Greek tongue and Greek letters. One would receive the reply that it is of no import, for Russia has the same religious faith as our own": Kromnaios, "Η Κρώμνα γεωγραφικώς, εθνολογικώς, εκπαιδευτικώς, θρησκευτικώς και ηθικώς εξεταζομένη" (Kromne from a geographic, ethnological, educational, religious and moral perspective), *Ξενοφάνης*, vol. 5 (1907-8), p. 346.

7. Dionysios Metaxas-Laskaratos, *Ελληνικά παροικία Ρωσσίας και Ρωμανίας* (The Greek communities of Russia and Romania), Braila 1900, pp. 71, 84-5.

8. The very interesting data (particularly the proceedings of the relevant parliamentary discussions) assembled by Isaak Lavrentidis in his study "Η κατά το 1895-1907 μετοικεσία Ελλήνων Ποντίων του Καυκάσου εις Ελλάδα" (The settlement of Greek Pontians from Caucasus in Greece during the 1895-1907 period), *Αρχαίον Πόντου*, 31 (1971-2), 450-514, are highly indicative of how Greece regarded the prospect of the immigration of Pontic Greeks.

When the demographic map of the Tsar's empire took final shape in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the basic framework of Tsarist policy towards the numerous (approximately 100) ethnic groups within it also crystallised. Specifically, the policy prescribed considerable state intervention in the economic, social, and cultural life of the various ethnic minorities in order to strengthen the Empire's political and cultural homogeneity. The first aim was achieved by applying the principle of intermixing the ethnic groups, imposing unified legislation, and centralising administration as much as possible. The second aim was achieved by making the Russian language compulsory and supporting the russifying role of the Church. The chief exponent of this policy was Tsar Alexander III (1881-94). After the revolution of 1905, his successor, Nicholas II (1894-1917), who adopted the same strategy, was forced to accept a more democratic implementation of some aspects of the system⁹.

However, the efforts of the Tsarist régime to achieve unity in fact had quite the opposite effect, for they accelerated the "national" awakening of the alien, heterodox ethnic groups from the East. They proved equally ineffective in the case of the Christian peoples, who refused to accept the alienation of their national characteristics, which had been formed before they settled in the Empire. In particular the small compact Greek settlements in the Caucasus (most of which had been formed in the second half of the nineteenth century), whose members had brought to their new homeland their own ideas about their communal independence (a relic of the *millet* system), vigorously resisted the imposition of the Russian language in their education and the intervention of the Russian Orthodox clergy in their religious life. They obstinately continued to invite priests from the metropolises of the Pontus and teachers from the large urban centres of Asia Minor, particularly alumni of the Greek School of Trebizond. Furthermore, their life in a foreign, albeit Orthodox Christian, environment also helped them to define their own distinctive ethnic persona. Despite the restrictions imposed upon it, the Greek-language press in Russia (from 1906 onwards) also undoubtedly played a decisive part in their national coming of age: the newspaper

9. See I. K. Hassiotis - A. Xanthopoulou-Kyriakou, "Η τσαρική πολιτική έναντι των εθνοτήτων και η οργάνωση των Ελλήνων" (Tsarist policies towards ethnic minorities and the organisational structure of the Greeks), *Οι Έλληνες της Ρωσίας και της Σοβιετικής Ένωσης: Μετοικεσίες και εκποτισμοί, οργάνωση και ιδεολογία* (in the press).

Phos, for instance (Odessa, 1909-11), started a campaign for a Panhellenic conference, the union of all the communities in Russia, and communication among them in their mother tongue, Greek¹⁰. Mention should be made, finally, of the national fervour that possessed the Greek metics in Russia during the hostilities between Greece and Turkey. The communities did not confine themselves to emotional or financial participation: Greek volunteers from the Caucasus fought in the war of 1897¹¹, which turned out so badly for Greece, and in the Balkan Wars¹², and savoured the joy of Macedonian liberation.

These developments, which conclusively gave the lie to the gloomy forecasts of the leaders of the Greek communities in the Pontus (that the Greeks of the Caucasus would rapidly and certainly be russianised), gave grounds for hope that some of the chiefly rural Greek population of the Caucasus might now easily be attracted to the new Greek provinces. After its liberation, Macedonia, one of the most fertile regions of the Greek peninsula, comprised five prefectures, the largest of which was Thessaloniki (including the provinces of Kilkis, Halkidiki, Imathia, Pieria, and Pella). The other four were Kozani, Florina, Serres, and Drama. The whole region was in dire need of demographic invigoration and economic reconstruction, two problems which were to a great extent interrelated and whose origins lay in the long-standing political instability in the region, as also in the mass migration of part of its productive population to the New World (50,000 to 75,000 people between 1900 and 1912). Several years after its liberation the region still had negative population growth, despite having absorbed most of the

10. A. A. Ulunyan, "Greek National Press in Russia and the URSS (1906-1939)", *Les Relations entre les peuples de l'URSS et les Grecs*, 197.

