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The Socialist camp, the USSR, and the Greek Political Refugees. An unsettled historical issue

Maria Olimpia Squillaci

Master of Arts MIREES
Interdisciplinary Research and Studies on Eastern Europe

AWARDED MASTER THESIS

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in
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Supervisor Prof. Stefano Bianchini

Academic Year 2011/2012

FOREWORD

The International Master in Interdisciplinary Research and Studies on Easter Europe (MIREES) was launched in 2004 at the School of Political Sciences-Forlì Campus in cooperation with Europe and the Balkans International Network (EBIN). In 2008 it developed as a second cycle degree program, which currently delivers a joint MA awarded by the four full partner Universities of Bologna, Vytautas Magnus at Kaunas, Corvinus of Budapest and St. Petersburg State University, together with the universities of Ljubljana and Zagreb. The program is carried out with the additional support of the associate partners, as the MIREES International Alumni Association (MAiA), the Institute of East-Central and Balkan Europe (IECOB) in Forlì, the NATO Centre of Excellence for Energy Security in Vilnius, and the Institute for Democracy 'Societas Civilis'- IDSCS - in Skopje, and more recently enjoys the cooperation with the Visegrad Fund.

MIREES is an innovative graduate programme focusing on interdisciplinary and in-depth study of the post-socialist Countries in transition, the new EU member States, as well as the New East-European Neighbor Countries. Providing courses in history, politics, economics as well as cultural and anthropological studies, MIREES stimulates multifaceted approaches to the study of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe. The program combines an academic approach with mobility in one of the partner Universities and professional training pursuing the goal of forging potential insightful consultants, analysts or managers, to become area experts for international agencies, public administrations, private and public companies, and NGOs, while also offering a solid basis for further academic studies at the PhD level.

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Remarkable and diverse academic works, truly representative of MIREES' intrinsic interdisciplinary and multifaceted approach are made available through such cooperation. These innovative, in-depth and insightfully drafted analyses testify the authors' dedication and MIREES' competence in training outstanding researchers and analysts.

All members of the MIREES, MAiA and IECOB network congratulate the authors on their achievements.

Prof. Francesco Privitera
Programme Director,
MIREES International Degree Programme

Adriano Remiddi
President of the Executive Board,
MIREES Alumni International Association

Giovanni Cadioli
Editorial Coordinator,
MIREES Alumni International Association

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Είναι ο γυρισμός στα χώματα που αγάπησαν,
Που πότησαν με τον ιδρώτα και το αίμα τους,
Που τόσο λάτρεψαν και υπερασπίστηκαν με τα στηθιά τους1.

Their craving, their undying ardour
is the return to the lands which they loved,
which they watered with their sweat and their blood,
which they so much adored and defended with their chest.

1 Gegadopoulou F. (1976). *I nea Voulgaria*, Athens, Papadopoulou, p.187.

Acknowledgments

Although I am not good at writing, I cannot avoid saying at least ‘thank you’ and expressing my gratitude to all the people that during this year assisted me in my research, gave me precious advice, and supported me. Each of them deserves a huge *grazie* on my behalf.

The first people that I would like to thank are all the refugees that I interviewed. Not only they proved to be very helpful and available for contributing to my research, but also they took care of me and helped me in coping with my everyday life abroad. Secondly, I must say thank you to Giorgios Alexandrou, Alexandros Ashla, Nikos Papageorgaki, Stelios Elliniadis, Nikos Marangidis, Giannis Skalidakis, Katerina Tsekou, Giorgios Pavlakos, Gavrilis Lampatos, and Vardis Vardinoganni. From the discussions I had with each of them, essential stimuli for my work emerged together with valid scientific material and suggestions.

Thirdly, for the first time publicly I must thank my family, mum, dad, Delia and Mimmy, who have always sustained me, and whose love and constant presence (even abroad!) have been my driving force in these five years of university.

Last but certainly not least, I want to thank Vincenzo. His patience is endless! GRAZIE.

Abbreviations

CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
DSE	Democratic Army of Greece
EAM	National Liberation Army
EDES	National Republican Greek League
ELAS	Greek People's Liberation Army
EVoP	Committee for Aid to the Child
KEEPPE	Central Committee of the Union of the Political Refugees of Greece
KET	Central Committee of Tashkent
KEKA	Party Central Commission for Registration
KKE	Greek Communist Party
KNE	Communist Organization for Young People
KOT	Party's Organization of Tashkent
KOV	Basic Communist Organization
OPLA	Organization for the Protection of the People's Struggle
PEAEA	Panhellenic Union of the Fighters of the National Resistance
PEEA	Political Committee of National Liberation
PEEPP	Panhellenic Union of the Repatriated Political Refugees
SNOF	Slavic Popular Liberation Front
SOE	Special Operations Executive
UNSCOB	United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans

Introduction

One of the most controversial issues in contemporary Greek history has been the Greek Civil War and its consequences. The two sides at conflict were the Democratic Army of Greece (DSE) headed by the Greek Communist Party (KKE) and backed by the Socialist countries and the Greek National Army, headed by the Greek government and backed by Great Britain and later the United States. The war caused approximately 45,000 casualties (Margaritis: 51-52, 2002) and 130,000 refugees (Triandafyllidou and Maroufof: 8, 2009). Up until the 1990s, the majority of Greek scholars who dealt with the topic had a strong politically influenced approach. In fact, a right-wing literature production dominated the Greek academic world until the dictatorship of the Colonels was overthrown (1974), while a left-wing approach emerged when the parties of the left came to power in the 1980s. Strongly politicized the Greek Civil War was recognized as such only in 1989. Until that moment it was considered a war between patriots and bandits, as the Communists were then named by the Greek government, or war between partisans and occupiers, as referred to by the KKE, hence a *second resistance*[2].

Although much research has been carried out with regards to the Civil War by both Greek and international scholars, little interest has been given to the consequences of such a war, particularly to the thousands of refugees that emerged as a result of this war. One hundred thirty thousand refugees, as previously mentioned, were forced to flee from Greece, and out of these approximately 56,000 fled to the Socialist Republics and the USSR. This latter group of refugees was constituted mostly of fighters of the Democratic Army of Greece, or its supporters who, having lost a war, were forced to leave their country to avoid being imprisoned, interned or sentenced to death. In 1949, according to directives given by the USSR, the refugees sheltered in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Eastern Germany, Poland, and in the Uzbek SSR.

My thesis focuses principally on the history of the refugees who were sheltered in Tashkent, the then capital of the Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan.This aspect of the Civil War consequences is largely unexplored by scholars in Greece, Russia and at the international level. Indeed, this thesis is only the second academic work to explore this particular topic, and it is the first for non Greek-speakers, on a scientific and systematic level. Therefore, the focus of my research has had to rely mainly on the research that I conducted in Greece and Russia from September 2011 to April 2012, which consists of interviews to the former refugees and consultation of archival documents. The aim of my work is to contribute in filling the gap in knowledge about this fragment of Greek modern history focusing principally on

2 The first resistance was fought during the Second World War, while the second resistance, according to the KKE, was fought in the following years when the US forces *occupied* Greece.

three groups of refugees: the Greeks in Tashkent, the refugee children, and the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees. To deal with these issues and to explore the important points in detail whilst having to stay within thesis requirements is indeed a great challenge. Therefore, what I hope to have achieved in this work is a general introduction to the topic, which also highlights individual arguments that can be open to further analysis and exploration.

Literature review

Until the fall of the Junta (1974), the academic literature in Greece was mostly produced according to a right-wing approach. Between 1945 and 1974 two out of every three books published, were anti-left (Antoniou and Marantzidis: 224, 2004). Hence, for a long time, the experience of the refugeeism has faded into oblivion (See Tsekou, 2008). Nevertheless, after 1974, when the refugees started repatriating to Greece, they themselves published mostly autobiographical books concerning their experience abroad (Mitsopoulos, 1979[3]; Alecsiou, 1983; Dimitrakopoulos, 1983; Dritsios, 1983, 1984; Goutidis, 1983; Gritzonas, 1984, 1986, 1987; Kokovlì, 1986). Among these, *We remained Greeks*, 1979, by Mitsopoulos must be mentioned, since it was the first work about the refugee experience published in Greece. Those among the refugees who became well-known Greek writers wrote about their life abroad, openly or implicitly, in their romances (Alecsiou, 1959; Zei, 1962, 1987; Alecsandropoulos, 1980, 2000, 2003; Ganas, 1981; Akrivos, 2001; Parnis, 2009).

On an academic level, the works published about the refugees mostly concerned data regarding their repatriation (Kasimati, 1993; Soultanià, 1999, 2001, 2002). Solely since 2000, in the framework of civil war studies, a team, the Civil War Study Group, made up of international and Greek scholars and headed by Professor Nikos Marangidis, has started to also explore the topic of the refugeeism. During my research period, I met with several members of the team, including professor Marangidis. The study group is the only academic team that has been dealing with this subject so far. Discussing my research with them, it emerged that their approach towards the topic reeks of a thinly veiled criticism against some aspects of the refugees' stories, and it is directed to distance their conclusions from those of the KKE, mostly putting in evidence omitted, by the KKE, aspects of the history. The works that they published focus either on the refugeeism in general, or on the refugees in the Socialist Republics rather than on Tashkent (Mihailidis and Gounaris, 2004; Bontila, Dalkavoukis, Marantzidis, and Vutira, 2005; Tsekou, 2010; Dalkavoukis, Paschaloudi, Skoulidas, and Tsekou, 2012). In fact, the only publication that approaches the topic of the Greek refugees in Tashkent in a scholarly way is *Greek political refugees in Tashkent* by Lampatos, 2001.

Besides the autobiographical and the academic works about the refugeeism, there is the literature produced by the KKE and the PEAEA, the Panhellenic Union of the Fight-

3 The whole reference of the books cited in this paragraph can be found in the bibliography.

ers of the National Resistance affiliated to the KKE since the repatriation of the refugees. This literature production results highly influenced by the party line, which describes the life abroad as perfect[4] (See Tsekou, 2008). On this line are the works PEEPP (Panhellenic Union of the Repatriated Political Refugees)[5], 1999; PEEPP, 2000; PEEPP, 2002. Hence, to the present, there are three main currents which evaluate the refugeeism: the first is affiliated to the KKE and encompass many refugees, thus it shows the refugee life abroad as idyllic; the second consists of all the writers that contrast with the KKE because of bad personal experiences or because of the writers' political beliefs; while the third consists of Greek and international scholars who only recently became familiar with the topic. On the contrary, to the present no book has been published in Russia or Uzbekistan about this topic. I only found some information regarding data about the refugees in Tashkent in the Ethnic Atlas of Uzbekistan (Zhukova, 2002) and in the sites of the Tashkent Municipal Association of Greeks and of the International Cultures' Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

As far as the first topic is concerned, the Greeks in Tashkent, I mostly use three books, which specifically deal with it: *Our life* by the PEEPP (2002), *Thirty years in Tashkent* by Jatrudakis (1999), and *The Greek political refugees in Tashkent* by Lampatos (2001) which respectively fit the above currents. In contrast to the limited literature about Tashkent, a plenty of academic books have been published about the question of the children, which is also briefly tackled in the present work. The most recent book published is *Children of the Greek Civil War: Refugees and Politics of Memory* by Danforth and Van Boeschoten (2012), while other works that concern the subject are Baerentzen 1992, Gritzonas, 1998; Papadopoulos, 1998; Ristovic, 1998 (2000 English translation); Servos, 2001; Manoukas, 2003; Vervenioti, 2003, 2005, 2009; Gankoulias, 2004; Theodorou, 2004.

With regard to the Slavo-Macedonian question, I must say that the literature I found about is also narrowed. The majority of the books focus on the Macedonian question in general[6] rather than on the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees, the exile and the repatriation. Much information is provided by the reports of the Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, Greek Helsinki Monitor, Minority rights Group – Greece, and US State Bullettin Annual report on Greece, which, although mainly examine the treatment of the Macedonian minority in Greece, they devote at least a paragraph to the repatriation of Slavo-Macedonian political refugees from the former Socialist Republics, the ex-USSR, and FYRM. The main academic works to which I refer are Ristovic, 2000, 2006; Mihailidis 2003, 2004, 2005; Van Boeschoten 2000, 2005, 2010.

Consequently, keeping in mind the different approaches towards the refugeeism and the fact that the academic material published on this argument is highly limited, in this work my intention is to illustrate the events, primarily availing myself of the material I have collected so far.

4 All the aspects of the refugees' everyday life can be used to cast light on positive or negative features of their experience, and thus, to conclude that the refugees lived in villas, or in shanties.

5 The PEEPP (Panhellenic Union of the Repatriated Political Refugees) has been renamed PEAEA (Panhellenic Union of the Fighters of the National Resistance)

6 For Macedonian question is meant the dispute over the geographic region Macedonia among the Balkan countries since their independence from the Ottoman Empire.

Research and methodology

Research question

The total amount of the people who fled to the former Socialist Republics was estimated by the KKE to amount to 55, 881. Out of 55, 881 refugees, 11, 980 settled in Tashkent (Episima Kimena, vol. 7: 480-536, 1995). My initial intention was to concentrate the entire thesis on the refugees' life in Tashkent: the conditions when they arrived, the housing, the jobs, the schools, the party organizations, the aid they received, essentially their everyday life in the Asiatic city. However aware of the fact that for non-Greek speakers this is the first piece of work on the issue, I decided to give a broader view of the topic. Maintaining the focus on Tashkent, I address two crucial questions that affect and are affected by the main issue of refugeeism: the refugee children and the repatriation of the Slavo-Macedonians political refugees.

Therefore, the primary aim of this thesis is to cast light on this topic at an international academic level whilst confronting past research with fieldwork that I carried out myself. The interviews I conducted along with information gathered from archival sources gave me the opportunity to learn as much as possible about the refugees' departure from Greece, their life in Tashkent, and their repatriation. In doing so, I employed a qualitative method of inquiry. However, it is important to note that the thesis should not be considered as an anthropological research. Although the present work largely relies on the refugees' accounts, they have been used only as important source information and therefore they are not the focus of the thesis. Through a comparative assessment of interviews, archival documents and the publications available thus far on the topic, I have pursued a reconstruction of a period of Greek modern history and this is the focus of my thesis.

Furthermore, since the topic of the refugeeism has been heavily used in political discourse for defending or discrediting the KKE about this experience especially after the KKE schism in 1968, it is in my intention in the end of the work to comment the experience of the refugeeism according to material collected, maintaining myself outside of the political conflict. However, working with interviews, I must acknowledge the limits of this source. In fact, since the refugees' memories are a subjective interpretation of the events they experienced, each story can be an interpretation of the facts according to the political affiliation of the narrator or his/her personal experience with the party, and this does not always correspond to the experience of the whole group. Hence, I must explore the factors that influenced the refugees' narrations (age, nostalgia for the past, context of the interview) and among these elements, a key factor to be considered is the possibility that the Greek Communist Party had indoctrinated the refugees during their time abroad. Indeed if this latter condition occurred, it could have had a great effect on the individual and collective memory construction process of the interviewees.

Interviews and archival research

The core of the present work is the fieldwork I conducted in both Greece and Russia, which is constituted of two sources: the documents collected in the archives and the oral accounts got from the refugees in Greek or Russian languages being myself fluent in both of them. As far as the former source is concerned, I examined the documents stored at the KKE Archive "Charilaos Florakis" where I availed of the help of Nikos Papageorgaki, historian of the KKE. There, I analyzed all the transcriptions of broadcasts of Radio Free Greece, the DSE radio, from 1948 to 1952, that concerned the question of the children and the life abroad of the refugees[7]. Furthermore, I had the opportunity of consulting and reading books, which are no longer available on the market. At the ASKI – Archive of Greek Contemporary History – in Athens, I researched the 'KKE Archive' and specifically the correspondence between the Central Committee of the KKE and the Party Organization in Tashkent from 1950 to 1954 about the initial living conditions of the refugees. At the ASKI, I also did research in the 'Maria and Georgula Beikou Archive', where I found precious information about the life of the Greeks in Tashkent. I had access to the PEAEA Archive – Panhellenic Union of the Fighters of the National Resistance – where I had the opportunity to consult many of the issues tackled by the newspaper that the refugees published once repatriated. I also researched at the ODEG – Organization for the Internationalization of the Greek Language – where I was supervised by three members of the organization, Panagiotis Kotsionis, Vlasis Angidis, and Stilianos Elliniadis, who are experts on the matter. Furthermore, I also consulted online the Greek Oral History Archive[8].

Concerning the interviews, I must say that are unstructured and that I carried them out randomly. Indeed, starting from the PEAEA, where I interviewed three people, I got the telephone numbers of other refugees and thanks to a domino effect, I interviewed 22 Greek political refugees. Hence, I did not select the interviewees according to age or other criteria. I interviewed all the people I could, trying to get the most information I could from everyone and not leaving apart anybody. Thanks to this system, I interviewed not only 22 Greek political refugees, but also journalists, historians, academic professors, directors. Furthermore, I had also the opportunity to meet and interview Mr. Alecsey Zachariadis, the third son of Nikos Zachariadis, the Secretary General of the KKE from 1931 to 1956. Although Mr. Zachariadis rarely gives interviews, he agreed to help me in my research.

7 I halted the research at 1952, because later the Radio continued broadcasting only about the life of the refugees in the Socialist Republics and not in the USSR.

8 The bulk of the work, however, was carried out at the ASKI and at the KKE Archive "Charilaos Florakis" since these are the two archives which contain the vast majority of the material about the refugeesim.

Data and structure of the interviews

After preliminary studies in Italy, I went to Greece and to Russia to carry out the research[9]. I prepared a list of questions[10] I asked the refugees. However, because of the topic dealt with, which refers to the refugees' life, and because of the old age of the interviewees, in most cases the interviews were more similar to a conversation. Furthermore, I noted that while at beginning the interviewees were very brief and concise in their answers, after getting to know me, they felt more comfortable and spoke also about topics about which previously they had refused to talk[11]. Furthermore, an interview could be completed after 2, 3 meetings, giving me the opportunity to visit the refugees at home, get acquaintance with the members of their family who most of time were former refugees too, thus allowing to me to be a direct observer of their habits which resulted being more Russian than Greek.

I faced the greatest difficulties in Russia. In St. Petersburg, the city where I carried out my compulsory mobility period within the frame of the MIREES program, at present only three Greek political refugees live, as the honorary president of the Association of the Greeks in St. Petersburg, Mr. Harlampii Apacidi, confirmed to me. I got their numbers and addresses from the Association of Greeks in St. Petersburg (this association consists of Pontic Greeks, who do not have any link with the political refugees). While Mr. Dastamanis consented to help me, the other two refused: one because he was sick and very old (97 years old) and the other, instead, because he did not trust me. It is interesting that, Mr. Dastaminis, being friend with them, tried to convince them to help me. Nevertheless, the one who distrusted me started shouting on the phone to Mr. Dastamanis that even he, Mr. Dastamanis, should not tell me *these things,* i.e. about Tashkent (this is what Mr. Dastamanis later told me). The other obstacle I faced in Russia was in finding documents. In both associations of Greeks, in St. Petersburg and Moscow, nobody has tackled the topic, and more than once they repeated to me that they did not know anything about it.

On the other hand, although I did not visit Tashkent, I received much help from there. The vice-president of the Tashkent Municipal Association of Greeks, Mrs. Despina Apostolidou, sent me by mail some document published in Uzbekistan about the Greeks in Tashkent, much photographic material, and information about the activities of the association of the Greeks who did not repatriate. She also told me that the refugees, when they repatriated, took everything with them to Greece. This was also confirmed to me by the former President of the PEEPP (Panhellenic Union of the Repatriated Political Refugees), Mr. Fotou. Indeed, the material in the Greek archives and yet scarcely used by historians is enormous.

9 For doing the interviews, I have been in St. Petersburg (Russia), Athens, Korinthos, Kiatos, Preveza, Iannina, Thessaloniki (Greece).

10 See Annex 1.

11 Indeed, the biggest obstacle was their initial distrust of me. For the same reason and also because of physical sickness of the refugees, I was unable to interview three people in Greece and two people in Russia.

Following, I report the list of the people interviewed:

Achilleas Stolakis, 28.06.1938 Tsamandas Filiaton Thesprotias, veterinarian;
Aleksej Zachariadis, 1950, Moscow,
Alki Zei, 1925, Athens, novelist;
Anastasios Fakiolas, 25.07.1929, Salamina, academic professor of international economics;
Christos Gingilonis, 1932, Samarina, historian-journalist, president of the PEAEA;
Christos Katsanos, 19.09.1937 Klimatià, electrotechnic;
Dimitris Spathìs, 11.11.1905, Cairo, academic professor of theatre history;
Dimitris Giankos, 1951, Tashkent, archeologist;
Eleni Ghinkoglou, 24.05.1949, born in the mountains during the war, doctor;
Georgios Dakoulas, 15.08.1934, Melianà, mineworker;
Giannis Motsios, 01.03.1930, Depoti Grevenon, academic professor of Modern Greek language and literature;
Giannis Papoulakos, 12.02.1947, Ampelikò Karditsa, electrotechnic;
Giorgios Vellàs, 1934/1936, Drosopigi Konitsas, academic professor;
Grigoris Fotou, 1929, Gola Thesprotias, journalist and general secretary of the PEAEA;
Irini Eleftheriadou, 14.07.1951, Tashkent, dentist;
Lambrini Gogo, 14.01.1931, Distrato Konitsi, tailor;
Kostantinos Katsiavalos, 24.09,1939, Despoti, metallurgical engineer;
Panos Dimitriou, 19.08.1917, Thessaloniki, high-ranging member of the KKE;
Paschalià Paganià, 06.05.1942, Serres Kimisi, bioengineer;
Sonia Ilinskaya, 1938, Moscow, academic professor of Modern Greek philology;
Vasilis Karastathis, 24.01.1951, Tashkent, aeronautical engineer.

Out of 22 people interviewed, 18 have been in the USSR, 1 in Hungary and 2 in Romania.[12] I also interviewed Mr. Spiros Gakis (05.02.1945, Karditsa, sociologist) who remained in Greece while the rest of the family was sheltered in Tashkent and in Czechoslovakia and Mr. Filip Pimenidis (13.09.2011), a Pontic Greek exiled in Kazakhstan.

Besides the interviews to the refugees, I also availed myself of important discussions with people who approach the subject in a scholarly way. These are:

Anna Enepekidou, head of the department "Exhibition" of the Foundation of the Parliament of the Greek people;
Dimitrios Manolessakis, Archeologist;
Fatima Yeloiva, professor of Greek language at the St. Petersburg State University
Gavrilis Lampatos, historian;
Giannis Skalidakis, historian and journalist of "Dromos";
Giorgios Alecsandrou, journalist of "To Trito Mati";
Giorgios Pavlakos, secretary of the ODEG (Organization for the Internationalization of the Greek Language);

12 Among the 18 interviewees, there is Sonia Ilinskaya who is the wife of Mitsos Alecsandropoulos, a well-known Greek writer who died in 2008 Ms. Ilinskaya told me about the refugee period of his husband in Tashkent.

Giorgios Petropoulos, historian of the KKE and journalist of "Rizospastis";
Katerina Tsekou, PhD history and member of the Civil War Study Group;
Maksim L'vovic Kisilier, professor of Greek language at the St. Petersburg State University;
Nikos Marangidis, professor of history of Eastern Europe and head of the Civil War Study Group,
Nikos Papageorgaki, historian of the KKE,
Panagiotis Kotsionis, former director of the office for the learning of the Greek language in the USSR;
Vardis Vardinogianni, president of the EDIA (Organizations for the Preservation of History Archive)
Vlasis Angidis, historian;
Stelianos Elliniadis, director of many documentaries about the Greeks who live abroad.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis is divided in five chapters. However, while the first chapter can be regarded as a long introduction to the topic, since it presents the background that led to the exile of the Greek Communist Party, the fighters of the Democratic Army (DSE) and their supporters, the second, third and fourth chapters are the core of the research. In fact, in these latter chapters, the primary literature I refer to is based on my research. Both the interviews I got and the archival research I conducted represent relevant unpublished materials that must be used to further explore the topic, get fresh information and eventually present new comments. Hence, I decided, in the second and third chapter, to let people and documents "talk" about the events they lived, while presenting my comments in the fifth chapter. In fact, the conclusions I reached on the basis of the research done, and the frequent contacts that I had with the Greek academic community, contrast on some points with the interpretation of the events presented in the previous sections.

Indeed, while, particularly in the second chapter, I present refugees' individual and collective memories almost without interfering, in the last chapter I critically explore:

- the refugees' willingness to remember;
- the different ways they approached different arguments;
- their hesitation to talk about some occurrences;
- their attitude towards their experience.

Hence, instead of considering second, third and fourth chapters separately from my final comments, the reader should conceive them as two macro sections that confront differently the various aspects of the refugeeism in question.

The second chapter is divided in two subchapters. In the first part, I tackle the evacuation of the refugees from Greece, their arrival and their settlement in Tashkent. Thus, I collected information on accommodation, jobs, social life, but also about the political system of which refugees were part. The second subchapter is entirely devoted to the question of the children. Indeed, out of 55,881 refugees, around 20,000 were children, who, according to the then Greek government, had been kidnapped by the KKE, while according to the KKE they have been rescued from war zones. Although the refugees' history is covered by few scholars (See Tsekou, 2008), even in their publications about the Greek civil war, the question of the children is tackled by Greek and international scholars, addressed by the media, and exploited by the political discourse. Nowadays the public, academic and political opinions are still strongly divided over the question whether the children were abducted or not (See Danforth and Van Boeschoten, 2012).

The third and the fourth chapters concentrate on two more key issues, the mass repatriation of the political refugees to Greece, which started in 1974, and the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees. The repatriation to Greece, in a way, caused more problems than the exile to the far away Tashkent. Hence, in this section I focus on the main difficulties that the refugees faced once in Greece. In the fourth chapter of the thesis, I deal with probably the most controversial issue of the whole history of the refugees. In fact, the question over the repatriation of the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees is not solely a dispute over past events, as the question of the children, but it still has repercussions on the present since to the present, it is prohibited for the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees to go back to Greece. As explained in the first chapter, by Slavo-Macedonians is meant the Slavic-speaking minority that today inhabits Greek Macedonia. The Slavo-Macedonians constituted a large part of the Democratic Army; thus, when the DSE fled, they also evacuated to the East. Nevertheless, when the former fighters of the DSE repatriated, their Slavo-Macedonian comrades were not allowed to follow them to Greece.

In this last section, I start from the civil war's end, presenting anew the events but focusing on the Slavo-Macedonians.

First Chapter

Patriots against banditos or partisans against collaborators? The Greek Civil War's question in the academic literature.

Considered as the first bloody conflict of the Cold War, the Greek Civil War showed how much, small states' internal affairs were becoming important to the global stage. In fact, the outcome of the war resulted not just from the internal situation, but also from international factors. To what extent the international factors played the leading role in influencing this outcome is an argument highly discussed among scholars.

The Greek Civil War has been for many years a gap in Greek historiography. After the end of the war, the right-wing party came to the power. Since then, nationalistic and anticommunist sentiments have grown constantly. In 1967, the right-wing coup d'état by the military elite (later known as *Junta*) gave a further boost to the persecution of the left. Consequently, since 1949, the Civil War was considered in Greek literature as a patriotic war against the *banditos*. Greek people who fought on the side of the DSE (Δημοκρατικός Στρατός Ελλάδας - Democratic Army of Greece), essentially communists, were banned from the country, or were deprived of their citizenship or sentenced to death and, their honor was discredited for the years ahead. During the year 1950-1974, the Greek society was divided into *national-minded* and *traitors of the nation*, obviously, the leftists fell in the second box. They were regarded as a group of banditos and traitors who tried to subvert the Greek nation and dismember their homeland.

Things in this regard started changing in the 80s, after the Junta was overthrown. Since then, a debate has gone on about the war in the 40s not only in the historical circles but also at the governmental level. Indeed, many people, and the Greek Communist Party (KKE) as institution, required to be recognized not anymore as an outlaw guerrilla group, as it was until that moment. This period is remembered as *Metapolitefsi* (Μεταπολίτευση – change of regime), since the parliamentary rule was adopted by the Greek government and the Communist Party was legalized. Furthermore, the changeover took place in 1981 when, for the first time since the end of the Civil War, a left-wing party came to the power (PASOK). The rise to power by the Socialist party PASOK "resulted in a new hegemony of the left in the media and in the universities which produced a revisionist historiography that redefined the civil war as a continuation of the resistance against the Germans, a struggle between 'patriots' and 'collaborationists/reactionaries', which the latter won" (Payne, 224, 2011). Only in the 90s, it was officially

stated that in Greece, after the Second World War was over, the Greek Civil War erupted. Today the situation is still in the process of changing. However, Greece has some difficulties in tackling with the 40s, since the Civil War is still an argument that divides the society.

Since the 90s, it has been generally accepted that the Greek Civil War took place from 1946 to 1949. The sides at conflict for the seizure of the power were the Greek National Army and the Democratic Army of Greece (DSE). In 1949, the war ended in favour of the Greek National Army and this outcome shaped the history of Greece for the thirty years ahead. Indeed, the result at stake was extremely high: had the Communist party won the war, Greece would have been one of the Soviet satellite until 1989, probably; had (as it occurred) the National army won, Greece would have been a *Western* country. "The British intervention in Athens in December 1944 was the first time during the Second World War that one of the Allied powers openly used military force to decide the postwar political development of a liberated country" (Baerentzen and Close, 92, 1993). Since the Greek Civil War was over, many other countries have undergone the same path: battlefields for the great powers. However, something should be added in the case of Greece.

In the Hellenic country, the Civil War did not occur because both the Socialist bloc and the Western had interests in the peninsula. Soviet Union, in fact, had repeatedly demonstrated that it was not interested in Greek affairs. As Stavrakis points out "few postwar events have had as profound an effect on Western perceptions of Soviet international behaviour as the Greek Civil War" (IX, 1989): Stalin led Great Britain and later United States have free hands in Greece, and he expected the same behaviour of the Western powers in Eastern Europe. Therefore, it is not fully correct to say that in Greece the Civil War was induced by the USSR: in Greece, "it was a communist-inspired revolution domestically conceived" (Iatrides, 5, 1995). The stance of the USSR on the war eventually changed on some occasions but essentially, it was meant to avoid a Communist takeover in the country[13].

At the end of the Second World War, most of the population supported EAM (Εθνικό Απελευθερωτικό Μέτωπο – National Liberation Army), the Greek resistance movement that fought against the Axis. Behind the EAM, in 1944, it was already clear there was the Greek Communist Party, whose aim was to establish a Greek People's Democracy. Great Britain could never accept something similar, since it had huge interests in the country. Consequently, it began supporting the opposition, EDES (Εθνικός Δημοκρατικός Ελληνικός Σύνδεσμος - National Republican Greek League), and especially the Greek government in exile in order to establish the *ante bellum status* of Greece. Yet, historians are not in agreement whether it was a war due to British intervention or not. There are scholars who stress that the internal situation played the leading role in the outcome of the war, and scholars who affirm that the international factor was crucial to its result. These have also represented for years the official positions of the right wing and left-wing parties, respectively.

Firstly, it is fundamental to focus on the circumstances under which the civil war erupted. Although the Greek civil war is commonly narrowed to the years 1946-1949, most of the scholars agree on the fact that the civil war constituted of three rounds, the first of which started in 1943. However, there are controversies about the question whether it is correct or not to consider rounds the different conflicts between the resistance forces, which have

13 A paragraph below is devoted to the ambiguous behaviour of the Soviet elite towards the Greek events.

occurred since 1943. Smith (60, 1993) affirms, "we must be careful not to interpret events in 1943-4 against the background of what happened later". In his opinion, what happened during WWII was caused "by specific events in the delicate relationship between the two organizations [EAM/ELAS, EDES] and its development was determined by British and German factors" (Smith, 61, 1993). As a point of fact, though both resistance movements, EAM and EDES, had specific goals in mind for the postwar order of Greece, the actors did not consider the clashes of 1943 as the beginning of a broader war. Keeping in mind what said above, we should not undermine, however, the importance of the fights in 1943. As a matter of fact, for both resistance movements these conflicts started becoming more important than fighting against the Axis. As it is further illustrated, Zervas, the EDES's leader, on some occasions even collaborated with the Germans in order to defeat ELAS.

Interestingly enough is the definition of these conflicts given by Woodhouse. He defines the rounds as "three climax in a continuous process" (3, 1976), where the climaxes correspond to the three attempts by the KKE to seize power by force. The climax by Woodhouse can be compared to the *lost momentum* illustrated by Iatrides. Iatrides does not speak about rounds but *phases* of the Greek Civil War, each of which culminated in a momentum of perfect conditions for the KKE to seize power. Because of this, each phase could have been the last one since it started and concluded itself under specific different circumstances. Focusing on the three phases, he concludes that the KKE lost the chance of declaring the revolution because of "its leaders' sense of timing" (Iatrides: 12, 1995). Indeed, for a revolution to succeed is fundamental to start at the right *momentum,* which means at the moment when internal and international factors are favorable to a positive result.

Therefore, the failure of the KKE to seize power in postwar Greece was also due to the fact that they began the offensives against the National Army after the momentum had passed. In Iatrides's view, it occurred in 1943-44 during the first phase. At that time, EAM enjoyed great support among the population and there were no internal obstacles since its military branch, ELAS, was the strongest among the other organizations. Furthermore, as far as the international situation is concerned, British forces, the main obstacle to a communist-led revolution in Greece, were just a few and the United States was not interested in the country, yet. Nevertheless, the revolution was not declared and the EAM signed an agreement on cooperation with the EDES and EKKA. *Why did they lose their momentum?*

The theories on the failure of the communist revolution in Greece and on the outcome of the civil war are many. Some of these theories are discussed below; nevertheless, it is not my intention to deepen the debate still going on among scholars and the Greek society. At the aims of this work, I decided to present the basic events of the civil war and the international actors' role in influencing them. Indeed, this assessment constitutes the essential background of the work's main topic, crucial to explain the reasons why 56.000 people circa fled from Greece to the Socialist republics in 1949-1950.

1.1 The *Ochi* Day and the beginning of the Second World War

In 1940, Greece, as many other European states, was a monarcho-fascist country. The king, George II of the Hellenes, had no effective power over the country. All the power was in General Metaxas's hands, the Greek Prime Minister that in 1936 de facto established his right-wing dictatorship. At the beginning of the Second World War, as well as it happened during WWI, Greece tried to maintain its neutrality. Nevertheless, on 28 October 1940, General Metaxas refused Mussolini's ultimatum of letting Italian Army occupy Greece. Since then, this day has been celebrating in Greece as *Το Επέτειος του Όχι του Ιωάννη Μεταξά* – the anniversary of the *No* by Ioannis Metaxas. Thus, giving the start to the Greek-Italian War, Metaxas aligned Greece with the Allied powers. Mussolini attacked Greece for one main reason: to reassert his dominance over the Balkans. He was annoyed by Hitler's predominance on war decisions, in particular since Hitler's invasion of Romanian oil fields in Ploeşti. Indeed, he interpreted the events in Romania as an invasion of his area of influence by German troops, hence his decision to invade Greece (Glenny, 1999).

As known, Mussolini thought that the invasion of Greece would have been just a formal changeover from Greek to Italian rule, besides Metaxas was germanophile and would not hamper Mussolini's plans. It did not occur like this. Contrary to Mussolini's previsions, not only Metaxas did not allow him to make of Greece an Italian protectorate, but also in few weeks, he organized a strong army to counter-attack the Italian army. In fact, by mid-December, the Greek army had already pushed Mussolini's forces back to Albania[14] and had even occupied one third of Albanian territory. The Greek victory over the Italian army was the first victory of the Allied forces during WWII, a victory that eventually had a significant consequence on the outcome of the war[15].

To counterbalance Greek victory and in particular to avoid a British invasion of the country, which could negatively affect German plans, Hitler decided to intervene[16]. Once in Greece, Hitler's main thought was to occupy the strategic areas of the country before a likely British invasion. Germany maintained under its direct control Athens, the western part of Macedonia comprised of Salonika (because from here it would be easy for British troops to attack Ploeşti's oil fields in Romania), and Crete because of its strategic location in the Mediterranean Sea, vital to the British Empire. Bulgaria, his newly acquired ally, gained the Eastern part of Macedonia and the Western part of Thrace and Italy occupied

14 At that time, Albania was Italian protectorate, completely occupied by Italian forces.

15 Indeed in order to redress Mussolini's action in Greece, Hitler delayed the attack against the Soviet Union, thus making the operation Barbarossa start later. Needless to say, the winter played on Stalin's side. Consequently, many historians affirm that the Greek-Italian war shaped the course of the Second World War (Thomsett: 157,1997; Petacco: 23, 2000; Stackelberg and Winkle: 279, 2002).

16 On 6 April 1941, Nazi troops invaded the Balkans, namely Greece and Yugoslavia, under the instructions of Operation Marita.

the rest of the country. Hence, since April 1941 until October 1944 Greece suffered a triple occupation by the Axis powers.

The worst period of the occupation was the winter of 1941-1942. During these months, Greece underwent the most dramatic starvation so far (Mazower, 1994). The Axis troops took all the food, reserves and all the means of transportations from the population. Meanwhile the Allied forces imposed the embargo on the country, which lasted until the summer of 1942. This winter, remembered in Greece as *Ο Μεγάλος Λιμός* - the Great Famine, caused up to 1000 deaths per day, particularly in the areas under Nazi occupation. People living in the North tried to cross Albanian border and get food from there, since under Italian occupation the country was receiving all kind of products. As an example, during an interview Mr. Vellàs told me that his mother walked with him and his cousin through the mountains of Epirus until Albanian border, in a risky and unsafe travel, "just to get some bread"[17] . Then, she left them alone because it was easier for kids to be fed by any Italian soldiers. Nevertheless, they were not lucky. After a couple of days, they were found by an Albanian woman hung upside down to a tree. Since then, Mr. Vellàs have been limping.

Furthermore, Germans applied in Greece the same strategy they applied in other occupied countries to generate hatred and hostility among the population, and to create a class of collaborators loyal to the Axis powers. They gave importance to the people that under the previous regime were frustrated, particularly to minority groups in order to awake repressed conflicts[18]. Because of this strategy, the region that suffered most was the Greek Macedonia (Mazower, 1994). In fact, Macedonia's main characteristic has always been its multiethnic and multireligious population. For instance, Salonika, the Greek Macedonian capital, was named by the Jews *the Jerusalem of the Balkans*[19]. Here, Greeks, Jews, Gypsies, Muslims, Slavs, and other ethnicities have coexisted for centuries. Thus, during the occupation, the Axis powers used the interethnic fragile relations, stereotypes and clichés to subvert the balance among the population of Greece and create hatred and discrimination.

17 Interview, 7 September 2011, Athens.

18 This is the case of the Chams, for instance. Being Muslim, the Chams belonged to the privileged class during the Ottoman Empire and owned the majority of territories in the region of Epirus and Chameria (region of today Albania). Thus, since Greece's independence and particularly under Metaxas's dictatorship, they have lost all their properties and have suffered discrimination by the rest of the population. Their condition was reverted during the Occupation, when they got all their privileges back thanks to German support, hence becoming collaborators of the Axis.

19 In 1492, the then rulers of the Spanish kingdom, Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile, declared the expulsion of all the *Marranos* (Jews) and the *Moriscos* (Muslims) who inhabited the Iberian Peninsula and who did not want to be baptized (Mazower: 47, 2004). The newly born Ottoman Empire welcomed the Spanish refugees, aware of Jews' valuable and practical skills. Salonica became the largest and the most important Jewish centre in the Balkans; more than half of the population was Jewish, and exercized effective economic and cultural control of the city. Still in the twentieth century, Jews defined themselves neither as Greek, nor Spanish nor citizens of the Ottoman Empire but simply as Salonikans (Mazower, 402, 2004).

1.2 "Of all the doctrines follies which communism has imposed on KKE, none was more fatal than the National Question"[20]

Talking about minorities and their role during the Occupation, it is unavoidable to linger over the Slavo-Macedonians who inhabited Greece, at that time. One of Bulgaria's primary goals of the war was to take the territories of the Greek Macedonia back. The Greek-Bulgarian conflict over Macedonia have lasted since the Independence of Greece, and it exacerbated during the Second Balkan War, when Greece regained a big part of today Greek Macedonia, comprised of Salonika. Hence, the Bulgarian government organized a strong propaganda for gaining support mainly among the Slavo-Macedonians in Greece, advocating the separation of the Greek part of Macedonia and the unification to Bulgaria. Many of them sided with the Axis power, identifying themselves as Bulgarian Macedonians. However, interesting enough, not all the Slavo-Macedonians joined this cause on the side of the Slavic country. In fact, a huge part of them fought with resistance group EAM. The latter group of Slavo-Macedonians represented a strong lobby in the KKE, indeed (Kofos, 287, 1993). However, they did not join EAM because wanted to preserve the integrity of the Greek territory. On the contrary, they founded the SNOF (Slavic Popular Liberation Front) and required Macedonia (both the Greek part and the Bulgarian) to be independent after the war was over. In their request, they were highly backed by Yugoslavia that eventually played a key role in this question. The SNOF "began talks with Tito's Anti-Fascist Council of Yugoslavia in late 1943 to explore the possibility of an enlarged Macedonia entering the proposed Yugoslav federation"[21] (Van Meter: 74, 1995).