11. According to figures published in the contemporary Athenian press, 697 volunteers from the Caucasus fought in the war of 1897 (E. I. Anagnostou, "Ο ελληνoturκικός πόλεμος του 1897 και ο αντίκτυπός του στη Λέσβο" (The Greco-Turkish War of 1897 and its consequences in Lesbos), (unpublished postgraduate dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 1995), p. 58). Cf. also what Metaxas-Laskaratos has to say (*op.cit.*, 84) about the Caucasians' patriotism.

12. Konstantinos Kynigopoulos, *Ιστορία της Ελληνικής Κοινότητας Μπεζικιάν-Κετζίτ του Καρς, ως και η αιτία της εκριζώσεως των 31 Ελληνικών Κοινοτήτων του νομού Καρς και εγκαταστάσεώς των εις την Ελλάδα. Αναμνήσεις* (The History of the Greek Communities of Bezirkian-Ketzit of Kars and the reason of the uprooting of 31 Greek Communities of the Kars prefecture and their settlement in Greece. Memories), Centre for Asia Minor Studies/manuscripts/Caucasus No. 16, p. 35.

Greek refugees from the neighbouring Balkan countries and Asia Minor (1913-14): between 1913 and 1920, the population of Macedonia fell from 1,176,617 to 1,085,531¹³.

The first Greeks from the Caucasus were encouraged to settle in Macedonia by "unofficial agents", who promised them land on the region's fertile plains¹⁴. However, the resettlement of ethnic Greeks from Russia played no part in the official state planning, particularly at a time when the Greek refugees from Bulgaria and Turkey were in urgent need of relief and rehabilitation¹⁵. Nonetheless, by 1913¹⁶ representatives of

13. See the very enlightening studies by Basil K. Gounaris, "Η οικονομική ζωή στη Μακεδονία πριν από την υπογραφή της συνθήκης του Βουκουρεστίου" (The economic life in Macedonia before the agreement of the Bucharest convention), *Η Συνθήκη του Βουκουρεστίου και η Ελλάδα*, Thessaloniki 1990, pp. 127-41; "Δημογραφικές εξελίξεις στην τουρκοκρατούμενη Μακεδονία" (Demographic developments in the Turkish-occupied Macedonia), *Η Νέοτερη και Σύγχρονη Μακεδονία*, Papazissi-Paratiritis Publications, vol. 1, Thessaloniki 1992, pp. 44-57; "Οικονομικές εξελίξεις στη Μακεδονία, 1430-1912" (Economic developments in Macedonia, 1430-1912), *op.cit.*, pp. 58-83.

14. Consult A. P. Pallis, *Περί ανταλλαγής πληθυσμών και εποικισμού εν τη Βαλκανική κατά τα έτη 1912-1920* (About the exchange of populations and the settlement in the Balkans during the years 1912-1920), Constantinople 1920, p. 12 (παρ.α. Spyros Lazariadis, *Από το Βαρδάρι ως το Δεσβένι. Ιστορική καταγραφή μέχρι το 1920* (From Vardari to Dervenii: Historical account until 1920), Thessaloniki 1997, p. 82).

15. For the various aspects of the problem, see P., "Το Προσφυγικόν Ζήτημα εν Μακεδονία" (The refugee problem in Macedonia), *Πολιτική Επιθεώρησις*, 1 (1916), 838-43; A. Pallis, "Φυλετικές μεταναστεύσεις στα Βαλκάνια και διωγμοί του Ελληνισμού (1912-1914)" (Tribal migrations in the Balkans and the persecution of Greeks (1912-1914)), *ΔΚΜΣ*, 1 (1977), 75-87; Spyros Loukatos, "Πολιτειογραφικά Θεσσαλονίκης, νομού και πόλης, στα μέσα της δεκαετίας του 1910" (Administrative issues of Thessaloniki, prefecture and the city, during the decade of 1910) *Η Θεσσαλονίκη μετά το 1912*, Thessaloniki 1986, pp. 101-28; Yannis G. Mourellos, "The 1914 Persecutions and the First Attempt at an Exchange of Minorities between Greece and Turkey", *Balkan Studies*, 26 (1985), 389-413; *idem*, "Πληθυσμιακές ανακατατάξεις την επομένη των Βαλκανικών Πολέμων: η πρώτη απόπειρα ανταλλαγής των πληθυσμών ανάμεσα στην Ελλάδα και την Τουρκία" (Demographic and ethnological rearrangements following the Balkan Wars: the first attempt of exchange of population involving Greece and Turkey), *Η Συνθήκη του Βουκουρεστίου και η Ελλάδα*, pp. 175-90; Elissavet Kontogiorgi, "Πληθυσμιακές μεταβολές στην Ανατολική Θράκη (1911-1923). Ελληνικές κοινότητες των εκκλησιαστικών επαρχιών Γάνου-Χώρας και Μυριοφύτου-Περιστάσεως" (Demographic changes in Eastern Thrace (1911-1923). Greek communities of the ecclesiastic Provinces Ganou-Horas and Myriophytou-Peristaseos), *Οφεις του Μικρασιατικού Ζητήματος*, Thessaloniki 1994, pp. 57-85.