The Macedonian question, or *National Question* as it often referred to in Greek academic literature, has been a burning argument for the Greek Communist Party for many years. During the 20s, in order to gain a massive popular support in the Macedonian part of Bulgaria, the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Party, proposed the formation of a united and independent Macedonia and Thrace within in a broader Balkan Federation (Kousoulas: 54-70, 1965; Kofos, 1989). Thus, in its request, the Bulgarian CP needed support by the KKE and the Yugoslav CP. At the beginning, the KKE was not satisfied with this decision. Macedonia, indeed, represented a significant region in Greek representation of the nation. However, the Central Committee of the KKE was not in harmony on this issue. In 1924, after lots of pressure by the CPY and the Comintern, the KKE signed the agreement for collaboration to the creation of an independent Macedonia and Thrace. Since then, the KKE has

20 Woodhouse, foreword to *Revolution and Defeat* by Kousoulas, p. VII, 1965.

21 During the Greek Civil War, the leadership of the SNOF eventually split. Some military units headed by Keramitsev and Gotse moved to Yugoslavia because in their opinion the KKE hampered Tito's project of an independent Macedonia within the Balkan Federation (See Mihailidis, 2005). Many other SNOF fighters, instead, remained on the side of the DSE. In fact, the Slavo-Macedonians constituted a large and strong part of the DSE (Kofos, 1989).

been accused of treachery by the Greek population; to the extent that during Metaxas regime a law was approved that equate Communism to sedition (Kofos: 279-282, 1993). However, though until 1935 the directives from the KKE were in support of this cause, the Central Committee has always avoided saying it openly, since it would cause further disappointment among the population. Since Zachariadis became General Secretary, the Macedonian cause for independence was abandoned. In fact, being the Macedonian question too important to Greeks, it hampered the participation of the masses to the KKE. The new slogan adopted called for the equalities of all the minorities in Greece (Kousoulas, 70, 1965).

"Nor other issue had such diverse repercussions as the Macedonian question" (Kofos: 274, 1993) had at the national and international level. In fact, since the 1920s, different actors took advantages from the question to achieve opposite results. Under Metaxas's dictatorship and by the Germans as well, it was used to create distrust and hatred towards the KKE. On the Communist side instead, the KKE joined the cause for an independent Macedonia, or dropped it depending on the internal and international situation. On his side, Tito's main goal on Macedonia was to form a greater Macedonia under the aegis of a Balkan Federation where Yugoslavia would have been the pivotal country. Thus, it brought also to Soviet Union to concern about these territories in order to hamper the realization of Tito's plan (Vukmanovic: 85-92, 1951).

1.3 "We will not say that Greeks fight like heroes, but that heroes fight like Greeks"[22]: the Greek resistance.

Before referring to the stances of the international and Greek scholars on the interpretation of the Greek Civil War events through a historiographic approach, it is worth summarizing briefly the historical events. In fact, the balance of power in Greece at the beginning of the 1940s and the complex relation among the resistance movements, the British SOE (Special Operations Executive), and the Greek government in exile constitute much key information that help understanding the crucial turning point of 1944-1945, when in Greece, it became more important to fight the EAM/ELAS resistance movement, rather than the Nazi collaborators.

During WWII, EAM has been the main resistance organization to the Occupation forces. It was founded by the KKE in July 1941 as EEAM (Εθνικό Εργατικό Απελευθερωτικό Μέτωπο - National Workers' Liberation Front) and then renamed EAM. Indeed, the word "workers" implied communist goals rather than national liberation and it would have confined the movement just to a small part of the population. At the beginning of the 40s, in fact, the majority of Greeks were suspicious of Communist ideology, goals, and slogans (Kousoulas, 148, 1965). The Greek Communist Party was negatively perceived in Greece

22 Wiston Churchill, 1941. http://greekembassy.org/Embassy/Content/en/Article.aspx?office=1&folder=361&article=19051

because of the propaganda disseminated on large scale by the Metaxas's regime, during the previous decade. Consequently, the KKE chose not to call for People's Republic, social rights and other values alien to the Greek population. This time, the KKE called the Greek nation for national survival and for liberation against the occupiers[23]: "patriotism rather than revolutionary zeal was the criterion" (Smith, 59, 1993) for choosing the partisans. Therefore, although other guerrilla groups existed, EAM immediately achieved huge success, encouraging people of all ages and both sexes to join the resistance. Moreover, the experience of the KKE in illegal activities, gained during the previous regime, made of EAM the strongest and best-organized resistance movement (Clogg, 2002).

After few months, the military branch of EAM, ELAS (Greek People's Liberation Army), was founded and its Kapetanios[24] became Aris Veleouchiotis. Velouchiotis, his real name was Athanasios Klaras, was the head of a small resistance group in the mountains that eventually joined the EAM. Indeed, EAM was not the sole resistance force in Greek territory. In each region, particularly in the beginning, there were many small resistance movements organized by local people. Nevertheless, the more EAM/ELAS, EDES and EKKA became known, the more small groups merged into the larger organizations. EDES and EKKA were the two other major resistance movements that require to be mentioned. The former, EDES was founded in the summer 1941, as well and focused its activities especially in the region of Epirus. It was not as large as the EAM/ELAS and it was headed by Napoleon Zervas, a staunch supporter of the republic, who eventually became one of the most faithful monarchists[25]. Indeed, he was determined to abandon his republican believes if necessary, but to fight with Great Britain against the Communists. EKKA (Εθνική και Κοινωνική Απελευθέρωσις - National and Social Liberation) instead, founded by the Generals Psarros and Kartalis, was a small organization, but its importance laid in its leader Psarros "the most efficient in the field" (Wallance, 1943 in Clogg doc. 119, 2002). EKKA regarded the Communists and the Slavs as the two greatest danger of Greece. Henceforth, it aligned itself with EDES against ELAS.

As Smith (1993) points out, the target of the resistance movements were not only the German, Italian and Bulgarian troops but also their collaborators, which means other Greeks. The conflict amongst compatriots began along with the war against the occupation forces but since 1942-1943, it became even more important than fighting the Axis armies. In fact, according to Smith, two types of conflict characterized Greece during 1943-1944,

23 It should be added that in the beginning it was not clear to everyone that behind EAM there was the KKE. Wallance claims that "EAM is much larger organization than EDES, though it would command fewer adherents if its real aims were known and people free express their opinion" (Wallance, 1943 in Clogg doc. 121, 2002). Kousoulas (1965) argues that it was made on purpose by the KKE to remain hidden and to speak only in the name of EAM in order to avoid sentiments of hostilities. On the contrary, Smith argues that the KKE "did not use the resistance movement as a cover for specifically Communist goals [...] from the very beginning EAM and the KKE tried to include in the movement liberal bourgeois parties and personalities, even royalists, provided they would fight the Axis" (Smith, 59, 1993). Thus, their primary aim was the war against the Axis and not the communist revolution.

24 The *kapetanios* was the head of the partisans in the mountains (*andartes*). In fact, the Greek partisans operated above all in the mountain regions. To say it with Woodhouse "without them [the Greek mountains] no guerrilla movement could have been born" (XIX, 2002).

25 The British Major D.J. Wallance, after visiting Greece during the summer of 1943, said about Zervas: "He professes democratic and radical social views, but the one entirely serious plan in his policy is probably his sincere conviction that Greece's future and interests are absolutely bound up with Great Britain and that therefore friendship and cooperation with Great Britain must take precedence over every other consideration" (Wallance, 1943 in Clogg, doc. 119, 2002).

in addition to the war against the invaders: the conflict against the collaborationists and the fighting that erupted among the resistance movements at the end of 1942. This is considered the first phase of the Greek Civil War. The first attack on another resistance organization was made by Veleouchiotis in December 1942. However, strikes became more organized and offensive in 1943 (Close, 4, 1993).

1.4 "They regard the Germans as a less enemy"[26]: the first round.

On 29 September 1942, the first military units of the Allied Powers arrived in Greece. On that day, the British SOE (Special Operations Executive), headed by Brigadier Myers, parachuted in the Greek territory. Their task was to cut the contact between the Northern and the Southern part of Greece because this was a key way for supplying the Nazi Afrika Korps, which had threatened British General Headquarters in Egypt. The operation at the Gorgopotamos railway viaduct "was one of the most spectacular acts of resistance in occupied Europe" (Clogg, XII, 2002), organized by the British SOE in collaboration with the resistance movements, it cut the contacts between Athens and Thessaloniki for six weeks. From 1942, the SOE was ordered to remain in Greece to support the resistance and for making Germans believe that the next invasion would have occurred in Greece and not in Italy. Since then, British involvement in Greek affairs increased significantly.

When the clashes erupted between ELAS and EDES, British SOE was afraid of the consequences they could have on the war against the Axis powers. Furthermore, by 1943 "the close connection between EAM and KKE was becoming unmistakable" (Woodhouse, 31, 1976) and Churchill realized that this situation could have had catastrophic results on his calculations about Greece at the end of the war. In his report, Wallance writes about ELAS "certainly almost all the political advisers are Communists, and a great deal of propaganda called 'enlightenment' or political education has been done" (Wallance, 1943 in Clogg doc. 122, 2002). However, he writes, he did not know to what extent Communist ideology had penetrated the ranks of ELAS. Nevertheless, British SOE knew that now the situation had to be handled *with delicacy* (Woodhouse, 31, 1976). Hence, even though continued feeding ELAS for the resistance against Nazi troops, they established close relations with Napoleon Zervas, head of the EDES[27], who by 1943 was willing to become "a bulwark

26 Woodhouse, *Struggle for Greece*, p.34, 1976.

27 Smith opposes this theory, affirming that British did not exploit the situation in 1943 with postwar goals in mind (61, 1993). Their aim was the victory against the Germans. Consequently, they induced the resistance organizations to sign the National Bands Agreement (June 1943) in order to create a Joint Guerrilla General Headquarters and coordinate all the resistance movements. In Smith's view, British actions were meant to stabilize the situation hence to give aid neither to ELAS nor to EDES. Eventually, he states, the EDES found support for its campaign against ELAS in the Germans. It is recorded, in fact, that in certain situations, Zervas even collaborated with the Germans to destroy ELAS. This is why in January 1944 ELAS was willing to come to terms for an agreement with EDES (the Plaka Agreement), because it could not anymore fight on two fronts (Axis and EDES).

against Communist domination of Greece during as well as after the occupation" (Smith, 62, 1993). In fact, the question about the post-occupation settlement of Greece was becoming of vital importance.

When in 1940 Greece was occupied, the King and his entourage fled to Cairo to the British GHQ, where the official Greek government in exile was established. The government was weak if not completely inexistent and it had no effective control over the resistance movements. After Metaxas's death, in Greece remained a political vacuum that needed to be filled the nearer the liberation was getting. In fact, the country was in the hands of the resistance armies[28]. Each of them controlled part of Greece, in relation to the territories it had liberated[29]. Hence, the fear of one emerging over the other was becoming true once Axis troops would have left the country. In 1943, EAM/ELAS and EDES "regarded the Germans as a less enemy" (Woodhouse, 34, 1976). Although spare events of collaboration occurred, as the successful operations of the Gorgopotamos and Asopos viaducts, EAM/ELAS and EDES's main goal was the elimination of the other in order to guarantee for them the power in postwar Greece.

For Great Britain, the Greek postwar arrangement was obviously part of a broaden discourse, which appeared in 1943: who is going to be the political elite of the new postwar Europe? What are the victorious powers going to gain after the war? How is Germany going to be?. Until 1943, Churchill had clear answers in mind to these questions. His plan included the hegemony of the British Empire and of the United States over the devastated countries of Europe (Boffa, 1979). Unfortunately for him, in 1943 he had to welcome another great power to the roundtable of the decisions: the Soviet Union. The USSR, at that time, had hardly fought against the enemy for their homeland, even forcing German troops to withdraw until Berlin. Consequently, the USSR was perceived as the victorious power all over Europe. This international situation inevitably affected also Churchill's plans on Greece.

Greece was crucial to British policy in the Mediterranean Sea primarily for its location, since it guaranteed the control of the trade routes through both Straits (Dardanelles and Suez). Furthermore, Greece's location in the Mediterranean was vital for the imperial sea communication in order to reassert British power in the colonies, which was already decreasing. In addition, Greece stood at the crossroads of the oil trade from the Middle East to Europe (Sfikas, 310, 1991). Nevertheless, there has always been a main adversary to British policy in Greece: Russia, and also in 1943 the Churchill's biggest fears came from the East.

As far as British policy in 1943 is concerned, Smith's theory can be accepted. However, it is worth noting that, as it is further demonstrated, the more the victory of the Allies forces approached, the more Churchill became obsessed with Greece's postwar arrangement.

28 "There is no central authority or State machine in Free Greece. Administration is on a village basis, a mixture of the old Demarch and village council on the one hand, and the new EAM *ypevthinos* [the responsible] and the village Committee on the other" (Wallance, 1943, in Clogg, doc. 119, 2002).

29 In particular, the largest part of Free Greece was controlled by EAM. "It [EAM] has a highly developed and efficient civil organization [...] the efficiency and the wide extension were in the early days built up by force [...] this unpopular conscription was backed when need be by looting, burning, torture, rape and murder. Whereas Zervas has always paid for everything his bands use" (Wallance, 1943 in Clogg doc 121, 2002). Wallance was openly supporting Zervas and his organization. However, it is completely true that ELAS in many occasions used force to affirm its power.

1.5 Did Stalin and Churchill divide Europe?

A crucial question has been debated by many scholars, Greek, international and Russians, about the role of Stalin and Churchill in the domestic affairs of Greece. The core of the debate has been for years the percentage agreement about the Balkan Peninsula between Stalin and Churchill in 1944. To what extent this agreement caused the Greek Civil War and influenced its outcome is highly debatable.

Until 1943, Churchill did not consider the USSR as great power; consequently, he did not even take into consideration the role it could have in the postwar Europe (Boffa, 1979; Gorodetsky, 1988; Kedros, 1968). "Churchill was a fervent custodian of Britain's imperial grandeur – 'a full-blooded imperialist'" (Sfikas, 309, 1991) nevertheless his position was under threat. In 1943, the Red Army started its march to Europe, liberating all the countries occupied by the Axis powers. As a consequence, "the USSR appeared in Europe's eyes as a great power, and not humiliated as Churchill hoped" (Boffa, 181, 1979). On his way down to Europe, Stalin required his demands not only to be considered, but also to be accepted by the Allies. "The coming victory was bound to bring the USSR to new heights of strategic and political influence" (Pechatnov: 90, 2010). Thus, from that moment ahead, British imperialism had to come to terms with Soviet communism.

Between the two western Allies and USSR, there has always been distrust, to the extent that even after the treaty of alliance "the mutual doubt of dealing with the devil never disappeared" (Boffa, 163, 1979)[30]. Therefore, in particular after Soviet victories and rapid advance to Europe, a new treaty urged on Europe's postwar arrangement. United States and particularly Great Britain were worried about the spreading of the socialist revolution mainly in countries, as Greece, Italy and France were the resistance movements were mostly communist-led. Churchill's fears of a communist take-over in Greece were increasing, to the degree that he even thought to open the Second Front in the Balkans. The Front would not be opened to help the USSR against the Germans, as frequently Stalin asked, but to stop USSR's advance in Eastern Europe (Boffa, 181, 1979; Kedros, 361, 1968). In fact, Churchill was frustrated as long as he could not influence the events, primarily the Soviet advance in Eastern Europe[31] (Tsakaloyannis, 40, 1986).

30 As Gorodetsky highlights, Soviet historiography, on the contrary, underlines the mutual sentiment of peaceful cooperation and trust between the Allied Powers (See Boltin, 1975; Norochnitskii, 1974), as if "glossing over disagreements in the past paves the way towards a new rapprochement" (Gorodetsky: 147, 1988).

31 Churchill's fears of Soviet intervention in Greece were partly unfounded, since Stalin had frequently said or showed that he was not interested at all in Greek affairs. As Baev says Churchill's fears were "excessive" (1999). Firstly, according to Woodhouse, the officer of the British SOE in Greece, "the Soviet government was indifferent to Greece and ill-informed about the Balkans during the whole occupation" (23, 1976). Secondly, clear signs of the future Soviet policy in Greece were already noticeable in April 1944. On that month, the Greek official army in Cairo mutinied and the British forces were ordered to fiercely bloc it; without any kind of disapproval from Stalin. Thirdly, in May 1944 Eden, the British Foreign Secretary and Gusev, the Soviet Ambassador, agreed on Great Britain having a *main concern* on Greek affairs and

Furthermore, Churchill's main worries came from the fact that EAM/ELAS enjoyed active support among the population, thus having great chance of victory, especially if backed by the USSR[32]. Hence, he needed Stalin's assurance that he would not intervene in Greece to support a communist-led revolution after the Second World War was over. "British policy towards Greece was conditioned by the thesis, […] that the Middle East and the eastern Mediterranean were vital to the security of Britain's world position" (Sfikas, 310, 1991). Furthermore, Churchill was aware of the British gradually loss of power on the colonies. Consequently, his main aim was to reassert British supremacy, and Greece was British outpost in the Mediterranean to do it (Gorodetsky, 1988). Besides a communist takeover, it was central to his plan the King's return. King George II, in fact, was expressly anglophile, principally after British enormous support during the war. The only state that could hamper his plans was the Soviet Union. Thus, the urgency and importance of the situation forced Churchill on 9 October 1944 to fly to Moscow in order to meet personally Marshal Stalin and finalize with him an arrangement on the Balkan Peninsula[33].

Apparently, the future of millions of people was decided in five or less minutes by two "big" men. Although Churchill was going to stay a couple of days in the Soviet capital, according to the account he gives in *The Second World War*, they had the meeting the same night the British Prime Minister arrived. This shows the importance of the issues they had to discuss. Through a tick, according to Churchill's account, Stalin agreed to maintain a 90% control over Romania, 50% on Yugoslavia and Hungary, 75% on Bulgaria, and 10% on Greece. The main exchange was Romania – Greece. Even though the communist party in Romania was almost inexistent, and in Greece, it mobilized mass popular support, Stalin had at least two major reasons for wanting Romania. Firstly, because of its geographic position, since it bordered with USSR and thus it was "a crucial security zone on their [Soviets'] western frontier" (Pechatnov: 97, 2010) and secondly it assured USSR control over the Black Sea. Greece was far away from the Socialist country and did not constitute a threat for USSR[34]. About Hungary and Yugoslavia, there were no problems in defining the percentages. In consideration of the fact that there were not major interests of one superpower or the other in these countries, they agreed to maintain a joined control.

Churchill's account makes the event appearing so easy and smooth that it is almost terrifying if is considered that through percentages they decided the future of millions of people. In fact, despite the fact that it was done to "prevent civil war breaking out in several countries" (Churchill, 198, 1953) and further conflicts after WWII was over, the noble gesture did

USSR over Romanian (Boll, 36, 1984). However, Churchill was afraid of a change in Soviet policy because of the KKE controlling the biggest part of Free Greece. By the summer of 1944, the British Prime Minister had become almost obsessed with preventing a communist take-over in the Hellenic country (Clogg, 2002; Sfikas, 1991; Tsakaloyannis, 1986).

32 According to Wallance in the summer of 1943, there was "no danger of EAM or Communism triumphing in Greece, except possibly as part of a vast Pan-Balkan movement aided by the USSR" (138, Clogg 2002). Consequently, when in Septemeber 1944 Stalin entered Romania and Bulgaria, the threat of a Socialist Balkan Federation was likely to happen, thus, a treaty among the Big Three on Balkan arrangement urgently needed.

33 At the meeting, the US President missed because of the electoral campaign. However, in a telegram addressed to Stalin and Churchill he affirmed that even though he could not be present, he wanted to underline that the USA were interested in each single matter of the war (Resis, 1978).

34 The Central committee of the Soviet Union did not have any interest in the victory of the revolutionary movements in Greece, since Greece was far in the spatial meaning from the USSR and it was out of the USSR's sphere of influence (Vukmanovic, 9, 1951)

not work in Greece. In Greece, not only erupted the war but it also was one of the bloodiest civil war of the XX century. Furthermore, with regard to the percentage agreement, three key aspects should be taken into account. Firstly, Churchill did not specify what the percentages were for, what they meant on the ground. He writes that the percentages were the degree of interest each side had on these countries (Churchill: 200, 1953). However, this did not imply that neither Great Britain nor Soviet Union could interfere in the states' internal affairs, something that actually was not respected. Secondly, Churchill in his account does not mention the second meeting that occurred between Eden and his Russian colleague Molotov, on the next day. This meeting was not as smooth as the previous one between the Bigs.

For several days, they could not reach a compromise on Bulgaria. During WWII, Bulgaria joined the war on the Axis side and it was not occupied by any Allied powers. Thus, there was the question about who should have a greater say in the country. Churchill main concern was the likely creation of a greater Bulgaria thanks to Soviet support[35] that could undermine British position in Greece. In fact "confronted by the overwhelming power of the Red Army everywhere in south-eastern Europe except in Greece and Albania, the British asked for an equal share of power within the Allied Control Commission (ACC) for Bulgaria" (Resis, 381, 1978). Already in September, Churchill had asked for an equal position in the ACC and for the withdrawal of the Bulgarian troops from Greece and Yugoslavia. Though the agreement was signed, nothing changed on the ground. Thus, in October they posed anew the retreat of the troops as prerequisite for opening the armistice with Bulgaria. However, something important changed in respect to September. Great Britain accepted Soviet Union being the Chairman of the Joint Military Mission in charge of verifying the withdrawal (Resis, 382, 1978). Nevertheless, the last point was not approved by the United States, which could not agree on having a minor role than the USSR in the ACC on Bulgarian affairs (Resis, 382-383). However, in the end, contrary to what decided, the Bulgarian Armistice was signed in Moscow without the supervision of British or American ministers.

The third point is the most discussed. Many historians have posed the question if the meeting has ever happened. When the book by Churchill was published in 1953, Soviet historiography completely denied the existence of the meeting, as well as the Soviet authorities did (Zemskov, 1958; Boratynskii, 1959; Turkhanovskii, 1969). They could not agree in principle with such an imperialistic way of making policy (Resis, 369, 1978). Certainly, it raised lots of discussion and consternation in the Western circles too, historical and political. Nowadays, almost all the scholars agree that the meeting was held, also because it is mentioned in other memoirs. Nevertheless, many of them affirm that at the time when it occurred it was not as important as Churchill wants us to believe (Tsakaloyannis, 1986). Indeed, the accord was "signed" as temporary, principally because the US president was not present and pressed both USSR and Great Britain to avoid Europe's division in spheres of influence, especially before the war was over and was not. However, as Sfikas says "Churchill's histrionic account of the meeting has recently been de-dramatized, but still it is remarkably indicative of his determination to have a free hand in his Greek pursuits" (Sfikas, 317, 1991).

35 Soviet Union required the first say on Bulgaria, claiming at the cultural affinities between the two countries and their traditional relations. Moreover, Soviet Union was in a better position than Great Britain because it had already entered Bulgaria in September.

In conclusion, on October 1944 through a tick Stalin remarked his lack of interest in Greek affairs, letting British have the major say in the country[36]. Few months later at the Yalta Conference, General Secretary appeared interested in Greek affairs, asking Churchill about the situation in Greece. He knew that British troops had just harshly crushed ELAS and he "was pleased about this because it represented a precedent for him to do the same in Eastern Europe" (Baerentzen and Close, 92, 1993).

1.5 "When the people face the danger of the tyranny they choose either the chains or the arms": *Ta Dekemvriana*

De-dramatizing the percentage agreement, much importance is attached by the scholars to the events that preceded the agreement. In 1943-44, the conflict between ELAS and EDES was going on, despite British attempts to hamper it through the National Bands Agreements. Finally, at the end of February 1944, EAM/ELAS asked for a permanent truce. The Plaka Agreement was proposed by Aris Veleouchitis to Napoleon Zervas for truce and collaboration against the Axis powers. Needless to say, the agreement was mostly in favour of EAM and it was not confined to military questions. Indeed, Veleouchiotis also proposed to set a preparatory governmental committee that would have coped with political problems. However, this part was categorically refused by the government in exile hence, not signed by EDES and EKKA. The main point supported by EAM stated that resistance movements "will maintain the positions which occupy today" (Clogg, doc. 169, 2002). This was a crucial point, since at that time EAM controlled majority of Free Greece's territory. Strangely enough, despite this and other declarations in favor of EAM/ELAS, the armistice was highly supported by the British government. The British SOE was satisfied with the agreement because of two main reasons: first, it stopped the conflict among the guerrilla units and secondly because of a secrete clause attached to the armistice. The clause stated that the resistance movements would cooperate to the Noah's Ark Operation, the operation for liberating Greece, and would "facilitate the infiltration of special British and American units designed to take part in the operations" (doc. 169, Clogg, 2002). Consequently, Great Britain had a valid reason for sending more troops to Greece and balance EAM influence, without being hindered in its mission by EAM itself (Kousoulas, 178, 1965).

In fact, the major military force was EAM, yet. Notwithstanding the Plaka Agreement, the situation got worse for British plans in March-April of the same year. In fact, on 10 March 1944 EAM established in Free Greece the PEEA (Political Committee of National Liberation). The PEEA did not focus only on military tasks, but on the contrary, it was con-

36 Notwithstanding the percentage agreement, it is crucial not to consider the following events and particularly the outcome of the Civil War solely in the light of the accord. In fact, also other factors deeply influenced the development of the conflict in Greece.

stituted as political body. Its main task was "the preparatory work for the return of the country upon liberation to a normal political life, with the aim of assuring the sovereign rights of the Greek people and of combating any attempts at coup d'état or dictatorships which oppose the freely expressed will of the Greek people, from wherever and whomever they originate" (Clogg: 172-173, 2002). Meanwhile this declaration was spreading among the population, another significant event, in favour of EAM, occurred in the Middle East: the mutiny of the Royal Army. According to Mourelos and Mihailidis (2007), the mutiny in Egypt was a clear demonstration of the fact that EAM dominated in Greece. Hence, British policy urged to be more influential otherwise, a communist takeover was likely to happen.

The growth of British influence became visible on 20 May 1944 when all the resistance armies were prompted to sign the Lebanon Agreement. On this occasion, EAM/ELAS faced for the first time, since the beginning of the Second World War, a well-organized opposition that prepared an agreement not anymore favourable to EAM as the previous one (Kousoulas, 189, 1965). The Lebanon Agreement concentrated all the powers in the newborn Greek Government of National Unity, whose Prime Minister was appointed Georgios Papandreou. The military part of the Lebanon Agreement was discussed in the Caserta Agreement, the *trap*[37] as Kedros defines it (452, 1968). The Caserta Agreement unified all the resistance armies, comprised of the ELAS, under the command of the British General Scobie to fight against the Axis. However, EAM still enjoyed large support and was the leading actor in Greece, to the extent that it fiercely opposed at first the Prime Minister and required all the key ministries of the new government to be assigned to the PEEA[38].

Nevertheless, the Lebanon and later the Caserta agreements and the crash of the mutiny were three evident demonstrations of the hardening of the British policy towards Greece. The way British forces treated the soldiers that mutinied in Middle East was extremely harsh (Kedros, 1968). Furthermore, for Churchill the turning point was Soviet non-intervention on this occasion. Neither Marshal Stalin intervened, nor did he concern about Greece. "The mutiny in Middle East in April 1944 paved the way for the percentages agreement" (Stavrakis, 4, 1989). Stalin's lack of interest in Greece was demonstrated anew in the beginning of May, when Gusev and Eden first talked and agreed on an arrangement on Romania and Greece. Accordingly, the USSR gained a predominant control over Romania and Great Britain over Greece, but only for the wartime period (Kedros, 451, 1968). In Kedros's view, by mid-June, also the Greek government in exile had been informed of Stalin's indifference about Greece.

The arrival of the General Popov, sent from Moscow to Athens, remarked the change. The Soviet General gave order to the KKE to join the government and support the Prime Minister Papandreou. "Stalin sent his little colonel to Greece to frustrate the revolution fervor in Greece" (Tsakaloyannis, 49, 1986). Moreover, it is supposed that he, under instructions from Moscow, induced the Central Committee of EAM to sign the Caserta Agreement[39] (Kousoulas, 196, 1965). The first results of this state of affairs showed up on 18 Octo-

37 It was a trap for the EAM because, although it envisaged a coalition government and the formation of one army, it actually aimed at the immediate demilitarization of the ELAS.

38 EAM gave up to its requests after Soviet order to join the National Government (Stavrakis, 1989).

39 The history about the Colonel Popov is highly questioned by Tsakaloyanis (cfr. Tsakaloyannis, 1986)

ber 1944. On that day, the parade in honor of the Greek victory against the Axis powers was organized and EAM/ELAS was not invited to take part to (Kousoulas, 1965; Woodhouse; 1976). The government was gradually getting support from the population, thanks to British backing, and the opposition parties were more united and organized in one front against EAM/ELAS. "Indeed, the forces against EAM were strong enough to pose a problem which increased, the nearer the liberation approached" (Smith, 60, 1993).

On 28 November 1944, the Prime Minister of Greece, Giorgios Papandreou, proposed a law, which enforced the resistance organizations to lay down their arms. Furthermore, a month later on 2 December, he ordered the disarmament and the dissolution of both ELAS and EDES. Until December, each side took defensive steps that appeared to the opposition as aggressive (Baerentzen and Close, 89, 1993). Consequently, the decision of disarming ELAS was perceived by EAM leaders as threat and decided to hold a massive peaceful demonstration against the new law on 3 December. Notwithstanding the peaceful character of the demonstration, the police opened fire on the crowd. Afterwards, clashes erupted in Athens, and in the region around, between the National Army of Greece, backed by the British army, and EAM/ELAS. According to Baerentzen and Close (1993), neither side was seeking the war. Conversely, Sfikas believes that while EAM tried not to have a direct confrontation with the British troops, Churchill was actually seeking a direct confrontation with ELAS, preparing British troops to the war (319, 1991). However, "the December events destroyed the last hope for peaceful solution" (Baerentzen and Close, 88, 1993).

The events, later remembered as *Dekemvrianà*, are defined by Close "the most formidable bout of civil conflict so far" (6, 1993). On that occasion, according to Kousoulas (213, 1965), the Communists lost the possibility of seizing power anew. Despite the internal situation was not as favourable to EAM/ELAS as a year earlier, British troops in Greek territory were not many yet and EAM was still the major force in Greece. However, despite the possibility of the KKE to declare the revolution, it is worth noting that the December events have been the test for the percentage agreement (Xydis, 1961), thus, probably, the British troops would win necessarily. In fact, at the beginning of the *Dekemvrianà*, Churchill in a message to General Scobie says, "you are responsible for maintaining order in Athens and for neutralizing or destroying all EAM/ELAS bands approaching the city. [...] Do not however hesitate to act as if you were in a conquered city where local rebellion was in progress" (Churchill, 1944 in Clogg, doc. 187, 2002).

The *Dekemvrianà* lasted less than two months. The armistice, known as the Agreement of Varkiza, was signed on 12 February 1945. After the agreement was signed, a harsh period for the left began. As aforementioned, during the previous year as well as the Second World War, EAM enjoyed enthusiastic support from the population. Nevertheless, not all the people were on the EAM side, particularly in the Northern part of Greece, as it is further explained. EAM, and chiefly its military wing ELAS, in some instances gained support by force, torturing and even sentencing to death many people who did not adhere to the movement or even were against it. The atrocities perpetrated by ELAS to impose its control over the villages, especially in Epirus and Rumelia, should not be forgotten (See Mazower: 17, 2000; Woodhouse: 63-64, 1976). Furthermore, EAM during WWII organized special units, the OPLA (Οργάνωση Προστασίας Λαϊκού Αγώνα - Organization for the Protection

of the People's Struggle), mainly engaged for assassinations of political persons. Nevertheless, many paramilitary actions occurred in Greek villages, nowadays are also imputed to the OPLA. Nicholas Gage, in his book *Eleni*, though partly romanticizing his mother's history and not being fully objective because of his personal involvement in the story he tells[40], presents a detailed picture of the ELAS atrocities in the North.

On the contrary, in 1945 after the Varkiza Agreement, the situation was reverted. The Communists became the victims. For the 30 years ahead, being a communist became almost a crime, punished even by death.

1.7 *National-minded and Traitors:* the White Terror of 1945-1946

The international literature has achieved an agreement in the reconstruction of the events that marked the White Terror of 1945-1946. According to the Varkiza armistice, all resistance movements had to be demobilized, "in particular the ELAS, both regular and reserve, ELAN [it was the naval branch of ELAS] and the National Civil Guard". Moreover, it was announced that the Government would start a campaign of purges of "the personnel of the public services, official of the public companies, local Government officials, and those of other services dependent on the State or paid by it. [...] The purge of the Security Services, the Gendarmerie and the City Police will be carried out as soon as possible [...]" (Clogg: 188-191, 2002). The criteria on the basis of which the purges had to be carried out, would have been "either professional competences, or character and personality, or collaboration with the enemy [for enemy it was considered the Axis powers] or utilization of the official as an instrument of the dictatorship". However, they wrote, "no official will be dismissed solely on account of his political opinion". In this regard, it is interesting to quote Gounaris's work in the Northern regions of Greece. He presents a clear account, on how the purges were carried out on the ground. "A common element in all various kinds on questionnaires [prepared by the police] was the additional question put to the directors of these departments [of public services] about the behavior of their employees during the Occupation, the period of EAM's rule and the *Dekemvriana*. [...] The reason was obvious. Every reference of cooperation, direct or indirect, with EAM/ELAS was underlined in red. The comments made by the supervisors included a standard vocabulary like 'pure patriot', 'national-minded', [...] anti-national etc. The jargon had been fixed and adopted *de facto* by Greek bureaucracy" (Gounaris, 183, 2004). On the basis of the research done, Gounaris affirms that this practice continued to be used until 1974.

Consequently, not only the purges were carried out according to one's political affiliation, but they also had a profound effect on people's everyday life. The anticommunist discourse could guarantee benefits as extra food and clothing, and especially work ac-

40 Nicholas Gage (1983). *Eleni*, Athens, Ellinikì Euroekdotikì.

tivities. In those years, Communism became the antonym of Patriotism (Gounaris, 178, 2004). Since 1945, the anticommunist atmosphere brought to a polarization of the forces, where police was much more interested in persecuting the left than the collaborators of the Axis powers (Close, 18, 2002). At the end of 1945, 6027 people imprisoned were regarded communists, against 2896 Greeks considered collaborators of the Nazi (Voglis, 143, 2004). "Whereas elsewhere in Europe prisons were flooded with Fascists and their collaborators, in Greece most of the prisoners were members of the leftist resistance organizations" (Voglis, 143, 2004). Many people who had successfully fought for their homeland were now imprisoned, guilty of being communists.

Interesting enough, the majority of them were not communists, since, as previously mentioned, during the occupation EAM attracted many Greeks, not necessarily communists. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that many of them became communists in prison, indeed. In fact, members of the KKE, who were in jail, constantly spread communist ideas, stirring the curiosity of the other prisoners. Sir R. Leeper, the British Ambassador in Athens, in a report of 1945 wrote: "The reason why large scale releases are urgently needed is [...] that prison has become a Communist training school sponsored by the Government" (Leeper, 1945 doc. in Voglis, 144, 2004). Despite the fact, that many people were released, for what said above and for other reasons as over-crowed prisons, in 1946 the condition in the prisons became much worse. Thus, the White Terror played a big role in forcing people abandoning the ELAS ranks. However, In Close's view (2002), without the British backing the Government could not organize such an anticommunist campaign.

Nevertheless, the Government failed from avoiding guerrilla activities. In the Central Committee of the KKE things changed when on 30 May 1945 Nikos Zachariadis, the general secretary of the KKE, came back to Greece from the Nazi concentration camp in Dachau, one of the worst concentration camp in the Balkans where it was imprisoned six years earlier. Once in Greece, Zachariadis immediately got the control of the party. At the 12th Plenum on June 1945, he said that Greece was "one of the most vital communication arteries of the British Empire" and that Great Britain was willing to do everything in its power to preserve it. Consequently, it was duty of the KKE to free Greece from the imperialistic subjugation of Great Britain (Kousoulas, 223, 1965). However, it is frequently claimed that he did not want the war (Mourelos and Mihailidis, 2007; Smith, 1995), and in particular a direct confrontation with the British troops. In the interview I did to Aleksey Zachariadis, Nikos Zachariadis's third son, on 13 September 2011, he repeatedly told me "Zachariadis did not want civil war in Greece to occur, he did not want it! His aim was to establish a Greek People's Democracy but without war". Until 1946, thus, the KKE made efforts to generate lawful parliamentary and political support among the population, avoiding the war. The change occurred in January-February 1946.

1.8 The Greek Civil War

Contrary to Stalin's suggestion, the Central Committee of the KKE decided to sabotage the parliamentary elections of March 1946 (Mourelos and Mihailidis, 2007). On the eve of the elections, strikes occurred in Athens and in the region around the capital. Nevertheless, Zachariadis was aware of the fact that without USSR and neighbouring states' aid, the KKE could not call for the revolution (Mourelos and Mihailidis, 21, 2007). Thus, in April 1946 he met both Josip Broz Tito in Belgrade and Josef Stalin in Crimea, to ask for support. As soon as the aid from Yugoslavia arrived (September 1946) Markos Vafiadis was sent by the party to the mountains, as General of the DSE (Democratic Army of Greece), the hereditary army of the ELAS.

Another factor that influenced the decision of entering the war was the plebiscite held in September of the same year to decide the future of Greece. At the end of the war, almost all the Greeks agreed at least on one question: the King must not return. However, when the plebiscite was held, the King's return was positively voted by the majority of the population (without the communists who decided to abstain from these elections, as well). As Kousoulas remembers, "the King was welcomed by a hysterically enthusiastic multitude" (238, 1965). It can be affirmed that Kousoulas is not fully objective; in fact, throughout the whole book anti-communist sentiments can be easily perceived probably due to the fact that Kousoulas was EAM prisoner. Nevertheless, because of the anticommunist campaign of which above and because of the spreading of the White Terror, particularly after the elections in March, it is easy to believe that lots of people in the two-year period 1944- 1946 saw the King as symbol of the nation and cornerstone of Greek national values (Iatrides, 9, 1995).

In September when the war erupted, the British government was aware of the scarcity of resources it had for keeping on supplying the Greek government. Consequently, it fixed March 1947 as the end of the aid. Thus, for Great Britain "there was a glimmer hope, not from Athens where the situation continued to worsen, but from across the Atlantic" (Iatrides, 200, 1993). In March 1947, as long as the British troops withdrew from Greece, a turning point in the world's history occurred: the US President Truman delivered his speech announcing the Truman Doctrine, the first US policy of containment towards the Communist expansion in the world. The United States decided to replace Great Britain in their mission in Greece "to ensure the insurgents' defeat fomented from abroad" (Iatrides, 5, 1995) and from that moment ahead, they became the main Greece's source for aid. Above all, the USA realised that the great importance of Greece lay not solely in its strategic location. What was important was the mission *per se*. Indeed, it would demonstrate and highlight the US place in the world in the struggle against the Communism, the new threat after fascism. The Greek Civil War was the first armed manifestation of the Cold War as well as the first

official acknowledgment of the spheres of influence. Greece was in the Western camp and the Western powers had to preserve its status of *free country*. Thus, since March 1947, the United States became directly involved in the Greek question. In the 20 years after 1947 the USA gave Greece 3.749 million $ aid (Close, 2002). Moreover, during the Civil War the US government deployed special units in Greece and trained Greek soldiers in the US camps.

Though suffering big losses, the DSE was still coping with the National Army. "Especially until March 1948, the DSE proved skillful guerrilla tactics" (Close, 37, 2002). Nevertheless, since autumn 1948, the DSE suffered heavy defeats until 1949, when it was completely defeated. The last battles occurred at Mount Grammos and Vitsi in August 1949. Afterwards only some guerrilla groups remained in the mountains until 1950. The other *andartes* fled to the Socialist countries or were imprisoned.

1.9 Stalin's policy towards Greece

Yet, it is wrong to consider Stalin completely indifferent to Greek affairs. In his studies, Stavrakis demonstrates that Stalin had various approaches to Greece, depending on the international and regional developments. At the beginning, he used Greece to *entice Churchill* and have Romania (Stavrakis, 3, 1989). Particularly, the non-intervention during the mutiny in Egypt "revealed the Soviet potential for capitalizing on the Balkans" (Stavrakis, 18, 1989). On the contrary, since 1945, the USSR reverted its policy towards Greece (Kousoulas, 229, 1965). It implemented a policy of gradual infiltration in order to maintain a pro-Soviet party and undermine British influence in the country. According the Pechatnov, the turning point in Soviet policy occurred in spring 1946. In point of fact, until that moment Stalin's main concern was "to turn the USSR into an invincible fortress against foreign enemies", i.e. the Western powers (Pechatnov: 91, 2010), thus to assure the USSR with a security zone. His strategy was based on a "defensive expansionism" which included the collaboration with the Allied Powers in order to prevent any conflict. Hence, to achieve his primary goal, i.e. "his country's security requirements" (Pechatnov: 95, 2010) Stalin did not oppose British-American dominance in Italy, France and Greece while in Central-Eastern Europe and in the Balkans he did not impose immediately a creeping Sovietization (Pechatnov: 92-95, 2010).

In 1946, Soviet strategies drastically changed. The buffer zone had been assured and the United States were becoming the main Soviet antagonist. Hence, the Kremlin started a full-scale Sovietization of the Eastern Europe, launched a propaganda campaign against the capitalism and "directed Western Communists to destabilize the 'capitalist economy' and to abort the implementation of the Marshall Plan" (Pechatnov: 105, 2010). Nevertheless, this change in strategy did not seek a direct confrontation with the West; on the contrary, conflict was always to be avoided.

The change in Soviet policy had effect also in Greece, where Stalin implemented a policy of "prudent expansionism" (Stavrakis, 1989). The core of the strategy was to maintain a strong Soviet lobby in Greece, while avoiding troubles with the United States[41] (Djilas, 1969; Gus'kova, 2000). Furthermore, this strategy not only was meant at weakening British and American influence in Greece, but also the role of a regional actor: Yugoslavia (Stavrakis, 1989, Gibianskii, 1991; 1997). Since the end of the war, the idea of a Balkan Federation was becoming closer to the realization and Stalin's main worry was Tito, to the extent that, according to Gibianskii "[…] Belgrade's Balkan policy was the fundamental and immediate cause of the crisis in Soviet-Yugoslav relations" (300, 1997). He undoubtedly was perceived as regional leader that could pose a threat to Soviet influence in the Balkans. In fact, Gibianskii points out that although both the Yugoslav and the Western literature on Tito-Stalin split give much importance to Stalin's fear of a likely USSR clash with the United States, this theory does not find correspondence in the Soviet documents. On the contrary, Stalin was worried by the fact that the "the Yugoslav intervention in the Greek Civil War would evolve beyond the Kremlin's control" (Gibianskii; 298, 1997).