16. The statement by Panagiotis Tanimanidis (*Ποντιακοί Οικισμοί στην Ελλάδα* (Pontic Settlements in Greece), vol. 2, Thessaloniki 1992, p. 137) that people from Kars

the Caucasians were already visiting Macedonia to investigate the conditions of their settling there and to capture the attention of the relevant Greek authorities.

It was in this context that Diomidis Vassiliadis, a Caucasian (?), wrote his memorandum of 25 September 1913 outlining the reasons why the Greek government ought to take a positive view of and provide moral support for the planned “mass migrations” of Caucasians to Macedonia¹⁷. The content of his proposal indicates that he was well versed in the history of the Caucasian Greeks, and he began by underlining the imminent danger of assimilation —“since the religion is the same and since primary-level education is by law conducted in the Russian language”. He then pointed out the benefits that would accrue to the Greek state if it opened its doors to a “flourishing, intelligent ethnic Greek element”, whose numbers included “first-rate merchants, craftsmen, manufacturers, and farmers” with the financial resources to cover the initial expense of resettlement¹⁸. The contribution of the Greek state could thus, Vassiliadis thought, be confined to the recognition of an official delegation from the Caucasus, which could work in close association with the Labour Bureau¹⁹ to regulate the flow of émigrés into Greece²⁰.

This seems to have been the climate in which the ground was prepared for the arrival in Thessaloniki of 1,000 Greeks from the Caucasus²¹. A leading part in bringing them to Greece was played by one of

were already living in Olymbiada, Elassona prefecture, in 1912 requires further investigation.

17. See Appendix, doc. No. 1.

18. This is confirmed by what Dr Koutsodimitris reported (May-June 1914) in his memorandum to Venizelos: C. Papoulidis, “Ο Ελευθ. Βενιζέλος και ο Ελληνισμός του Καυκάσου το 1914” (Eleftherios Venizelos and the Hellenism of Caucasus in 1914), *Βαλκανικά Σύμμεικτα*, 3 (1989), 146, 155.

19. The task of welcoming and installing the refugees was originally undertaken by the Labour Bureau and the Governorate General of Macedonia. The responsibility was later passed on to the Central Commission for the Relief and Settlement of the Ethnic Greek Settlers in Macedonia, which was set up in June 1914: P., “Το Προσφυγικόν Ζήτημα” (The Refugee Question), *Πολιτική Επιθεώρησις*, 1 (1916), σ. 840.

20. See Appendix, doc. No. 1.

21. See Appendix, doc. No. 2, Report by the British Consul-General James Morgan, 1 May 1914. Although some of the information given is rather vague, he clearly records the process by which the Caucasian émigrés were persuaded to come to Greece. I am grateful to the historian Basil Gounaris for making this interesting document available to me.

their own priests²², who managed to persuade the clergy of the Church of St Demetrius and the local authorities of the justice of their cause. The new arrivals, who had high hopes of settling permanently in Macedonia and making their fortunes easily and quickly, were lodged, as refugees, in the city's mosques. They rapidly became disillusioned when their expectations failed to materialise, and asked the Russian Consul in Thessaloniki to intervene so that they could return "to their old homes in the Caucasus"²³.

Also in 1913, when rumours were rife that much of the Greek population of the Caucasus (estimated at some 150,000²⁴) had been seized by migration fever, twelve families from the villages of Peperek (or Beberék) and Toroskhov (or Toreskhov) arrived by boat at Kavala, whence they were sent on to Kilis (Old Gynaikokastro)²⁵.

In 1914 another forty families from Peperek settled in the villages of Ráhova (Mesorahi) and Ziliáhova (Zihni)²⁶. Most of them decided to return to the Caucasus just before the outbreak of the First World War. The return journey was a veritable Odyssey: via Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania, they eventually reached Odessa, where they embarked for Ba-

22. This, at least, is the implication drawn from Morgan's words: "A priest, himself half Russian, aware of the existence of the colony..." (Appendix, doc. No. 2).

23. Appendix, doc. No. 2.

24. Regarding the problematic calculation of the Greek settlements in the Caucasus in early twentieth century, cf. I. K. Hassiotis - Artemi Xanthopoulou-Kyriakou, "Δημογραφικές εξελίξεις στο ελληνικό στοιχείο των ρωσικών χωρών από τα τέλη του 19ου αιώνα ως τον Α΄ Παγκόσμιο Πόλεμο" (Demographic developments in the Greek element of the Russian countries from the end of the 19th century to War World I), *Οι Έλληνες της Ρωσίας*, *op.cit.* Cf. *ibidem*, Tables 17-19.

25. Tanimanidis, *op.cit.*, 249. Evidently owing to a printing error, the village of Toroskhov is referred to as "Το Ροσκόφ" (The Roscoff).