Thus, anew the KKE, backed by Stalin, called Macedonia into question to reduce Tito's role in the Balkans and get further support among the Slavo-Macedonians in Greece who otherwise would have moved to Yugoslavia. Gus'kova (2000)[42] states, "Moscow tried to consolidate thoroughly its influence on the countries of Eastern Europe using these countries particularly as provocation against the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. It fomented disagreements between Yugoslavia and its neighbours, ethno-territorial conflicts; in particular, it strongly exploited the Macedonian question, counting on the intensification of the confrontations among Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Greece." In 1947, Soviet troops were redeployed from Romania to South Bulgaria and the KKE brushed up again the slogan for an independent Macedonia within a Balkan Federation, of course under Soviet leadership (Baev, 1999).

These events had consequences overall war. Indeed, even though the Western powers knew that the redeployment of the Red Army was meant at subverting Tito's aims, they feared a Soviet intervention in the Balkans. As a consequence, the Greek government affirmed that if this were the case, it would invade Albania (Kofos, 1993; Stavrakis, 1989) and the US aid increased. The latter condition brought to the final defeat of the KKE, which could not cope with such a well-equipped army.

In the end, Stalin did not gain anything in Greece from his policy of gradual infiltration but he succeeded in undermining Tito's position in the Balkans (Stavrakis, 204, 1989) while assuring his predominance in Eastern Europe.

41 Crucial to his strategy was gradualism in order avoid a US intervention. He was well aware of the fact that in the post-war order of the world he would cope with the United States and not with Great Britain (Stavrakis, 4, 1989). This is also, why he always asked for an approval by the USA to any accord with Churchill. To say it with Cadogan, it was evident that they were "two big men and a half". Moreover, Stalin preferred a gradual approach because he did not want a civil war to erupt: "the Soviets showed an interest in reconstructing KKE military force to be held in reserve for a future, apparently unspecified opportunity" (Stavrakis, 5, 1989).

42 Gus'kova E. (2000), Советско-Югославский конфликт, http://www.coldwar.ru/conflicts/yugoslaviya/conflict-1948-1953.php.

1.10 "The uprising on Greece must be stopped as quickly as possible" (I. Stalin)[43]: the end of the Civil War

Since 1946, the major supporter of the DSE in its struggle against the National Army was Yugoslavia. After having established the People's Democracy in Yugoslavia, Tito's aim was a Balkan federation. Consequently, he established close relations with the general secretaries of the other Balkan countries, especially of Greece and Bulgaria. However, while in Bulgaria the Communists were already in power, because of the Red Army intervention, in Greece the situation was different. Tito and Zachariadis met in Belgrade in April 1946, and on that occasion, Tito promised Zachariadis full support in the struggle against the imperialism. In fact, the Greek partisans needed huge aids not only for the war that was approaching but also for the recovery from the previous war (Kousoulas, 1965). Stalin too in 1946 promised Zachariadis Soviet help, but nothing from Moscow has ever arrived. On the contrary, from Yugoslavia in particular, but also from other socialist republics, huge quantities of materials arrived to Greece. The Yugoslav aid consisted of weapons and money but also of medicines, food reserves, clothes and shoes. Moreover, they provided in Yugoslav territory first aid to wounded people, hospitals, hospitality in family for the fighters' children, a radio station, and training camps for the *andartes*. Bulkes was the main centre for aid to Greece. There, it was established a Greek commune where all the inhabitants were Greeks. Refugees, approximately 5,000, started arriving since May 1945 (Koliopoulos and Veremis, 2002; Ristovic, 2006) escaping the White Terror which meanwhile had begun in Greece against the ELAS. Bulkes was regarded a kind of experiment of the perfect Soviet state (Ristovic, 2006). It was the KKE centre for recovering wounded people and training new reserves. In addition, Yugoslavia was also in charge of organizing the aid from the other EE countries and mediator with USSR (Ristovic, 98-107, 2006).

Consequently, the split between Tito and Stalin caused huge problems to the DSE, since Yugoslavia interrupted all the contacts with Greece. In June 1948, when the split occurred, the KKE avoided to accuse openly Tito, since it was aware of the consequences it could have on the conflict (Baev, 1999). In August, however, it was forced to declare an official position and it chose the Stalin's side. The cut of reserve and contacts and the closure of the Yugoslav border obviously gave a further push to DSE defeat. Nevertheless, this is not the sole factor that influenced the outcome. For many years, it has been claimed by the KKE that the disastrous end of the Civil War was all a Tito's fault. He was accused of treachery by the KKE, because in the summer of 1948 he stopped supplying the DSE, indeed. Nevertheless, Tito was chosen as scapegoat by the KKE for the failure of the revolution (Kousoulas, 270 1965). The reasons that brought the DSE to lose are various.

43 Milovan Djilas, (1969). *Conversation with Stalin*, Penguin Books, p.141.

In analyzing the outcome of the Greek Civil War, Iatrides affirms that there are *two stark realities* to take into consideration: first "the profound internal crisis", and second "the extraordinary degree of foreign manipulation and control" (Iatrides, 191, 1993). Tsakaloyannis focuses primarily on the first factor, namely the internal crisis. Making an analysis on the Greek CP and the Yugoslav CP during WWII and the different paths they underwent afterwards, he affirms that the difference "should be found in their variety inter-war stories, not in the percentage agreement" (Tsakaloyannis, 52, 1986), thus in the international intervention or non-intervention[44]. Similarly, also Mazower believes that the reason for the outcome of the war should be firstly searched in the Greek society, considering the Tito-Stalin split the last straw (Mazower, 1994). In fact, when the Tito-Stalin split occurred, the KKE had already lost its momentum of declaring the revolution. *Why did it happen?*

According to Vukmanovic (94, 1951), it was due to the completely wrong directives given by the CC of the KKE during the crucial periods of the struggle. Although he mainly refers to the KKE's decision to side with Stalin in 1948, the theory that KKE's main problem laid in its leadership is shared by other scholars (Iatrides, 1995; Kousoulas, 1965; Mourelos and Mihailidis, 2007). In Iatrides's view, in 1943 the KKE lost its momentum because of its leader's, Siantos, character of *non-acting*. When Zachariadis was deported, Siantos took the leadership role of the party. However, probably because he did not want to take such an important step without Zachariadis's consultation, he delayed the momentum. Meanwhile he hoped to achieve more political acceptance without war[45] (Iatrides, 10, 1995). Yet again, in 1945-1946 there was a strong domestic push for action (Stavrakis, 120, 1989). However, Zachariadis also avoided the war because there were no signals from Moscow. He was a fervent Stalinist, acting in accordance with the directives from Moscow.

Hence, at this point, another feature enters the analysis: the soviet directives and the impact they had on the KKE decisions of acting or not. In fact, the KKE declared the revolution only after Stalin's approval of going ahead in the struggle (Smith, 102, 1995)[46]. However, Stalin's behavior towards the KKE has been always ambiguous. If on one hand he allowed the KKE to struggle against the British, on the other he did not allow the KKE to participate at the Cominform's founding ceremony and prohibited that any public statement was done in regard to the Greek situation during the meeting (Papanastasiou, 2004). Stalin's way of acting since 1943 was ambivalent and can be explained only in the light of the policy explained above. In his conclusion, Stavrakis does not focus on the KKE leaders' sense of timing but on the *tempo* of the events controlled by Stalin. He affirms that, "Ironically, it was Stalin the person in whom Greek communism never lost faith, who played the decisive role in undermining the KKE's chances of success", indeed (Stavrakis, 203, 1989). Temporizing his decisions, he played with the destiny of the Greek people (Mourelos and Mihailidis, 25, 2007).

44 He claims that Stalin pressed much more Tito for a joint government with the King than the KKE, however the result was the opposite.

45 I claim that not only they did not start the war because of the sense of timing they had, but also, a crucial factor to consider is their feeling of self-confidence. They were sure of the fact that they had free hands in Greece and that the majority of the population supported them. Thus, this confidence brought them not to understand that things were changing and that may be they could lose their support.

46 In 1947 the situation was not favorable to a communist victory. Indeed, the government was backed by the USA and the opposition was stronger and united against communism (Iatrides, 10, 1995; Kousoulas, 271, 1965). However, until the end, Zachriadis was confident in a Soviet aid, which eventually did not arrive (Smith, 102, 1995).

Talking about Soviet policy towards Greece, we passed from the internal to the external factors that influenced the war outcome. Indeed, Stalin's behaviour can be considered as a sort of foreign intervention or non-intervention, which eventually had its consequences. It is commonly acknowledged as foreign intervention factor only the British and the US involvement in the war, mainly in the person of Churchill, who undoubtedly shaped deeply the events in Greece until 1947. Conversely, Stalin is generally regarded as the man that in 1944 sold Greece out and went off. Instead, as demonstrated by Stavrakis and partly by Pechatnov, he did continue influencing the development of the conflict.

Hence, I would say that both internal and external factors are crucial to a complete analysis of the war and the result cannot be attributed to this or that event. However, to say it with Iatrides, "even if the things would go differently [with regard to the internal situation], in the end the level of foreign intervention would spell the differences between winners and losers" (Iatrides, 17, 1995), and as foreign intervention I intend Soviet involvement too.

Second Chapter

The refugeeism

At the end of the Civil War, the Greek Communist Party ordered the Democratic Amy of Greece (DSE) to retreat in the neighbouring countries, namely Albania and Bulgaria. Hence, by September 1949 according to the KKE sources, approximately 56,000 people, both soldiers and civilians who supported the DSE were sheltered in these countries. This aspect of the Greek modern history is scarcely known, within the Greek, the Russian and the international academic community as well as almost unknown at the societal level (See Tsekou, 2008). Therefore, as underlined in the introductive chapter, the interviews that I got and the comparative evaluation with the documents far available in state and private archives represent a crucial source for the production of this thesis.

Hence, in the pages that follow, my primary source consists of the fieldwork that I carried out in Greece and Russia. The first section centers on the Greek community in Tashkent, and the second on the question of the children. Each paragraph starts with the answer given by one of the interviewees about the subject tackled and then I expand the topic through archival documents, articles and publications.

Greeks in Tashkent

2.1 "The war must be stopped today": the end of the Greek Civil War and the departure to the Eastern bloc

On 9 October 1949 during the 6th plenum of the Greek Communist Party that was held in Bureli (Albania), it was officially declared that the war against the *foreign imperialism* was over

and that the Democratic Army of Greece (DSE) would temporarily retreat, with the exception of some outlaw guerrilla units (Dokimio Istorias tou KKE, Vol. 2, 2011). Nevertheless, the famous slogan by the general secretary Nikos Zachariadis, "το όπλο πάρα πόδα – Gun at the Ready" continued to broadcast until around 1952, even though the party's elite knew that no war would come soon. Since August 1949, lots of meetings occurred among the high-ranking members of the KKE to discuss the reasons why the KKE lost a war that apparently should have already won many years earlier. Thus, their primary task was to find a vindication for such a defeat. Without a shadow of doubt, the most important of these meetings was held in the Crimea, near Lake Riza, with the participation of Stalin. During this gathering, the three reasons for the defeat were clearly defined once and forever. These were: the lack of reserves, the lack of supply and the treachery of Tito. Nevertheless, Zachariadis during the Sixth Plenum eventually inverted the causes' order, putting as the first reason Tito's treachery (Dokimio Istorias tu KKE, Vol. 2: 194, 2011).

The above Zachariadis' decision caused the formation of two factions within the elite of the KKE that came into conflict on many occasions, included the KKE schism of 1968. In fact, part of the elite did not agree with Zachariadis on assigning to Tito's treachery the disastrous outcome of the war. However, what is important to the aim of this work is another topic usually discussed during the meetings: how and where to withdraw the DSE, for how long, and with the help of whom.

In August-September 1949, the units of the DSE that fought on Mounts Grammos and Vitsi, where the final battles occurred, were ordered by the party to withdraw to Albania, while the units that fought in Eastern Macedonia and Thrace were ordered to cross the Bulgarian border[47] (See Tsekou, 2010). The majority of the DSE's units were concentrated in two Albanian cities, Elbasan and Bureli, awaiting new directives from the party. Thus, Bulgaria and especially Albania had to provide food, beds, medical care, for huge numbers of people crossing the borders every day beginning in August 1949[48] (Lampatos: 17, 2001, Van Boeschoten: 48, 2005). It is understood that these countries hardly bore such onerous costs; hence, they demanded urgent directives from Moscow. Moreover, before the DSE arrival, there were already thousands of Greek people in the Balkan countries. They were people that escaped to the neighboring countries before the war's end (Mihailidis, 2005).

In fact, for the entire duration of the civil war, the borders were opened between Greece and the newly born People's Democracies of the Balkans. Therefore, there was a continuous exchange not only of goods and weapons but also of people[49]. It is possible to identify at least

47 The Yugoslav border was closed after the Tito-Stalin split; consequently, any relocation of refugees to Yugoslavia was halted.

48 The total amount of refugees who fled after the civil war is counted 130,000 (Triandafyllidou and Maroufof: 8, 2009).

49 About the camps in Elbasan and Bureli and the hosting of Greek refugees in the Socialist republics before the war's end the US State Department wrote: "The camps, guarded by Albanian gendarmes, were used as transit and training centres for guerrillas, as permanent centres for non-combatants who had been evacuated from Greece, as clearing centres for children en route to other countries, and sometimes as detention camps for Greeks forcibly evacuated from Greece and hostile to the guerrilla cause. The following examples have been taken from the very large number of statements of witnesses giving detailed evidence of this system. The camp at Skodra, a former Italian barracks, was a centre for women, children and civilians and also a military camp for guerrillas. Estimates by witnesses as to the number of people there ran as high as 3,500. Military training courses were established at the camp at Sukth, beginning with fifty students in November 1948 and increasing to more than 600 by February 1949. One witness stated that this training was given both by Albanian and by guerrilla officers. At the beginning of March 1949, there were about 1,000 persons at the camp of Burrelli. Mr. Stringos, a member of the "Provisional Democratic Government of Greece" visited this camp at the end of February 1949. At the camp at Prens there were Greek families, forcibly removed by the guerrillas from the Grammos area, living in a former barracks. Two witnesses who had been in the camp stated that in it there were some 3,000 civilians and wound-

three groups of people that were already there for different reasons: first, the people that lived at the border. Often, they fled to the neighbouring countries to save themselves or their children from attacks or because they were forced by the Army to evacuate (See Danforth and Van Boeschoten: 53, 2012; Hradečný: 190, 2005[50]). Second, approximately 20,000 Greek children that since the end of 1947[51] were taken to Albania by the EVoP (Committee for Aid to the Child), a KKE organization, in order to rescue them from bombings or to train them as future Communist reserves[52]. The third group, instead, consisted of wounded soldiers who were sent to the Socialist Republics to recover and go back to Greece to fight. Thus, when around 12,000 *andartes*[53] from Mount Grammos and Vitsi arrived to Albania at the beginning of September (ASKI Archive, F= 20/33/74), the cost to help them proved to be too burdensome, mainly for countries that still had to recover from the Second World War themselves[54].

According to the report made by Bartzota during the 3rd Conference of the KKE, in October 1950, 55,881 people overall fled from Greece, 23,405 men, 14,956 women, 17,520 children, up to 17 years old. For the USSR alone, it is reckoned that 8,573 men and 3,407 women went to Tashkent (Episima Kimena, vol. 7: 480-536, 1995; Zhukova: 64, 2002).

2.2 The *necessary* departure from Greece

We escaped because it was necessary.
In Greece, fascists and Americans collaborated; we could not win.
(Mr. Dakoulas[55])

ed guerrillas. The camp at Elbasan, in a former Italian barracks, is a collecting centre and reinforcement depot. One witness testified that at the camp at Fier, in December 1948, he had seen some 400 Greek children who were being taken in a 30-truck convoy to Czechoslovakia" (US Department of State bulletin, Vol. 21, Jul- Sep 1949, 421).

50 Hradečný's analysis does not focus on villages that were forced to evacuate but on DSE prisoners, who eventually found themselves refugees in the Socialist countries.

51 The number of children gathered by the KKE is still in dispute. According to the KKE report, during the Third Congress of the KKE in 1950, there were 17,520 children already sheltered in the Socialist Republics (Episima Kimena, vol. 7: 480-536, 1995). However, this report does not inform about the children in Yugoslavia, since after the split with Tito no more information was provided by the KKE about the Greek refugees living there. On its side, the Yugoslav Red Cross counted 9,119 Greek refugee children in Yugoslavia in 1950. According to the latter data 7,274 out of 9,119 lived with their parents or close relatives, while 1,845 were sheltered in children's homes (Ristovic: 96, 2000). The figures provided by the EVoP in 1949 are 26,788 children, which indeed correspond to the sum of the KKE and Yugoslav Red Cross (Danforth and Van Boeschoten: 43-49, 2012). Nonetheless, since 7,274 children lived with their parents, in Danforth and Van Boeschoten's opinion, they cannot be counted among the children rescued by the KKE, which number subsequently decreases to about 20.000 (Danforth and Van Boeschoten: 49, 2012).

52 As mentioned already in the introduction to the chapter, according to the sources we want to refer to, i.e. filo-communist or filo-right, we will find one (to save them) or the other (to train them) motivation.

53 *Andartes* were the people fighting in the mountains on the side of the DSE. Literally, *andartes* means partisans.

54 To be more precise, the majority of the children by September 1949 had already been moved to the other Republics, mainly Romania. "[...] thousands of Greek children, contrary to the spirit of that resolution [the resolution of 27th November 1948 signed by the General Assembly of the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB) about the children's repatriation], have been transferred from one Soviet satellite state to another" (US Department of State bulletin, Vol. 21, Jul- Sep 1949, 409).

55 Mr. Georgios Dakouls, Preveza, 19.03.2012.

The main idea that emerges from the interviews I did, from the broadcast of "Radio Free Greece" and from declaration of the KKE in August 1949 (See "Charilaos Florakis" Archive, *"Radio Free Greece" Broadcasts*; Episima Kimena, 1995; ASKI Archive, k. 164, F=20/33/74), is that these people were forced to flee because of the hostile conditions created in Greece by the government. In many cases, the interviewees told me that initially their fathers or brothers did not want even to join the civil war, and go to the mountains again. Nonetheless, they could not do otherwise, since they were persecuted by the government's police. In fact, although everything was legislated by the *peaceful* agreement of Varkiza[56], which actually recognized the KKE and its operations as legal, the White Terror period began and it was essential to the government's effort to undermine ELAS forces, as showed in the previous chapter. Indeed, paradoxically enough, no law was passed against the Communists, until 1947. The law 509/1947 came into force after the KKE established its own government: the "Provisional Democratic Government" whose president and minister of war was Markos Vafiadis, the head of the DSE. It occurred on 23 December 1947, and three days later, the official government approved the above law, which declared the KKE illegal (Close: 20-27, 2002).

Furthermore, the same law constituted the framework for the communists to flee from Greece at the end of the war. In fact, there was no law that forced communists into exile. The only law that was addressed against the KKE and its members was the number 509/1947, mentioned above. This law said that each Greek that tried to dismember the Greek territories was punishable even by death. Needless to say, Macedonia anew came into question. The law's reference to dismembering the country was clearly addressed to the Communist Party and its attempt to *sell out* Macedonia. Thus, Communists' primary fault, according to the Greek government, was not the war, nor KKE activities in the mountains, but the KKE stance on the National Question, something that caused the government to declare it outlaw. Only after the war's end was a set of laws passed against communists[57] (Psillas, 2008). As consequence, it became necessary for the DSE units and their collaborators to flee from Greece, in order to escape humiliation, concentration camps[58], and death sentences. Up to 1949, the KKE counted 40,000 people sentenced to death and 2,289 still awaiting the judge. It is recorded that just from 1950 to 1951 2,430 men and 202 women were imprisoned[59]. From 1952, the situation gradually changed. In-

56 The Varkiza agreement, which was signed in February 1945 after the December events of 1944, was an amnesty accord between the Greek government and the EAM/ELAS, which envisaged the disarmament of the latter army (See 1st chapter – paragraph 1.7).

57 In his study on the *metapolitefsi* period and the disintensification of the anti-communist sentiment that characterized Greece from 1924 to 1974, Psillas accounts that from the war's end, 351 laws, 501 legislative decrees, 15,851 judicial decisions about the removal of the citizenship were passed (9, 2008).

58 The Greek concentration camps were mostly built in the islands. From 1949, the women were sent to separate concentration camps from men, especially in the islands of Chios and Trikeri. Mr. Karastathis in the interview of 11.03.2012 (Athens) told me that his grandmother and his aunt were sent to Trikeri island in exile because their son/brother (Mr. Karastathis's father) was a communist. The same tragedy occurred to Mr. Papoulakos's relatives.

59 From the interviewees, it emerges that the children's parents that remained in Greece did not have bad consequences because of their children's destiny, it was considered as if it was not their fault, and parents could always say that the communists took the children by force. Whereas all people who had adult relatives in the Socialist countries underwent humiliation and discrimination. If their own collaboration with the DSE was proved, not only that of the relative, they

deed the majority of the death sentences were commuted, other sentences of imprisonment were reduced and many people released (Clogg: 145, 2002)[60].

2.3 "They welcomed us as heroes, who fought against the fascism": the arrival in Tashkent

By the end of September 1949, a huge system of transportation had been put into action to transfer the refugees from Albania to the Socialist Republics and to the USSR. According to the archive sources (See "Charilaos Florakis" Archive, *"Radio Free Greece" Broadcasts* folder; US State Department Bulletin, vol.21, 1949), the children had meanwhile found hospitality in the other republics and would remain there for at least four years more. About the other refugees the party decided that: the DSE's units would be moved to the USSR, the majority of the wounded people that could be transferred would be taken to Poland and Czechoslovakia, while most of the elderly people, and injured people would remain in Bulgaria (from Albania almost all the people moved out) (See Lamabtos, 2001; Tsekou 2010)[61]. Many people, especially women with children and other civilians, were sent to Hungary, as well. All these operations needed the maximum secrecy since they could cause international incidents. Hence, the operations occurred mainly during the night and no refugee knew where they were being taken. The movements to the Socialist Republics occurred by lorry and train. The most risky part of this journey was the crossing of Yugoslavia. Along the same route went the children some months earlier. In the interviews I did with these children, today grandparents, I heard from every one of them almost the same story: "They arrived in the night to take us somewhere. We did not know where. They arrived by beautiful trucks, new, big, and ordered us to go in. Then we traveled for many days. At the beginning we had to be silent since we were crossing Yugoslav territory"[62].

To reach the Soviet Union the ship was chosen as the means of transport. This journey too was extremely risky, especially in the Dardanelles Straits. "At specific mo-

were sent to a concentration camp. Of the interviewees, nobody had relatives that were sentenced to death after the departure of the DSE, while some of interviewees themselves, as Mr. Fakiolas, Mr. Dimitriou, and Mrs. Ilinskaya's husband, Mr. Alecsandropoulos, were sentenced to death and this created further obstacles to their return.

60 "I was sentenced to death. Then, the government commuted it to life imprisonment. But I managed to escape. I went Corfu from there to Albania swimming. From Albania, they did not want to let me go because in the meanwhile Hodza was not anymore in good relations with the USSR. Thus, I lived there for three year and I did two hunger strikes. So finally they let me go. I went to Bulgaria, and finally USSR." Mr. Fakiolas.

61 It is worth underlining that there was no plan to move people in accordance with family or village ties and this caused huge dispersion of families.

62 Mr. Stergios Dastamanis, St. Petersburg 18.12.2011. Almost the same sentences were told to me by Mr. Christos Katsanos and Mr. Kostantinos Katsiavalos. In his account, Mr. Dastamanis told me that for him the night that the adult comrades arrived was one of the worst in his life. In fact, in the confusion he lost his brother who was sent to Hungary, while he was sent in Romania. They met again in Tashkent when they finally found each other and their father in the late 50s.

ments" – writes Jatrudakis – "even coughing was avoided" (21, 1999). The people were stowed away and had to stay below deck for the entire duration of the journey, while the upper deck was strewn with wood or coal in order to make it seem that the ships were commercial. The Soviet city where around 12,000 Greeks went was Tashkent, the capital of the Uzbek SSR. Among the refugees the idea is widespread that Stalin chose Tashkent as the host city for Greeks because of the city's climate. In fact, being similar to the Greek climate, the Greeks would not have suffered the harsh Russian winter. The second reason which they gave me concerns the industries. During WWII, all the major industries were moved eastwards in order to escape the German invasion. At the end of the war, while the population came back home, thus mostly to the European part of Russia, the industries remained in Tashkent. Therefore, a new labour force was extremely necessary to keep these industrial giants in operation[63].

Although the first reason could be true, it is much more plausible that the first reason why Stalin chose Tashkent was its distance from Moscow. Hosting such high numbers of Greeks could cause two problems, first an international incident at the United Nations, since the USSR could be accused of openly fomenting another Greek Communist revolution. Secondly, although communists, Greeks were not Russians, thus it was better not to have much interference from foreigners in Soviet affairs (See also Lampatos, 2001).

The long journey was organized by ship until Poti (Georgia), through the Aegean and the Black Sea, crossing the Dardanelles. From Poti they were taken to Baku (Azerbaijan) by train. Again by ship crossing the Caspian Sea, they arrived in Krasnovodsk (Turkmenistan) and finally by train in Tashkent. The people that experienced this long journey do not know how long it lasted. Mr. Motsios told me "it seemed to me that I was in that ship for one year"[64]. Nevertheless, contrary to the journey's hostile conditions, they found a warm welcome in Tashkent. "They welcomed us as heroes who fought against fascism," Mr. Fotou told me; "my parents told me that when they finally reached Tashkent, local people were awaiting them at the train station with flowers, greeting them as heroes because, although they lost, they were comrades in the struggle against fascism"[65]. I only heard this story from Vellas and Fotou, who are two of the exponents of the PEEPP, the Panhellenic Union of the Repatriated Political Refugees linked to the KKE. However, everyone confirmed that when they first arrived, the Soviet help was enormous[66].

The Soviet state provided the Greek refugees with all kinds of things they could need: food, clothes, and medical care. In Tashkent were founded 14 "*греческие городки* – Greek towns" where Greeks settled down[67] (Zhukova: 65, 2002). The first accommodation in these *politìes*, as the towns were called by the Greeks, was in the former jails built for the Japanese prisoners of WWII. In each *politìa*, there were large dormitories that could host up to 50-60

63 Also in the other Socialist republics, Greeks were settled mostly in inhabited areas in order to give them land to build houses and work there. In some cases, as in Hungary and Poland, Greek villages were founded, where even the street names were in Greek (Botu and Konecny, 2005; Soultanià, 1999, Tsekou, 2010).

64 Mr. Giannis Motsios, Iannina, 19.03.2012.

65 Mr. Giorgos Vellas, Athens 7.09.2011. Mr. Grigoris Fotou, Athens 8.09.2011.

66 The same was said about the other Socialist Republics.

67 The 5th and 14th politìes were in Tsirtsik, a small village near Tashkent.

people, separate for women and men, a restaurant where for the first six months they could eat for free, the offices for the Soviet authorities and for the Greek party's organizations and buildings for the doctor and other services (Jatrudakis, 1999; Lampatos, 2001). Toilet facilities were separate from the dormitories. As first accommodation, it was the best they could imagine. However, in the long run it caused problems.

2.4 New state, new city, new home

We lived in huge dormitories, at the beginning.
During the first days, we were in quarantine since we had to recover from injuries and disease.
Then they gave us 500 rubles, clothes, and food for free for lots of time.
(Mr. Motsios)

Each of the refugees cannot forget the cleanliness of the dormitories, the beds' white and clean sheets, and the warmth of the environment. These were all things that they had forgotten, living in the snowy mountains in Greece. Nevertheless, little by little, life in the dormitories was no longer satisfactory. The main problem was that husbands and wives could not have a family life together, since they had to live separately, and private spaces were almost nonexistent. Thus, just-married couples started forming small rooms within the dormitories, building partition walls. Nevertheless, the number of families increased rapidly and the problems doubled. Thus, the first apartments were built mainly to host the families[68]. Jatrudakis (1999) in his book devotes an entire chapter to the question of "family and accommodation". In his opinion, problems got worse when the Soviet party gave out the apartments. In fact, more than one family lived in each apartment. The apartments were spacious, with many rooms and a shared kitchen (toilet facilities were not annexed), but two couples would live in one room and there were also cases of couples that lived in the kitchen, hence every evening they had to transform the kitchen into a bedroom and vice versa in the morning, in order to let other people use it. At the relational level, as Jatrudakis points out, this situation caused huge disputes.

Mr. Papoulakos[69] lived in one, or one half to be more precise, of these rooms. Certainly, the situation was very difficult and probably the atmosphere was not calm, as he said, but it did not last forever. In addition, he said, "our living conditions were better of those of the Russians"[70]. Something that deserves note, in talking about apartments and facilities, is the period we are dealing with. The years were 1949-1959, and neither the Soviet Union, nor

68 First came the families with children, then just-married people, and finally if there were other apartments also single people, whose family was in Greece or who did not have their own family yet.

69 Mr. Giannis Papoulakos, Thessaloniki, 20.03.2012.

70 This feeling, that Russians as well as other populations in the Socialist republics deprived themselves from something to give it to the Greeks is deeply rooted in the refugees' accounts.

the Soviet Bloc had yet recovered from the Second World War. Hence, it is hard to consider apartments and facilities as a criterion for judging the living conditions as bad. Things such as light, telephone, toilet facilities in the apartment, tile floors, were all things that many, if not the majority of the Greek refugees did not even have at home in Greece. This was the case for Mrs. Paganià, for instance:

> When we [her mother, her sister and she] arrived [March 1963]" – said Mrs. Paganià – "everything was beautiful, huge, new, strange, even light in the house was something incredible! In the beginning, my father did not have an apartment, so we stayed in dormitories but already in May, the Soviet authorities assigned us a house[71].

Contrary to Mrs. Paganià's perceptions was the feeling of Mrs. Zei. Alki Zei[72] arrived in Tashkent in 1954 to reunite with her husband. The description of the habitations that she made to me was completely different.

> Only when I arrived" – she said – "I understood why my husband, in the letters he sent to me, had never answered my questions 'How is life there? What does your apartment look like?' He knew I would have never gone, if I had known what I saw when I arrived in Tashkent". Then she added, "The living conditions in Tashkent were really bad. I insisted my husband move to Moscow[73].

Hence, after three years, thanks to her husband's scholarship to teach theatre, they moved to Moscow, where she enjoyed better conditions and started working at the Greek party's radio station[74].

As shown by these two examples, the living conditions are highly debatable, and can be exploited to demonstrate opposite conclusions about life in Tashkent. Even though the Soviet party started giving apartments to each family, this process lasted couple of years; hence, families that still lived in dormitories had to face ever larger problems[75]. The guiding principle according to which the apartments were assigned was the number of family members. Thus, people such as Mr. Dastamanis's father, whose wife was in Greece, lived in very bad conditions. As reported by Mr. Dastamanis, his father lived in a very small room, built with low-quality materials, without kitchen and toilet facilities. The Party's Organization of Tashkent (KOT) knew that this

71 Mrs. Pashalià Paganià, Thessaloniki, 22.03.2012. The majority of the people that remained in Greece were women and children. At the close of the 50s some men who left their families in Greece managed to prepare documents and take their families to the Soviet Union. This is the story, for instance, of Mrs. Fakiolas and Mrs. Paganià. The first arrived in Tashkent in 1959, the second in 1963. Both their fathers were andartes of the DSE and thus, refugees in Tashkent. Again Mrs. Paganià told me that in the village where she lived, they had flooring at home, while she saw tile floors for the first time in the USSR.

72 Mrs. Alki Zei, Athens, 17.03.2012.

73 Mrs. Zei lived in Athens when she was in Greece. Then she fled to Italy, where she worked actress with Edoardo De Filippo. After having earned some money, she went to the USSR to reunite with her husband.

74 These jobs were restricted to reliable members of the party.

75 In particular, the difficulties increased when, in 1954, the family reunification occurred. The majority of the people that fled from Greece lost their parents, relatives, neighbours. Thus, after the first years of stabilization and adaptation to the new environment, the KKE started a program devoted to family reunifications. The USSR decided that each family could decide to establish wherever it preferred in one of the socialist republics if there was already a member there. Nevertheless, all those who had at least one person in the USSR had to move to Tashkent (See ASKI Archive F=7/51/28 of 23.10.1951). Most of the children who were in the socialist republics were reunified with their parents in Tashkent in 1954, as for example Mr. Dastamanis, Mr. Katsanos, Mr. Katsiavalos and Mr. Vellàs.

was a huge problem especially in some *politìes*, as 12th, where the conditions worsened due to the increasing of people living there. Mr. Katsanos[76], for instance, arrived in Tashkent from the Socialist Republics in 1954 with all the other children whose parents lived in the Uzbek capital. His family lived in the 12th *politìa* and his account confirmed that the conditions were appalling. However, his family, like many others, got a new apartment[77] as soon as the children arrived.

In its reports to the Central Bureau of the KKE, the KOT continuously mentioned the living conditions asking for major contributions. Here is part of the letter sent on 28 December 1950, almost one year after the arrival of the DSE in Tashkent. In the section "Housing", they write:

> Another important issue that concerns us is the question of accommodation. We have to recognize that also in this regard improvements have been made. The *politìa* of Bikovat[78] was dissolved. From the 12th, many have settled in new apartments in the city, so that now 3125 remain. Furthermore, since the past week they have started building the 20 apartments in the city, that are going to be assigned to the comrades coming from the Socialist Republics. These apartments are going to be finished in March and 1200 will settle there. Nowadays, the problem of accommodation remains only for the 12th *politìa*, and it must be solved because the living conditions there are not good and because we must concentrate the people nearer to the industries of Taselmas and Uzbek Selmas, where the major factories are (in these 2700 members work, which means the 40% of our party's force) (ASKI Archive F= 7/50/8).

Yet by 1952, the living conditions in the 12th *politìa* did not improve; in a report sent by the KOT it is written that: "In all the *politìes* there are couples that live two or four together in a room. There are 457 couples of the 12th *politìa* that built small rooms for the winter but there are problems because these small rooms have been regarded by Soviet technicians as not appropriate" (ASKI Archive F=20/33/88).

2.5 From the agricultural world to the industrial

Obviously we did not know the language. Consequently, for the first months we could not even work. They organized courses to teach us the Russian language and the trade we would do. In fact, the majority of us were peasants and we did not have any idea of industrial work.
(Mr. Motsios)

76 Mr. Christos Katsanos, Korinthos, 18.03.2012.

77 This did not happen in the case of Mr. Dastamanis's father. In fact, with his son living at a dormitory provided by the school, he was always alone and for this reason, he remained in that situation until the 1960s when he finally went back to Greece. At the beginning, I thought that his condition was due to the fact that he was not a member of the party, but Mr. Dastamanis told me "no, no they gave houses made of stone to families, to those who had children, while my father was in a shed in the 2nd *politìa*". The party, in fact, gave priority to the families. However, I should add that his father belonged to the pro-Zachariadis group and this fact played a negative role in people's life after 1955. Nevertheless, I do not know if this influenced the senior Mr. Dastamanis' living conditions since his son denied it.

78 Bikovat was a politìa built outside of Tashkent. There, 500 refugees and 200 people between the ages of 11 and 16 were sheltered (See Lampatos: 23, 2001).

Not everyone attended the Russian language courses. As far as I understood later from other interviews, mostly young people attended them in order to enter school or university[79]. Many older people even in the 70s did not speak Russian. "My mother" – said Mr. Papoulakos – "did not need Russian to interact. She was always in the *polities* and she needed just Greek to communicate"[80]. While, as far as jobs are concerned, they were assigned as the Soviet system envisaged, thus, people did not have to look for them. For the first six months, they did not work mainly because they were not able to. According to the percentages provided by the PEEPP (Panhellenic Union of the Repatriated Political Refugees), around 90% of the refugees were peasants (Syros: 18, 2002; See also Tashkent Municipal Association of Greeks[81]: 6, nd).

However, by 1951, many people did not work and evening classes were organized to help people integrate in their new environment and learn new trades. In the report sent by the KOT to the CC of the KKE, dated 16th December 1951, it is stated that 2,000 people did not have any job, while 1,932 had a very low salary, less than 300 rubles (ASKI Archive F=7/51/13). In a more detailed report a month later, the Central Committee of Tashkent writes:

> The Soviet government pays half board to 2500 comrades that have low salary (until the end of 1951, from the beginning of January we do not know anything yet). It also pays whole board for 1000 sick, amputees etc. Moreover, although it makes other facilitations, still we register a shortage of 350-400 thousand rubles that is covered by those that we collected last year[82]. [...]Exactly one year ago, the comrades that did not work because of different reasons were 1050 with the 350 youths of Bikovat. Today, the people that do not work for different reasons are 1830 without taking into consideration the 250 youths of Bikovat because now they are in college. But now there are also 1420 children, babies that obviously also need to eat. Among the 1830 there are 1000 babies' mothers.

Five months later, the condition of the women still did not improve. According to the report of the CC of the KKE in Tashkent dated 15 May 1952, 819 women did not work: 43 because they were ill, 531 because in the industries where they worked there were no nurseries for children and therefore they had to stop to work, 129 because their children were sick and the others for irrelevant problems. The majority of the women that did not work lived in the 12th *politìa* (ASKI Archive F=20/33/88). Little by little, schools and nurseries were built in each *politìa* in order to facilitate women's employment. There was intensive propaganda from the party to work. "The refugees worked with huge enthusiasm because they believed that they were contributing to building socialism, for which they had fought with all their force in the mountains of their motherland" (Lampatos: 50, 2001).

79 "They asked us if we had already studied in Greece, so that these people could keep on studying in the USSR. If there were people who were staunch supporters of communism or enjoyed a successfully career during the war, the party offered them to go to the party's school to become officers. They asked me too, whether I wanted, but I answered that although it was an honor, I would prefer becoming philologist" (Mr. Motsios).

80 As explained below, in the *polities*, the everyday life, the atmosphere, the food, the customs, everything was markedly Greek.

81 I abbreviate it as TMAG.

82 There was a fund used for accommodation and food for people who could not afford it. Each refugee had to contribute half of his or her salary (See Lampatos: 84, 2001).

2.6 Who were the refugees, legally?

Our days were divided into three parts of 8 hours each: 8 hours of work/study, 8 hours of amusement, and 8 of rest. In the summer we [young people] also worked. We worked all together in the cotton belts, because in Uzbekistan there are so many. Then we also had holidays and we could go to holiday camps. Life, there, was cool.
(Mr. Katsanos)

They could go on holidays but only after receiving permission and a specific document that allowed them to go. They always told me about the document as something usual, normal: "we could go wherever we wanted; we had only to ask permission because we were not Soviets" – Mr. Vellas. Van Boeschoten says "the so-called 'Greek refugees' were not considered citizens of the host country, but were counted in the group of the 'socialist workers' and of the 'builders of international socialism'" (53, 2005). Nevertheless, the question remains: who were the refugees legally? Could they truly go wherever they wanted? Not exactly. Talking with the interviewees, they told me that each of them had his/her own passport where it was written *политэмигрант* – political refugee. This happened later in the 60s. In the beginning, the first passport they had was the same as for criminals (but they have never told me about this) who did not have citizenship. Thus, the lack of citizenship hampered them from travelling, from sleeping in hotels, from becoming members of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union)[83], and prohibited them from doing certain jobs or research[84]. Thus, outside of Tashkent, where nobody knew about the Greek refugees, they could experience serious problems if they did not have a permit. In the 60s, this passport was changed to one where it was written that they were political refugees.

However, the situation did not change so much because they were not yet recognized as refugees at the international level. According to Jatrudakis (61, 1999), the latter condition has never occurred because the USSR, as a member of the United Nations Organization, should have recognized all the principles declared in the *UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* of 1951, which defined the international status of the refugees, their duties and their rights. Reading the above convention, I noticed that the Soviet Union respected almost all the convention's articles with the exception of three: article 26–28, about freedom of movement and travel documents, and article 35, about co-operation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. With regard to the former articles the

83 In the other Socialist Republics they instead became full members of the national party.

84 For instance, Mr. Dastamanis and Mr. Dakoulas had to go back from the region bordering Afghanistan where they worked because these were exclusion zones. Later, when Mr. Dastamanis went to Leningrad, he wanted to complete his research in Karelia but he was not allowed, because his permission was only for the Leningrad region. Mr. Katsiavalos was in a similar situation. He studied metallurgical engineering, and he needed to conduct research in specific areas for his PhD. However, in the exclusion zones where there were special metals he could not carry out his research and for the same reason he always had many difficulties in finding a job.

convention says, "Each Contracting State shall accord to refugees lawfully in its territory the right to choose their place of residence to move freely within its territory, subject to any regulations applicable to aliens generally in the same circumstances" and article 28 "The Contracting States shall issue to refugees lawfully staying in their territory travel documents for the purpose of travel outside their territory, unless compelling reasons of national security or public order otherwise require, and the provisions of the Schedule to this Convention shall apply with respect to such documents"[85]. The Greek refugees were not permitted to choose their residence, or to travel outside the USSR. They could move from one city, namely Tashkent, to another only if they had a valid motivation to do it, for instance a party order to work/study in Moscow, Leningrad or somewhere else, or for holiday, which had to be previously agreed with the employer. To travel out of the USSR was prohibited, even in cases of extreme urgency. Furthermore, it was extremely difficult also to travel to the other Socialist Republics[86].