26. The tables produced by the Governorate General of Macedonia (hereafter GGM), which are now in the Historical Archive of Macedonia (GGM, f. 64, Ziliáhova district), give no figure for Caucasians in Ráhova. However, in the last column, where the provenance of the refugees settling in each area is usually stated more clearly, the table gives for Ráhova "Raidestos Vyzii Ardalan" (Ardahan?) and for Ziliáhova "Vyzii Trapezous Dardanel. Astrakhan" (Ardahan?). Twelve families (43 persons) from the Caucasus are recorded as having settled in Ziliáhova (Zihni) (see Appendix, Table II). Artahan (or Ardahan or Ardagan) was a separate administrative area of the district of Kars: see Stylianos Mavrogenis, *Το Κυβερνείο του Αντικαυκάσου (Κάρσκαγια Όμπλαστ) και το εν αυτώ ελληνικόν στοιχείον κατά την περίοδον 1878-1920* (The Governorate of Kars of the Anticaucasus (Karskaia Oblast) and its Greek element during the period 1878-1920), Thessaloniki 1963.

tumi; but two Turkish warships attacked them and they were forced to disembark at Tuapse. They continued by train to Kars, and from there travelled by bullock-cart via Ardahan to Peperek; but were forced to leave again immediately, because it was about to be seized by the Turks (at the end of 1914). Together with people from other villages in the Kars area, they sought refuge in Alexandropol (formerly Leninakan, now Gumri in Armenia). They returned to Peperek when the Russians re-occupied the area (after Easter 1915)²⁷.

Evidently to avoid being caught unawares by an unorganised, and perhaps undesirable, influx of immigrants, though also to acquire direct, reliable information, the Venizelos administration sent Dr I. E. Koutsodimitris to Russia (May-July 1914)²⁸. His specific purpose was i) to form a clear idea of the numerical potential and the professional occupations of the Greek settlers in southern Russia, particularly the Caucasus; ii) to sound out their feelings about possibly resettling in Macedonia; and iii) to draw up lists of the families who would be prepared to migrate. He was also to persuade the prospective émigrés to wait awhile, on the ground (which was not entirely divorced from the truth) that the fields they were to be given were not yet ready for them. This advice saddened them profoundly ("they were sincerely grieved by the temporary postponement of their migration"); though those who were already set to leave via Batumi refused to comply²⁹. These may have included two groups of people from the villages of Tsiplahli (Sarikamis district) and Külebert (Ardahan district), who settled in Filiro (Thessaloniki district) in late spring 1914, after an eventful voyage that took them from Batumi to Constantinople, Piraeus, and Thessaloniki³⁰. At about the same time, ten families from the village of Miatsitli or Metsitli (Sarika-

27. Tanimanidis, *op.cit.*, 249-50. For the tragic fate of the Greek settlements in the Russo-Turkish marches, see A. Xanthopoulou-Kyriakou, "Μεταναστεύσεις", 170-2.

28. Kynigopoulos (*op.cit.*, 37) is obviously referring to the same mission, though he erroneously dates it to the end of May 1913 and believes its purpose was to draw up an inventory of the property owned by the Greeks of Kars. In the same manuscript, Venizelos's representative is referred to as "Koutsodimitrakopoulos, Undersecretary for Welfare", an appointment he probably received after his mission was over.

29. Papoulidis, *op.cit.*, 136-71, incl. the full text of Koutsodimitris's memorandum.

30. M. Maravelakis and A. Vacalopoulos, *Αι προσφυγικά εγκαταστάσεις εν τη περιοχή Θεσσαλονίκης* (The refugee settlements in the region of Thessaloniki), Thessaloniki 1955, p. 38.

mis province) settled in the Promitheas quarter of Veria³¹.

A more organised effort was made by the 150-plus Greek families (the figure quoted in their appeal to the King on 13 May 1914) of the village of Handere (or “Handéres”, as they call it in the memorandum)³². Their representatives³³ located the formerly Moslem village of Pazarlades (which was renamed “Kato Filipéi” later that year) in the Elasona district, and sought permission to settle there³⁴. It is unknown whether the Handere villagers managed to migrate to Greece; the fate of their village is known, however, for it was sacked in 1914 along with fifty other villages in the Kars district that were seized by the Turks. The remaining inhabitants ended up as refugees in Alexandropol³⁵.

Prior to Koutsodimitris’s mission, some families from the poor mixed villages of Tsalka (Tbilisi district), Hando and Meglissi had already tasted the experience of resettling in Macedonia. Some of the émigré families from Meglissi in fact had been driven back to Georgia by the conditions they found in Macedonia³⁶.

Be that as it may, 3,757 émigrés from the Caucasus³⁷ had settled in Macedonia by the summer of 1914, most of them farmers. This figure seems to have remained stable throughout the period of intense demo-

31. Lavrentidis, *op.cit.*, 431-2. By December 1914, some 800 Caucasians had settled in the Veria area, half of them in the town itself. They were highly motivated, earnestly seeking work and land to cultivate (Historical Archive of Macedonia / GGM, f. 11, Province of Veria, 1 Dec. 1914).