Article 35 is concerned with control by the UN representative of enforcement of the principles: "The Contracting States undertake to co-operate with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, or any other agency of the United Nations which may succeed it, in the exercise of its functions, and shall in particular facilitate its duty of supervising the application of the provisions of this Convention"[87]. In this case, it can be assumed that USSR preferred not to have much interference in its internal affairs by any Commissioner of the UN. However, the lack of resources on this aspect of the Greek refugees' status highly restricted the scope of my research.

2.7 Social life in Tashkent: Uzbek, Russian, or Greek feasts?

Yes of course! We had kullures[88] for Easter, we celebrated 15 August[89] and all the party's anniversaries such as the foundation of the EAM, of the KNE [Communist Organization for Young People] and many others.
(Mrs. Paganià)

There was a λέσχη (club) in each *politìa*, where all the Greeks met. Later they built a larger central club where they organized parties, meetings, festivals, demonstrations for Greece and for their repatriation (See Mitsopoulos, 2005, TMAG: 13, nd). What is funda-

85 Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, UNHCR, Geneva, 2011, pp. 27-28.

86 Mr. Katsavolos's father and sister died: the first in Greece and the second in Poland. Neither he nor his mother was allowed to go to the funerals. "My mother suffered a lot, especially because she could not bury my sister who was not even in her homeland". In 1975, when they finally got the permission from Greece to go back, his mother at the age of 80 almost, first went to Poland to get the remains and only after that she came to Greece, where she finally got through the grieving process.

87 Op. cit., 31.

88 Greek traditional food prepared for Easter.

89 It is an important Orthodox feast.

mental to understand is that they maintained their life as if they were in Greece: they organized sporting events like Olympic Games called *Spartakiades*[90], they had Greek traditional dance groups, acting companies, they had their newspapers in Greek, they had the radio station, organized music and film festivals (TMAG: 22, n.d.). Mr. Spathìs[91] engaged in theatre from the first days after he arrived in Tashkent. However, he dealt with articles, history of the theatre and he even wrote scripts for plays, becoming a professor of theatre. About the theatre in Tashkent, he wrote, "Obviously, the first theatrical performances, in 1951-1952, were devoted to current political themes, to the struggles after the civil war against the imprisonments, the exiles, the death sentences. [...] from autumn 1951, the theatre company was accepted in the 'actors' section of the Russian (or to be more precise multiethnic) Tashkent Academy of Theatre Arts" (Spathìs: 84, 2009).

All national and religious[92] feasts they had continued to be celebrated in the Asiatic city according to their traditions. They had even a church, although from the interviews results they did not go there frequently. "Basically, you could go. But there was the risk that they could downgrade you, for example" (Mr. Katsanos). However, this does not mean that they did not go native. On the contrary, they adjusted to the new realities and, particularly the second generation perfectly fit the new environment. This is shown also by the number of mixed marriages that occurred[93], which according to Zhukova in the mid 1960s were 2000 (Zhukova: 65, 2002). With regard to the mixed marriages some notes are required. Firstly, they occurred especially on the part of the men (Soultanià, 2002). It was more difficult for a Greek woman to marry a Russian man than for a Greek man to marry a Russian woman, for traditional reasons. Secondly, in a way, this situation was unavoidable, since the number of Greek men that arrived in Tashkent was far greater than that of women (remember that the DSE army was sent to Tashkent). Thirdly, mixed marriages frequently happened between Greeks and Russians while marriages with Uzbeks were extremely rare. Moreover, even though there was exogamy it was not well accepted by the Greek community, especially by older people. The reason was simple: since they were sure of going back to Greece, a potential marriage with a Soviet citizen could hamper the return to the motherland (interview source). Both Mr. Motsios and Mr. Katsanos told their future wives "we marry if and only if you are going to come to Greece with me as soon as this is possible"[94].

90 The first *Spartakiada* was organized in 1950 and since then it continued every year.

91 Mr. Dimitrios Spathìs, Athens, 8.03.2012. Mr. Spathìs's history is very interesting since he is a Greek from Egypt. He was born in Cairo and, when he was 20-21 years old, the KKE asked for volunteers who wanted to go to their motherland and fight against the "American occupation". Hence, he fled from Cairo and went to Greece. Then, to escape imprisonment he went to Italy and from there, returned to Greece to fight. In 1949, he fled to the Soviet Union with the DSE. In 1963, he succeeded in going back to Greece, but, in 1969, he had to flee again because of the coup d'état. This time he went to Paris.

92 The most important religious feast celebrated was Easter. Christmas was unified in one big feast for the New Year as in Soviet tradition.

93 When interviewing people, I was frequently invited to their homes. There, I noticed that the decor was not Greek; they had lots of carpets in the walls and on the floor, they had many samovars and kettles, they prepared *bliny* (Russian crepes) for lunch, many times I had to take off my shoes before entering the apartment, and, more than once, they offered me tea, something that in Greece you drink "only if you feel bad". These are all signs of the integration of the two cultures in their everyday life. Such a mixture of habits caused Mrs. Paganià to tell me "I am Russian for Greeks, and Greek for Russians: I do not know who I am".

94 Professor Tsekou told me that in her research on the Greek political refugees in Bulgaria, she found a document where a Greek refugee asked the party whether he should marry a Bulgarian woman or not. The idea of return was always alive. Everything they did was for their motherland, and these strong sentiments were conveyed also to the little children

Beginning in the second year of residence in socialism's motherland, the Greek community started printing its own newspaper, which reported not only about events in the Soviet Union but also in the other Socialist Republics and in Greece (See TMAG, nd; Zhukova, 2002). In the beginning, they continued the publication of "*Προς την Νίκη – Towards Victory*" the newspaper of the Democratic Army, which was published in the mountains during the war. Later, at the close of the 50s, the title was changed. "After the end of the civil war, it [the newspaper *Towards Victory*] followed them in the emigration. Nevertheless, later, in the late 50s and beginning of the 60s, the foreign policy of the USSR changed. The importance was mostly in defense of peace. Consequently, the title *Towards Victory* did not work in the new environment and had to be changed. Thus, it became '*Νέος Δρόμος – New Route'*. The new title fit more, and did not enhance the sentiment of 'gun at the ready', and they launched a new slogan 'to align ourselves with the Soviets!'. Zachariadis had launched this motto during a meeting of the refugees in Tashkent after Stalin's death. Thus, we had to take a new route in our life. And this was conveyed by the title" (Jatrudakis: 91, 1999).

2.8 The Greek Communist Party in Tashkent, its members and its *citizens*

Q: Were you a member of the party?
-No, I was not a member and I have never had a problem because of this, or at least so I think. Not so many people were members, you could choose to register in the party or not. […] no, no anyone of us could register to the CPSU, we were not Soviet citizens.
(Mr. Dastamanis)

-Yes, I was. But then I unsubscribed.
(Mr. Fakiolas[95])

-Yes, I was a high-ranking member of the party.
(Mr. Dimitriou[96])

Thinking about the USSR, it seems impossible that someone could be a non-member of the party and enjoy the same opportunities[97], or that someone could even unsubscribe from the party; actually this happened in the case of Greeks, as the interviewees explained to

born in the USSR who did not have bond with their "motherland".

95 Mr. Anastasios Fakiolas, Athens, 11.03.2012.

96 Mr. Panos Dimitriou, Thessaloniki, 23.03.2012.

97 According to the account made by Bartzota during the Third Conference of the KKE in1950, in Tashkent were 6222 men and 1442 women were members of the party (Episima Kimena, vol.7: 480-536, 1995).

me[98]. It is worth remembering that the ELAS, the father of the DSE, was constituted mostly of people that were not communists. Consequently, when these people, already fighters of the DSE, fled to the USSR they paradoxically constituted the non-communist part of the exiled Communist Party. However, the topic is not as simple as it might seem. Although they were not communists, so they could not, for instance, hold party offices[99], they depended on it, since the KKE was a kind of government in exile that, hosted by friendly countries, kept on taking care of its "citizens", almost without distinctions. An interesting formulation of this concept is made by Jannakakis.

He introduces the idea of a refugee land that stretched from Prague, Warsaw, Sofia to Tashkent, whose ruler was the KKE and capital was Bucharest. In Jannakakis conception, the KKE confused its power on the 'socialist refugee land' with imaginary power over the 'people of Greece', thus proclaiming itself ruler of the latter (Jannakanis: 5, 2005). "The KKE lived in a schizophrenic condition. Banned in Greece, since it definitely had lost a struggle for the power, it became, after the defeat, the party of power, ruler of the people and of the state – of refugee land […]. This vague and ambiguous reality gradually corroded it" (Jannakakis: 13, 2005). Hence, the KKE was both the party and the state of the Greek refugees. This strange and sometimes contradictory relationship with the KKE was not perceived by the interviewees who talked about the KKE as the institution in charge of their material life (i.e. housing, jobs, studies), although they were not members of the party. The KKE did not act only as a party but also as a state, imitating, in a way, the Soviet system. Indeed, according to Jannakakis, if we look at the behavior of the KKE during the exile, it is possible to learn what kind of power it would have established in Greece, if it had won the civil war (5, 2005).

The Soviet party, instead, was the father-state of everyone, which the KKE had to obey as well. Indeed, although the refugees referred mostly to the KKE, the Soviet Union always had the first say on everything. Relations between the KKE and the CPSU always held first place (See Lampatos, 2001). In the report of 14.04.1952, written by two high-ranking members of the party, Vainas and Fokas, who had been sent by Zachariadis to evaluate the situation in Tashkent, they conclude, "in this frame of time, we maintained a close collaboration with the Soviets. We have always waited to meet them, to have counsel from them, to inform them about any question that arose". Indeed, close collaboration with Soviet officials was crucial to the KKE. This fragment of a letter sent from the Greek Politburo to the Central Committee of Tashkent, says: "And, there is another very important issue, about which I must say few words. Here it was said by members of our Central Committee that the criticism that is occurring within the Party Organization of Tashkent turns rightly against the Soviet comrades, because they lead us. This stance on the issue is very dangerous and, I can say, anti-party. How could you allow yourselves this stance on the criticisms?" (ASKI Archive, KKE, k.164).

From the interviews, it emerges that people complained more about the Soviet system than about the KKE, and the complaints were mostly about the lack of freedom of speech.

98 Mr. Fakiolàs said, "It is true that we did not have problems, but only if you did not openly and repeatedly criticize the party's line. If you did, the first consequences were on your job!".

99 It was fundamental to be a staunch supporter of the KKE and the Soviet Union. For instance, in the report of 12.09.1952 the party asked for young people that spoke Russian very well because they needed a translator for the newspapers. However, among the requirements it was written that they had to be a "staunch supporter of communism". Among others, they nominated Alecsandropoulos Mitsos, Spathìs Mimìs and Panos Dimitrios, whom I interviewed.

One of the interviewees said "the Soviets did some stupid things that did not make any sense, such as requiring permission for doing everything or the partial lack of freedom of speech. If we had it, we would have not complained because there was nothing to complain about. So why did they not let us talk about everything?" Alternatively, as Mr. Fakiolas said: "Look, for example, they forced young people, not us because we were Greek, to join the *Komsomol* [All-Union Leninist Young Communist League]. Why should they force people to do useless things? They did it only because they needed huge numbers for everything, as for the plans. In this way, they ruined the Soviet Union". According to my research results that only three of them, Mr. Dastamanis, Mr. Fakiolas and Mr. Motsios, had problems with the Soviet authorities[100]. However, they all told me that the Soviet authorities were far more tolerant with Greeks than with Soviet citizens. They were reprimanded or monitored, but none of the interviewees underwent exile or prison[101].

2.9 The KKE organization in the USSR and its activities

The structure of KKE once in exile was the following: the Central Committee of the KKE was set up in Bucharest, as well as all the party offices and the official radio station "*Η φωνή της αλήθειας – The voice of truth*"[102]. Furthermore, the Central Committee of the Union of the Political Refugees of Greece (KEEPPE), which was in charge of handling ref-

100 Mr. Fakiolas was a high-ranking member of the party. "My problems started when I knew what Stalin did". Thus, he unsubscribed from the party and a member of the CPSU told him that he could go to Siberia or be a professor at the University of Tashkent (he taught economics): "They wanted me to move away from Moscow but I answered either Siberia or Greece". Finally, since he was well known, he managed to remain in Moscow. However, he knew later that they spied on him. Something similar occurred to Mr. Dastamanis. Once he criticized the Soviet Union while talking with friends in front of a person who was famous for having put many people in trouble. Later, this person came to him and reprimanded him, saying that he did not want Mr. Dastamanis to go to Siberia but threatened that next time he could be sent there. Mr. Motsios, instead, was spied upon like Mr. Fakiolàs because he openly opposed the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia.

101 Although in the interviews I tried to find evidence of problems caused by not being communist, I could not find any. I heard about only one case of preference of a member of the party over a non-member. Out of 22 people interviewed 8 were not members of the party and they studied, went to the universities, had a job, had an apartment, without any major problems other than those which anyone could have during the Soviet period. They were asked if they wanted to become members but they refused.
However, it should be added that some interviewees arrived in Tashkent in 1954, when the most difficult years were almost over. In fact, especially at the beginning, the KEKA (Party Central Commission for Registration) was set up to be in charge of controlling people's activities, commitment, and involvement during the first and the second resistance (See Lampatos 2001 and 2004). Every Communist had to register and KEKA task was to maintain files about them (the equivalent of what was occurring in Greece against the communists (see chapter 1, par. 1. 8). People who were not recognized as true communists could even undergo imprisonment. This practice continued until 1953. Moreover, for most of the first 3 years everyday life as well as the punishment methods were still structured on a military basis (they even went to work marching) (See Lampatos, 2001). In the light of this information, it is an exaggeration to say that Greeks in Tashkent never had any problems.

102 The radio station was first called Free Greece and its base was in Belgrade. After the split with Tito, the base was moved to Bucharest and in 1950 it was renamed "The Voice of Truth". After 1948, the radio broadcast news about the children in the Socialist Republics and in 1951 it started a broadcast titled "News about the life of the refugees in the Socialist Republics".

ugees' difficulties in integrating, was also based in Bucharest. In Tashkent, there was the KOT, the Party's Organization of Tashkent, whose main branch was the KET, the Central Committee of Tashkent that coordinated all the activities in the city. Each *politìa* had its own KOV, the Basic Communist Organization, which coped with people's everyday troubles, requests, and so on. Later, the KOVs where transferred to the *ụex* - guild, at which offices most of the jobs were located. Both the members and the non-members of the party relied on this structure. In addition, the party organizations represented the only bridge the refugees had to Greece. In fact, a crucial activity that was also coordinated by the party was the correspondence between the refugees in the USSR and the Socialist Republics and between the refugees in general and Greece. Correspondence on a regular basis with Greece, but also with Socialist Republics, began in 1955-1956 when the refugees stabilized in the new environment. In fact, in the beginning, it was quite difficult to get precise information because of the continuous movement of the refugees[103] (Soultanià, 2002). After some years, they could also send packages with the letters as long as they did not send precious items or money[104].

Even more important than the correspondence was family reunification. As mentioned before, after the first days in their new cities, the refugees asked the party for information about their parents, relatives, children, brothers and sisters who were sheltered in other countries. In fact, there were thousands of families that were dispersed between the Soviet Union and the Socialist Republics. Consequently, an office was established whose function was to give information about other refugees or people in Greece and mainly with the help of the Red Cross of each country to organize the reunification of families. Mr. Tzitzilonis[105] had already been separated from his family during the civil war: both his parents and his two oldest sisters were imprisoned in 1946, and he remained alone with his younger brothers. In 1948, his sisters were released, but one of them died in Mount Grammos while the other was wounded and thus sent to Yugoslavia and from there to Czechoslovakia. Meanwhile, the youngest members of the family went to Albania with the other children. The two younger brothers were sent to Romania to study, while he was sent to Hungary to teach. Finally, all the family reunited in 1956 in Romania (his parents meanwhile had fled to Poland).

Like Mr. Tzitzilonis, all the interviewees became separated from family members during 1946-1950. In 1951, the USSR declared that all families had the right to move from one country to the other for reunification, and they could choose to settle in the place they preferred. Nevertheless, if one member of the family was in the USSR all the others had to move to the USSR (ASKI Archive F=7/51/28). Hence, according to the report of the CC of the KKE dated 18.08.1953, the children that asked to go to the USSR, because at least one parent was there, included 396 from Romania, 28 from Bulgaria, 550 from Czechoslovakia, 241 from Hungary and 198 from Poland, and in Poland there were also 62 children and a woman from Germany who had been transferred there to go to the Soviet Union but they were still waiting. According to the same document, the wives and their children that wanted to go to their husbands (only in a few cases did the contrary occur) included 10 from Ro-

103 The KKE office in charge of correspondence also transmitted messages from relatives in Greece. In a document of 1951 was written, "Tell Mr. Karagiorgi to write to his mother more often!" (ASKI Archive F=7/51/20).

104 Mr. Gakis told me that once his father sent him a coat from Czechoslovakia, and in the lining, he sewed a watch.

105 Mr. Christos Tzitzilonis, Athens, 09.09.2011.

mania, 1 from Bulgaria, 23 from Czechoslovakia, 3 from Hungary and 14 from Poland. The majority of these people arrived in Tashkent in 1954. After 1954, only occasional cases of reunification occurred.

The party organizations were also in charge of organizing demonstrations about the political situation in Greece, for the refugees' repatriation, and for the people in Greece who were still prisoners of war (See TMAG: 13, nd; Zhukova: 65-66, 2002). For the latter group, in the beginning a fund was established to send money periodically to them or their families. The fund was also used as a reserve fund for the party. However, this fund withheld a large part of the refugees' salary and caused many disputes within the party, since the members responsible for it were accused of cheating (See Lampatos: 84-87, 2001).

2.10 The Greek small-scale civil war in Tashkent

Because of the fund and other problems, clashes among the high-ranking members of the party were frequent. The most obvious episode of this tension, mainly between two factions of the party, occurred in September 1955. "Once we were on the train. We were going back to Tashkent from Tajikistan, where we worked at that time. And a woman, after having understood that we were going to Tashkent, told us 'do not go to Tashkent, Greeks are killing each other there.' That is how we came to know about the conflict between Zachariadikì and anti-Zachariadikì" (Mr. Dastamanis). The fighting of 1955, remembered as τα γεγονότα της Τασκένδης – the events of Tashkent, erupted primarily because of a struggle for leadership of the party.

After the end of the Civil War, two main factions opposed each other, one which supported Zachariadis, and one, headed by Koligiannis, Ypsilanti, Dimitriou (whom I interviewed), Choutoura, Fourkioti and others, which opposed Zachariadis. In 1955, the tensions increased in particular because of the certainty on the part of the so-called anti-Zachariadis group of being backed by the new Soviet elite. Three years earlier such a small-scale civil war in Tashkent probably would not have happened as it did in 1955. The main differences between the disputing groups depended, in the first place, on defining the outcome of the Greek Civil War and Zachariadis's responsibility for such an outcome. While Zachariadis mostly accused Tito, the anti-Zacharidis group stressed Zachariadis's mistakes beginning with the resistance and especially during the civil war, claiming that Tito's treachery was not as crucial as Zachariadis wanted people to believe it was[106]. Secondly, the opposition attacked Zachariadis's predominance in all spheres of the party, and thirdly, they asserted Zachariadis's inadequacy in the office of Secretary General of the KKE. Indeed, since the opposition to Zachariadis, added to the general push for change,

106 This was a pivotal point also in the tension between CPSU and KKE. Indeed, Zachardiadis did not accept to improve the KKE-CPY relations, contrarily to Soviet orders.

was becoming stronger and stronger, the anti-Zachariadis group claimed its right to influence the party's policies as well (See Lampatos: 137-244, 2001).

For these and less relevant reasons, in September 1955, a literal small-scale civil war erupted between the two factions, which were defined as "zachariadikì and antizachariadikì" (with – against Zachariadis). The hostilities broke out in Tashkent, where many Greeks, even non-members of the party, were with Zachariadis[107] (See Lampatos 2001 and 2004). In fact, while in the other republics the wave of change was accepted easily by the majority of Greeks, Tashkent was considered Zachariadis's stronghold. The clashes were bloody (there are no precise data about the numbers of the victims. See Lampatos, 2004). After five years, brothers and neighbours were at war anew, beating and even killing each other with ferocity. In November 1955, the Soviet party blamed the pro-Zachariadis group and Zachariadis for the fighting in Tashkent, but it did not expel the Secretary (See Lampatos: 169, 2001). That occurred one year later.

On 24-25 February 1956, during the 20th Congress of the Soviet Union, Zachariadis was expelled from the party, and sent into exile in Borovitsi[108] (and later to Siberia); at the same time, Koligiannis became secretary general of the party[109]. The changeover of the elite naturally had its effects in Tashkent; the exponents of the pro-Zachariadis group were sent into exile too, mostly to Kazakhstan and Siberia. "My uncle was with Zachariadis and he was sent to exile and because of this, I could not find a job" (Mr. Vellàs); "My mother was not a member of the party but she was with Zachariadis. For this reason, both my brother and my brother-in-law could not find a job"; "We [Greeks from Pontus] were in exile in Kazakhstan since the 40s, and there we became acquainted with the Greeks of the Civil War who were in exile too, because they were with Zachariadis" (Mr. Pimenidis)[110]. As result of this small conflict, many

107 Many people, although not members of the party were with Zachariadis because, first of all, he had been the leader of the war in Greece and also because he was the secretary general of the KKE.