32. See Appendix, doc. No. 3.

33. Eighty inhabitants of Handere, all heads of households, signed the “delegates” (undated) warrant of attorney, authorising their compatriots Pavlos Apostolidis, Theodoros Savvidis, and Polyhronis and Haralambos Andreadis to travel to Greece, find land on which the villagers could settle, and make the necessary preparations for their fellow villagers to join them. Their signatures were witnessed by the village priest Haralambos Triandafyllidis and the “mayor” Ioannis Lavren[tidis] (Historical Archive of Macedonia / GGM, f. 117).

34. Appendix, doc. No. 3. The document bears the signatures of only three of the four delegates.

35. Xanthopoulou-Kyriakou, “Μεταναστεύσεις”, 171. For the operations in the area, see Mavrogenis, *op.cit.*, 201-4, and Agtzidis et al., *op.cit.*

36. Koutsodimitris’s memorandum, from which this information is taken, reports that only ten Greek families were left in Hando and that Meglissi had thirty to forty Greek families, together with Armenian, Russian, and Georgian families (Papoulidis, *op.cit.*, 147). According to Tables compiled by the Greek Foreign Office (1914-15) seventy people lived in Hando and only five in Meglissi. (Xanthopoulou-Kyriakou, *op.cit.*, 163, 164).

37. See Appendix, Table II, for details of where the refugees settled.

graphic upheaval in the region, which received (in round figures) 130,000 (36,000 from Bulgaria, 70,000 from Eastern Thrace, 20,000 from Asia Minor, and 4,000 from the Caucasus) of the 230,000 refugees who arrived in Greece in 1913 and 1914³⁸. So Dr Koutsodimitris was successful in his mission: the flow of Greek émigrés from the Caucasus was checked. The outbreak of the First World War played a considerable part in this. It is true that the Greeks living in the administrative district of Kars in the Caucasus ended up in Greece five years later. But they did not depart in an organised fashion, as the Greek government would have wished, nor as émigrés, as they themselves would have wished: some 20,000 Greek inhabitants of the frontier area of Kars and Ardahan, after the outbreak of the October Revolution and the restoration of these two areas to the Turks (under the terms of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty in 1918), were forced to leave their homes, to travel to the Georgian port of Batumi, and from there to board ships sent by the Greek government, which carried them as refugees to Greece. The rescue operation lasted some three years (1919-21)³⁹.

It may not be entirely irrelevant to mention the fate of the inhabitants of Peperek and Toroskhov. Unconvinced of the necessity of leaving for Greece, they stayed in their villages, which, after the departure in February 1921 of the Georgian troops who had been protecting them, experienced the violent onslaught of the Turkish irregulars. The houses were plundered, the men massacred, and the women taken prisoner. Those who managed to escape reached the port of Batumi on foot, where, in March 1921, they embarked for their final destination, Greece⁴⁰.

38. Historical Archive of Macedonia / GGM, f. 65 / Memorandum from A. A. Pallis, 29 April 1919. By the summer of 1914, 56,716 refugees had settled in Macedonia, the vast majority of them from Thrace (36,422) and Bulgaria (13,634) (see Appendix, Table I). The immigration numbers started to fall in September 1914 (P., *op.cit.*, 840).

39. I. F. Kaztaridis, *Η "Εξοδος" των Ελλήνων του Καρς της Αρμενίας (1919-1921)* (The "Exodus" of the Greeks of Kars in Armenia (1919-1921), Thessaloniki 1996, pp. 47-83. Cf. also Xanthopoulou-Kyriakou, "Μετοικεσίες των Ελλήνων του Πόντου προς τις χώρες του Καυκάσου (1829 - αρχές 20ού αι.)" (Migrations of the Pontic Greeks to the Caucasian countries (1829 - beginning 20th century), *Οι Έλληνες της Ρωσίας*, *op.cit.* According to the 1928 census, 47,091 Greeks from the Caucasus and a further 11,435 from the rest of Russia had fled to Greece: Pallis, "Φυλετικές μεταναστεύσεις", 78.

40. Mavrogenis, *op.cit.*, 239.

APPENDIX

DOCUMENTS

1

DIOMIDIS VASSILIADIS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL
ADMINISTRATION IN THESSALONIKI

(Source: Historical Archives of Macedonia / Governorate General of Macedonia, f. 70)

Thessaloniki, 25 September 1913

Λαμβάνων αφορμήν εκ των διαστάσεων ας τείνει να λάβη το ρεύμα της μεταναστεύσεως των Καυκασίων Ελλήνων, έρχομαι να εκθέσω υμίν σχετικά τινα περί του ζητήματος τούτου.

Κατά το έτος 1828 ότε ο Ρώσος στρατηγός Πάσκεβιτζ επέστρεφεν εις Ρωσσίαν διά της Μ. Ασίας, πολλάι των εν τω Πόντω Ελληνικών οικογενειών φεύγουσαι τας θηριωδίας των Τούρκων, ηκολούθησαν τον Ρωσικόν στρατόν εις Ρωσσίαν εγκατασταθείσαι εκεί εις τας περιφερείας Καρς και Τσάλκας. Το ρεύμα της μεταναστεύσεως έκτοτε έλαβε διαστάσεις σοβαράς, διότι ολόκληρα χωρία και πόλεις ηρημώθησαν· εις τους μετανάστας τούτους βραδύτερον προσετέθησαν και οι λεγόμενοι Σταυριώται (ήτοι οι κρυφοί χριστιανοί), επ' εσχάτων δε και οι την στρατιωτικήν θητείαν εν Τουρκία αποφεύγοντες ομογενείς. Ούτως εν Καυκάσω ευρίσκονται σήμερον συμπαγείς Ελληνικοί πληθυσμοί υπερβαίνοντες τας 150.000. Δυστυχώς όμως ολόκληρος ούτος ο πληθυσμός ο εργατικός και ακμαίος, κινδυνεύει χάρις εις τα εφαρμοζόμενα κατ' αυτού συστηματικά μέτρα της Ρωσικής Κυβερνήσεως διά του Σχολείου και της Εκκλησίας, να αφομοιωθή. Εφ' όσον η θρησκεία είναι η αυτή και εφ' όσον η πρώτη εκπαίδευσις υποχρεωτικώς γίνεται εις την Ρωσσικήν γλώσσαν, τ' αποτελέσματα είναι προφανή.

Ολίγοι δυστυχώς εκ των ημετέρων ησχολήθησαν επί του ζητήματος τούτου. Βεβαίως η Ελληνική Κυβέρνησις μέχρι των τελευταίων αγώνων της δεν ηδύνατο ν' ασχοληθή εις ζητήματα εξωτερικής φύσεως. Σήμερον όμως όποτε το ρεύμα της μεταναστεύσεως τείνει να λάβει διεύθυνσιν προς τας νεωστί ανακτηθείσας Ελληνικάς χώρας και εν Καυκάσω παρατηρείται κινήσις ζωηρά μεταξύ του εκεί Ελληνικού πληθυσμού και σχεδιάζονται σύσσωμοι μεταναστεύσεις, φρονούμεν ότι εκτελούμεν εν ελάχιστον εθνικόν καθήκον αναπτύσσοντες τας ιδέας ημών επί του ζητήματος. Η Ελληνική Κυβέρνησις μελετώσα το ζήτημα και θέτουσα αυτό εις εφαρμογήν, αφ' ενός μεν θα χρησιμοποιήση

διά την πλουτοπαραγωγικὴν ἀνάπτυξιν των νέων αὐτῆς χωρῶν 150.000 ἐργατικῶν χειρῶν, μεταξύ των ὁποίων θα εὕρη ἐμπόρους, τεχνίτας, βιομηχάνους καὶ γεωργούς πρῶτης δυνάμεως, ἀφ' ἐτέρου δε θα περισσώσῃ ἐκ τῆς προφανοῦς καταστροφῆς ὁμογενὲς στοιχεῖον ἀκμαίων καὶ ευφυῆς.

Ἐπειδὴ λόγῳ των ἀναγκῶν αὐτῆς ἡ Κυβέρνησις μόνον ῥηθικῶς δύναται νὰ υποβοηθήσῃ τὸ ἔργον τῆς μεταναστεύσεως των ἐν Καυκάσῳ Ἑλλήνων ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος, ὡς ἐκ τούτου αἱ μεμονωμέναι ἐνέργειαι των ἐρχομένων ἐνταῦθα ἐκ Καυκάσου ἀντιπροσώπων, δεόν νὰ συστηματοποιηθῶσιν εἰς τρόπον ὥστε νὰ ἀναγνωρισθῇ ἐξ ἐκείνων. Ἐπιτροπὴ υπεύθυνος, ἥτις διατελοῦσα εἰς ἄμεσον συνάφειαν μετὰ τῆς Διοικήσεως καὶ συνεννοουμένη ἐκάστοτε μετὰ των ἐν Καυκάσῳ Ἑλλήνων νὰ ἐνεργήσῃ συστηματικῶς καὶ τμηματηδὸν τὴν μετανάστευσιν, ἀρχὴν ποιουμένη ἀπὸ των ευπορούντων ἵνα μὴ ἐπιβαρύνεται ἡ Κυβέρνησις.

Γνωρίζοντες ἐκ τοῦ σύνεγγυς τὸν χαρακτῆρα καὶ τὴν οικονομικὴν θέσιν των περὶ ὧν ὁ λόγος ὁμογενῶν, δυνάμεθα νὰ εἰπώμεν ὅτι ἐλάχιστα θα ἐπιβαρύνωσι τὴν Κυβέρνησιν ἐάν κανονικῶς καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ βάσει ὠρισμένου προγράμματος ἐνεργηθῇ τὸ προσήκον.

Οἱ ὡς ἀντιπρόσωποι τῆς μεταναστεύσεως οφείλου νὰ ἔχωσι Γραφεῖον ἐν Θεσσαλονίκῃ δι' οὗ νὰ παρὰσχῳσι παντός εἶδους πληροφορίας εἰς τοὺς ἐνδιαφερομένους Καυκασίους, νὰ συνεννοῶνται ἐκάστοτε μετὰ τῆς Κυβερνήσεως καὶ διὰ των ἐν Ρωσσίᾳ ἀντιπροσώπων των νὰ ἐνεργῶσι συμφώνως ταῖς ὁδηγίαις αἱς θα λαμβάνωσι παρὰ τῆς Κυβερνήσεως.

Εἶναι ἀληθές ὅτι, λόγῳ τοῦ περιορισμένου βίου των, πολλοὶ των Καυκασίων ἔχουσιν ἱκανὰς ἰδιοτροπίας· πλην προ παντός πρέπει νὰ ληφθῇ ὑπ' ὄψιν ὅτι εἰς τὸ ἀγνόν Ἑλληνικόν αἶσθημα ὅπερ διατηροῦσιν ἀκμαίον, οφείλονται αἱ εἰς πᾶσαν ἐθνικὴν ἀνάγκην ἐπικουραὶ των Καυκασίων καὶ ὅτι τιθέμενοι ὑπὸ τὴν προστασίαν τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ πολιτισμοῦ, θα σχηματίσωσι Κοινοῦτητας ἀνθηράς, ἐργατικὰς καὶ προθύμους εἰς παντός εἶδους θυσίας υπὲρ τοῦ ἔθνους.

Τὰ ὀλίγα ταῦτα υποβάλλοντες εἰς τὴν μελέτην των ἀρμοδίων, εἴμεθα πρόθυμοι νὰ ἀναπτύξωμεν ἀνάγκης παρουσιαζομένης τὸ ζήτημα, ἵνα μὴ ἐγκαταλείψωμεν ἀδελφούς ὁμαίμονας εἰς προφανή καταστροφὴν.

Διομήδης Βασιλειάδης

2

JAMES MORGAN, ACTING BRITISH CONSUL-GENERAL IN THESSALONIKI
TO AMBASSADOR LOUIS MALLET IN CONSTANTINOPLE

(Source: PRO/FO 286/580)

Thessaloniki, 1 May 1914

Sir,

I have the honour to report that shortly after the definite Greek occupation of New Greece a considerable number of Greeks arrived here from the Caucasus, intending to settle in the country.

These Greeks, who are members of a colony which for over 50 years has been settled in Russia, are originally from Lazistan. The founders of the colony, fleeing from Turkish oppression, sought refuge in the Kars district and were allowed by the Russian Government to occupy a district there.

A priest, himself half Russian, aware of the existence of the colony, became attached to the staff of the Church of St. Demetrius in Salonica. With the encouragement of the local authorities, he wrote to members of the colony, inviting them to come and settle in Macedonia, and describing to them the advantages they might expect here and in general painting their future in New Greece in glowing colours.

Over 1000 responded to his invitation and, after selling up everything, arrived in Salonica, where the first act of many was to tear up their Russian passports to mark their definite abandonment of their old country.

For a time they were lodged in mosques and efforts were made to start them in their new life. But the bright prospects which had attracted the immigrants were no longer visible after sufficient time had elapsed to allow them to become acquainted with the country.

Life was dearer and fortunes harder to gain than in the Caucasus. Disappointed, the immigrants appealed to the Russian Consul to help them, and through his instrumentality they are now being sent back, in small groups, to their old homes in the Caucasus.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient,

Humble Servant;

James Morgan

Acting Consul-General

3

REPORT BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMUNITY OF HANDHÉRES
IN THE CAUCASUS(Source: Historical Archives of Macedonia / Governorate General of Macedonia, f. 117,
Applications, Letters)

Elassona, 13 May 1914

Μεγαλειότατε,

Οι βαθυσεβάστως υποσημειούμενοι ως μέλη και αντιπρόσωποι της Κοινότητος Χανδέρες του Καυκάσου υποβάλλομεν μετά μεγίστης ευλαβείας προς την Υμετέραν Μεγαλειότητα τα βαθύτατα υμών σέβη και λαμβάνομεν την τιμήν να αναφέρωμεν τα εξής. Η Κοινότης ημών Χανδέρες αποτελουμένη εξ 150 και πλέον οικογενειών εξέλεξεν ημάς πληρεξουσίους επιτρόπους ίνα ερχόμενοι εις Ελλάδα εύρωμεν κατάλληλον μέρος, όπως τη προστασία της Β. Κυβερνήσεως εγκατασταθή εν τη ελευθέρα Ελλάδι ολόκληρος η Κοινότης ημών. Τα ελατήρια τα ωθήσαντα την Κοινότητα ημών ίνα μεταναστεύση εις την Μητέρα Ελλάδα είναι πρωτίστως πατριωτικά, καθόσον ο Έλλην φύσει αποκρούει αλλοεθνή αφομοίωσιν. Προς τον σκοπόν τούτον απετάνθημεν προς την Γενικήν Διοίκησιν Μακεδονίας επί τη ευκαιρία της μεταναστεύσεως των Μουσουλμάνων, αύτη δε μας συνέστησε να εγκατασταθώμεν εις ακατοίκητα οθωμανικά χωρία και τοιούτον εύρομεν το εν τη Επαρχία Ελασσώνος τουρκικόν χωρίον υπό το όνομα Παζαρλάδες, το οποίον είναι τελείως εγκαταλελειμμένον και εις ο είχομεν εγκατασταθή προσωρινώς, πλην ευάριθμοι κάτοικοι του χωρίου τούτου διαμένοντες αλλαχού, υπέβαλον εις την Υποδιοίκησιν Ελασσώνος παράπονα καθ' ημών, συνεπεία των οποίων και απεμακρύνθημεν. Η πλειονότης των κατοίκων του χωρίου τούτου μετηνάστευσεν εις την Μικράν Ασίαν, είναι δε αδύνατον να κατοικηθή και αύθις το χωρίον. Αι γαίαι, το κλίμα και εν γένει τα άλλα προτερήματα του χωρίου τούτου, είναι ικανά όπως γίνη σπουδαίος αγροτικός συνοικισμός, δεδομένου ότι, οι κάτοικοι αυτού δεν θα κατοικήσωσι πλέον εν αυτώ. Δύναται επομένως η Β. Κυβέρνησις ενεργώσα καταλλήλως να εξαγοράση διά λογαριασμόν μας το ως άνω χωρίον.

Καθικετεύομεν όθεν την Υμετέραν Μεγαλειότητα ίνα, εν τη Πατρική Αυτής μερίμνη, ευαρεστουμένη συστήση εις την Β. Κυβέρνησιν την παρούσαν αναφοράν, εν αποτυχία δε της εξαγοράς του χωρίου Παζαρλάδες, να μεριμνήση προς εγκατάστασιν ημών εις άλλο αγροτικόν κτήμα.

Υποσημειούμεθα μετά βαθυτάτου σεβασμού πιστά τέκνα
Χαράλαπος αδρεαδισ, Θεόδωρος σαββηδης, παυλος αποστολιδις.

TABLE II

Where the Greek refugees from the Caucasus settled

(The table is based on data from a number of printed registers in the Historical Archive of Macedonia / Governorate General of Macedonia, f. 64, Data of the Refugee Settlement Commission. The registers were compiled in the summer of 1914. The names in parentheses are the names of the villages from 1914 onwards).

<i>Yenitsá district</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Ormánovo	19	80	All the refugees
(Dasseró)			
Ramet	52	205	211 of the total
(Rahona)			
<i>Ziliáhova district</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Aistrati	2	10	Out of a total of 456, refugees from Thrace and Asia Minor
Vytasta	1	7	Out of a total of 177, chiefly from Thrace
Angista	37	188	All
Vouítsista	1	6	Out of a total of 56, from Bulgaria
(Dómiros)			
Ziliáhova	12	43	Out of a total of 610, chiefly from Thrace
(Zihni)			
<i>Kaílaria</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Comments</i>
(Ptolemaída)			
district			
Kaílaria	30	115	All the refugees
(Ptolemaída)			
<i>Kilkís district</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Gyol Óbashi	39	169	All the refugees
(Pikrolimni)			
Doiranlí	8	42	Out of a total of 202. 160 Thracians
Sarí Kioy	60	306	All the refugees
(Potamiá)			
Moutóúlovon	10	47	All the refugees
(Metaxohori)			
Mylaftsa	6	29	Out of a total of 72, chiefly from Thrace and Asia Minor
(Belaftsa? =			
Iliólouston)			
Kourkoút	77	317	Out of a total of 727, chiefly from Thrace
(Térpyllos)			
Kilkís	60	284	Out of a total of 1573, chiefly from Bulgaria

<i>Mayadág (Fanós) district</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Oróvista (Orévista = Pefkódasos)	35	151	Out of a total of 302
Ar**	27	102	Out of a total of 121
<i>Veria district</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Veria	14	53	All the refugees
Kato Kopanós	12	41	All the refugees
Bania (Loutrochori)	16	68	All the refugees
Kato Lozitsa (Kato Tripótamos)	11	46	All the refugees
<i>Kastoriá district</i>	8	42	Out of a total of 2693 (2252 from Thrace)
<i>Sidirókastro district</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Dragotí (Promahón)	29	145	All the refugees
Djoumá Mahlé (Livadia)	29	145	All the refugees
Látrovon (Horteró)	5	23	All the refugees
<i>Serrai district</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Toutlí (Elaión)	23	83	Out of a total of 87
<i>Nigrita district</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Lidzia (Ta Thermá)	5	17	Out of a total of 193
Éziova (Dafni)	21	101	All the refugees
Deré Mahalá (Kafkassianá)	21	90	All the refugees
Kopatsi (Vergi)	1	6	Out of a total of 59
<i>Langadís district</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Lahaná	32	160	All the refugees
Tsernik (Aretí)	17	65	Out of a total of 133
Souilovon (Skepastón)	24	124	Out of a total of 252
Korfalouí	2	9	Out of a total of 270 (the majority (228) from Thrace)
Gouvézna (Ássiros)	24	104	Out of a total of 243
<i>Djoumayá (Iraklia) district</i>	90	357	Out of a total of 3560 (2418 from Thrace)
Total	853	3757	