108 When I interviewed Mr. Zachariadis's third son, he told me about the exile of his father in Surgut. Since he was only six years old, his father told him that he was going to work in a new city while Alecsey would go to another city to study. In a sense, he also was exiled to Vladikavkaz. For three years, in the summer, he could visit his father in Surgut. Meanwhile, his mother had gone back to Greece to do illegal work for the party and was imprisoned. She left him when he was a child and they next met 18 years later.
There are many theories about Zachariadis's death. Alecsey Zachariadis told me it is true that his father committed suicide. "He asked many times to go back to Greece, he made many hunger strikes, and finally he wrote a letter saying that if they would not allow him to go back he would commit suicide. And this is what happened! They knew perfectly well that he would kill himself because he was consistent. That is why people say that the Soviet Union killed him, because in a way it is true. In the past I repeatedly asked for my father's file in Russia and once a woman, Mrs. Tomilina, told me 'if we open the files about Zachariadis a war between Greece and Russia could erupt'".

109 First Grozos was appointed as provisional secretary of the party, and in 1958, Koligiannis was elected.

110 Mr. Filip Pimenidis, Athens, 13.09.2011. It is worth noting that in the Soviet Union there was not only a group from Greece but there were also many Greeks that already lived there and even "indigenous Greeks". Each group was treated differently by the Soviet authorities. First, there were in Mariupol', Ukraine, the Crimean Greeks from the Byzantine period who by order of Catherine moved to the Russian Empire when Crimea was held by the Ottomans. These Greeks suffered a lot under Stalin, especially during the Great Terror. Many of them were sent to Kazakhstan and Siberia while around 4000 of them were killed (Dzhuhi, 2006). Then there were the Pontic Greeks who have always lived in the Caucasus. Their problems started after the Second World War when Stalin accused the population of the Caucasus of treachery. Thus, on 23th February 1944, they also, along with Chechens, Ingushes and many other Caucasian populations, were sent to Central Asia. Finally there were the indigenous Greeks. These were Uzbek and Tajik people who claimed to be descendents of Alexander the Great. What is interesting is that nobody knew anything about these Greeks. Paradoxically, they were discovered only in 2003 by Dimitrios Manolessakis, a Greek archaeologist who has devoted his life to finding Greek communities all over the world. In his interview, he explained me all the scientific work that he has done to be sure that these people are really descendents of Alexander the Great. However, it is very stunning that in some way other Greeks have already heard about people claiming to be Greeks of Central Asia.

people lost their jobs, were exiled to Kazakhstan or Siberia, or even died. From that moment on, being non-communist was not a problem, but being a *Zachariadikòs* became a reason for exile, humiliation, or an obstacle to entering universities, jobs and so on.

The question of the children

2.11 *Pedomazoma or Pedososimo?*

The question of the children is without a shadow of doubt the most heated argument in the entire history of the exile[111]. Whether the children were saved or kidnapped is still an issue that affects and divides Greek society, the political world as well as the media and the academic sphere. The dispute began in 1948, when the Greek Communist Party organized the evacuation of Greek children, who mainly lived in the war zones, to the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe. Comparing the data provided by the KKE, the EVoP, which was the KKE organization in charge of the children's rescue, and those of the Yugoslav Red Cross, it turns out that around 20,000 children were sheltered in the Socialist Republics up to 1950 (Danforth and Van Boeschoten, 2012). The controversy is about the reasons why this evacuation happened.

At the beginning of 1948, the Greek government accused the KKE of abducting children, destruction of the Greek race, and genocide (Danforth and Van Boeschoten: 54-58, 2012). It claimed that the Communists took the children by force to the Socialist Republics and taught them communist values so that they could have a new generation of fighters. This operation was called *pedomazoma* by the right wing: the communist aim was to have new janissaries[112] (Roditsa, 1977). Furthermore, the government informed the United Nations about this operation carried out by the KKE. Thus, the UN committee responsible for the Balkans (UNSCOB) was also entrusted with the task of assessing whether children were being kidnapped by the communists[113]. The first conclusions of the Committee were that children up to 14 years old

111 It is not fully correct to talk about exile because there was not a law that forced them out from Greece. The refugees themselves refer to the period as *υποχόρισ*η – removal [from their motherland] or, more often, as *προσφυγιά* – prosfigià a word that does not correspond to any English word and can be translated probably as "the period I was a refugee".

112 The *pedomazoma*, or *devshirme*, was a practice during the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans took by force all the skilled male sons from Orthodox families at the age of 6-8 years to make them study in Islamic schools, train in the military schools and become the most loyal caste of the Empire. They were called Janissaries, the Sultan's army.

113 After the American intervention in the Greek Civil War the USA tried to involve the UN in the question too, "The Security Council discussed the Greek problem during June, July, and August 1947, but because of five Soviet vetoes, it was unable to reach any decision. The question was taken off the agenda of the Security Council on September 15 on the motion of the United States representative, and on September 23, the General Assembly decided to place the question of "threats to the political independence and territorial integrity of Greece" on its agenda. On October 21, 1947, the Gener-

were taken by the KKE, mostly in the regions of Epirus, Western Macedonia and Thrace. The US State Department, in accordance with the report of the UNSCOB A/935, concluded that "in violation of fundamental humanitarian principles, some of these children, both boys and girls of adolescent age, have been sent back to Greece to fight in the ranks of the guerrillas" (US Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 21, Jul- Sep 1949, 409).

Nevertheless, in the following reports, after further research, the UNSCOB committee proposed that the word 'abduction' be replaced with the word 'removal', since many children were removed with the parents' consent. However, the UNSCOB did not manage to provide data about the children evacuated (Danforth and Van Boeschoten: 58, 2012). The report about the region of Thrace states that they "were children of guerrillas or guerrillas' sympathizers" and that "mass abduction of Greek children by the guerrillas for schooling in foreign countries cannot be confirmed" (UN: 1948a, 30-31 in Danforth and Van Boeschoten: 58-60, 2012). The radio station *Free Greece*[114], in the broadcast of 19 March 1948, reports a dialogue between the mothers of the children who were sent to the Eastern European bloc and the commissioners of the UNSCOB in the village of Lafki in Kastorià province: "How many children are missing from the village? – '30', a mother answers. 'And it is possible that other children will join the group' another mother who was behind added. 'Why didn't these mothers hide them? Why did they allow the bandits[115] to take their children by force?' the same member of the commission asked. 'But they did not take them by force. They themselves [the mothers] accompanied their children to Free Greece[116] to make them leave. They learnt that from there, children left, and they took them there'. 'Here, in our village partisans did not come to tell us anything' added another." (R/S EE 1948.03.19 AD 497 AM 339517 – Archive KKE "Charilaos Florakis").

Indeed the KKE, for its part, has always claimed that each child was taken with the consent of the parents and that no forced recruitment of children was carried out (See Servos, 2001). "The truth about the Greek children is different. The truth is that the pain of the children, their hunger, abandonment, the danger of bombing, forced the parents of the children to send them to a safe place. The philanthropic organizations of the democratic countries, thanks to the mediation of the Provisional Democratic Government of Greece, agreed to take care of and host the poor prey of the monsters of the monarcho-fascism", declared Radio Free Greece, in 1948 (R/S EE 1948.10.13 AD 1267 AM: 311730 – KKE Ar-

al Assembly, by a vote of 40 to 6, with 11 abstentions, approved a resolution establishing the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans, with representatives of 11 nations, although the U.S.S.R. and Poland refused to serve [...]. The United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans, composed of the active representation of Australia, Brazil, China, France, Mexico, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, began its work in Greece in November 1947, and has continued to sit in that country, either in Salonika (December 1947-July 1948) or in Athens (July 1948-49)" (US Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 21, Jul- Sep 1949, 407). The main task of the UNSCOB was to evaluate the Socialist Republics' support and aid to the Democratic Army (DSE).

114 Radio Free Greece was the DSE's radio station, operative from July 1947 until 1956, first in Belgrade and then in Bucharest. The radio was the best way to propagandize party's activities, inform people about events, battles, and people wounded, imprisoned or dead and report people missing. There was also a newspaper, Towards the Victory, however the radio remained the major instrument since the majority of the population was not able to read.

115 Both the Greek government and the US and UN units referred to the DSE fighters as bandits (See chapter 1 paragraph 1.1).

116 Free Greece was called by the KKE sympathizers; the territory controlled by the DSE, where the KKE established its government, the "Provisional Democratic Government of Greece". Free Greece's territories were opposed by the KKE to *Slave Greece*, the territories ruled by the official Greek government.

chive "Charilaos Florakis"). Consequently, the communist party defended and defends itself talking about *pedososimo*: the rescue of the children. According to the KKE, in 1948, the party established a commission in Bucharest, the EVoP (Επιτροπή Βοήθειας στο Παιδί– Commission for Aid to the Child), whose aim was to save the partisans' children from bombings. In fact, in many cases both parents fought in the mountains and the children remained alone at home, risking their lives and, even worse, risking being taken by the National Army[117]. Therefore, the EVoP's task was to save these children temporarily from starvation, poverty, and death, sheltering them in the Socialist Republics.

Furthermore, the KKE turned the accusation of *pedomazoma* back against the Queen of Greece, Frederica. The Queen, in 1947, founded with other noblewomen the "Royal Care Organization" for the rescue of children from villages and cities. For these children, were built 53 Child-towns. The Queen organized a huge international propaganda to cast light on the genocide that was occurring in Greece at the communists' hands, while comparing it to her philanthropic act of saving the children. Conferences and meetings were held in major European cities to condemn the crime against humanity perpetrated by the Greek bandits (Vervenioti: 123-124, 2010). Consequently, the main aim of the Queen's organization was to find the children before the KKE did (Margaritis: 609, 2002).

"Thus, the Greek government 'kidnapped' the children in other to 'save' them from the communists who allegedly wanted to change their national consciousness, and the communists 'kidnapped' the children to 'save' them from the 'monarchofacist' government of Athens and the Queen" (Vervenioti: 122, 2010). The age limits of the KKE for taking a child was from 3 to 13, while of the Greek National army was from 4 to 16. Nonetheless, these limits were not always taken into consideration. The Greek Red Cross data almost coincide with EVoP data about the children that were taken by the communists. In fact, the Red Cross counted 12,941 children who were kidnapped and 12,248 who escaped with their parents[118]. On the other hand, around 18,000 children lived in the Queen's Child-Towns (Vervenioti: 128, 2010).

Nowadays in Greece, the discussion is still going on between the left- and right-wing parties. Often, articles are published in the newspapers, talking about the tragedy of the children of the Civil war or about the lucky destiny of the children of the Greek Civil War. In the next section of the chapter, I present the experiences of the children evacuated by the KKE, as well as the story of one of people who accompanied them, Mrs. Lambrinì Gogo, and one of their teachers, who was the first headmaster of the first Greek school in Hungary, Mr. Grigoris Tzitzilonis. On the other hand, since the present work's aim is the life of the Greek political refugees in Tashkent and the question of the children is only an aspect of this, I do not linger over the Queen's Child-towns, since this latter topic concerns specifically Greece and not the life abroad.

As in the previous section, starting from the children's answers, I highlight the salient points of the dispute.

117 From the interviews, it emerges that the National Army used children as well as women, in order to force *andartes* to go back to their village from the mountains. "Once a cousin of my grandmother who was with the National Army arrived and took my grandmother's younger brother so that my grandfather, who was hidden in the mountains, would come down to the village to save him. This was a trap. He actually went to the village, and they killed him. It was 1947" (Mr. Gakis).

118 As mentioned previously, the EVoP counted 26,788 children (Danforth and Van Boeschoten: 43-49, 2012) and obviously making no distinction between voluntarily taken children and abducted since it categorically denied such a thing.

2.12 Why did the Communist take the children out from Greece?

To save us!
There were bombings everywhere and we were alone in the village since the members of our families were in the mountains fighting against the Americans. And to save us from Frederica!
(Mr. Stolakis[119])

The conditions in Greece, especially in the Northern part, were disastrous since war had existed almost continuously since 1939 and people suffered greatly (Hatzivasileou: 58, 2007). It is estimated that there were 700,000–750,000[120] refugees within Greece (Vervenioti: 119, 2010). Children were the weakest members of the society. Many of them had already crossed the border since 1946 with their parents or relative. As mentioned above, the majority of Greek refugees were hosted in Bulkes, Yugoslavia, where a Greek village was founded (Mitsopoulos, 2005; Ristovic, 2006). From late 1947 and for the whole 1948, teams were organized by the KKE to evacuate the children[121]. By October 1948, according to the figures provided in a broadcast of Radio Free Greece, there were 2,163 children in Hungary, 3,800 in Albania, 2,500 in Bulgaria, 1,100 in Yugoslavia, 2,477 in Czechoslovakia, and 3,100 in Romania (R/S EE 1948.10.13 AD 1267 AM: 311730 – KKE Archive "Charilaos Florakis").

In order the KKE to take children away, it needed the parents or someone else to sign a paper declaring that the children could temporarily go to the Socialist Republics. For many parents, this represented the best solution they could find for saving their children's lives, partly because it was only a temporary separation. "We, my three youngest sisters and me, were alone at home. The youngest was two years old. Both my parents fought for the DSE, thus they were happy to send us to the Socialist Republics so that Frederica could not take us" said Mr. Vellas, who at that time was 8-10 years old (See also Vervenioti, 2010).

It is worth lingering over the moment when the Communists took the children from the villages and the parents signed the paper. In fact, I heard from the interviewees many sentences about this that did not match with the rest of the account, which show the complexity of the entire issue:

119 Mr. Achilleas Stolakis, Kiatos, 18.03.2012.

120 On 4 March 1948 Radio Free Greece reported about the intra-national migration, saying that there were 600,000 peasants who lost their houses and 100,000 children (R/S EE 1948.03.04 AD 461 AM: 272538 – KKE Archive "Charilaos Florakis"). On 6 March, the radio reported the data provided by Athens Radio counting 485,000 refugees (R/S 1948.03.06 AD 463 AM: 305170).

121 The broadcast of 6.03.1948 titled "The children and their monarcho-fascist killers" said, "Hundreds of thousands of Greek children are freezing and dying because of hunger and dire poverty in front of the eyes and in the embrace of their mothers. Hundreds of thousands of Greek children suffer in the villages and in the cities because of the unemployment of their fathers. And as if all this were not enough, the monarcho-fascists send their killers that bomb the villages of the Free Greece and destroy the places where there are women and children (R/S 1948.03.06 AD 463 AM: 305170).

> Mrs. Gogo: "All the parents had to sign a paper. I am sure of this; we could not take the children, if the parents did not sign. But sometimes the parents were not there, so elder brothers, grandparents, uncles or aunts signed for them";

or

> Mr. Stolakis : "yes! They took us to save us! And it was done voluntarily. For example, in my family, my uncle, who was a fighter in the DSE, signed for us because my father in that period was in Athens for an operation[122] and my brother was fighting in the National Army. In fact, when he knew that my uncle signed he got angry! [...] then, in Albania, a person appointed by the party came and said that all children that were at the age to study should be moved to other places. The mothers did not want but it had to be done for the children!";

or:

> They came to my village and took all the children.
> Q: Did they take all the children without distinctions?
> Yes, yes! All of them. (Mr. Dakoulas);

or

> Mr. Gakis: "Where my aunt was, in Eastern Germany, there were 80 children and she told me that they were all orphans."

These excerpts from the interviews demonstrate the huge obstacles in defining a clear line between abduction and rescue. In families like that of Mr. Stolakis where one member was aligned with National Army and another with the DSE (something frequent in a civil war), it was easy for them to accuse each other of *pedomazoma*. Moreover, as affirmed by Mr. Dakoulas and partly supported by Mr. Gakis's account, in some villages all the children were taken, without distinction. As consequence, some may have been taken by force or perhaps more often their parents, not being aligned with one side or the other, simply preferred to send the children away from the war[123]. Their children could have been included among the hundreds of parentless children in the Socialist Republics.

Indeed, in 1948, the solution presented by the party, to send the children out of Greece, seemed to many parents the most reliable (Vervenioti, 2010). The following letter from a Greek mother was broadcast on 16.06.1948 by Radio Free Greece:

> *Letter from Ioanna Gutsi.*
> *Comrades [in arms],*
> *I am the mother of the children Elpida and Georgios Gutsi. My husband has been in pris-*

122 It is interesting to note that Mr. Stolakis's father was a priest, thus anti-communist by definition. Because of his children in the Socialist Republics, he also suffered humiliation.

123 As Professor Marantzidis said to me, there were also many cases of children given voluntarily by communist parents to the Queen's organization, probably because it was near their habitation, just to save them. Thus, these children on the one hand were indoctrinated with monarchist propaganda, and on the other, they knew that probably some of their relatives were imprisoned or killed by the government.

on for three years and was sentenced to 15 years. The monarcho-fascists killed all our animals, our properties remain uncultivated, and we are suffering hunger. My kids are suffering hunger and are in danger because of bombings and cannons. We do not have clothes, oil. Our kids grew up without soap. Unjustly mistreated, their eyes darkened.
To my great joy, I knew that our neighbours accepted to take care of our kids in order to help free us. I ask you to allow me also to send mine who have suffered a lot.
My children and I thank you and our good friends for your interest. (R/S EE 1948/06/16 AD 798 AM 305 361 – Archive KKE "Charilaos Florakis")

Many parents, especially members of the DSE and/or of the party, made the same request as Mrs. Gutsi[124]. However, the DSE's huge need for reserves is undeniable[125]. As explained in the first chapter, by 1946 thousands of the fighters of ELAS were imprisoned in the White Terror, sent to concentration camps or sentenced to death. By 1947, many of them had signed the declaration of repentance. Consequently, although completely dismissed by all the interviewees who stressed, instead, Frederica's plan to have a children's army[126] or to send them to the USA, in 1947-1948 there was a KKE plan to train a new generation of DSE fighters in order to continue the struggle or to start a new war later in the 50s. This does not mean, however, that all the children were taken for this aim, particularly the youngest among them. Nevertheless, although "in the Child Towns children were educated to adore the Queen as national symbol, while on the other side they were educated to adore the KKE leader Nikos Zachariadis and the revolution" (Vervenioti: 129, 2010), the aid and the care that the children received from both institutions is undeniable, too.

2.13 The first repatriation of the children

Both the government and the UNSCOB demanded the repatriation of the children to Greece. In the Radio Free Greece broadcasts of 11 and 28 June 1948, are reported the neg-

124 "Tens and hundreds of letters from the parents arrive at the Headquarters of the Provisional Democratic Government, from all the provinces and the villages of Free Greece, to thank the government for the great interest it showed in the safety of our children. From the province of Edessa, 85 mothers and fathers sent letters to the Provisional Democratic Government" (R/S EE 13.6.48 AD 785 AM 336305 – Archive KKE "Charilaos Florakis").

125 It has also been listed as one of the reasons why the KKE lost the war (See Episima Kimena vol.7: 14-16, 1995).

126 The Queen's aim was not to constitute a children's army or a generation of new Hitlers, as claimed by the interviewees. However, young people older than 20 years old joined the National Army and young people from 16 to 20 years old were sent to special Child-towns different from those for the other children. Vervenioti reports that in one of these Child-Towns at Leros, there were 1,300 children under 21 years old, who were fighters of the DSE taken by the National Army. Since they were young, they were sent to the special Child-Towns where they were re-educated to national values. Eventually, the system in these places was a military one (Vervenioti: 128, 2010). Furthermore, as also claimed by the interviewees, it is confirmed that many orphans, or children believed to be such, were given to US families for adoption (these were mainly families of Greek emigrants to America) and, in the majority of cases, they did not return to Greece like the other children of the civil war did. Orphans also included partisans' children, since the parents were considered not adequate by the Queen. On the other hand, it is not recorded that the KKE allowed families to take children for adoption. Mr. Stolakis said, "When I was in Romania, there was a family that wanted to adopt me but the party did not allow them because I had my family in Greece".

ative responses about repatriation from the Czechoslovak, Yugoslav, and Romanian governments, which justified their negative answers saying that the children would return only when conditions in Greece were safe for them. In 1949, the UNSCOB adopted a second resolution on the topic. Following, an excerpt from the US State Department Bulletin, reports on the UNSCOB resolution:

> The second resolution recommended the repatriation, through the mediation of national and international Red Cross organizations, 'of Greek children at present away from their homes, when the children, their father or mother, or in his or her absence, their closest relative, express a wish to that effect' (fragment of the resolution). This resolution originated from the anxiety expressed by the Special Committee in its report concerning the removal of a large number of Greek children from Greece to other countries (Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 21, Jul- Sep 1949, 411).

Thus, beginning in 1949, a catalogue with the names of the children requested by parents and relatives was drafted by the government and the Greek Red Cross, with the help of Yugoslavia as well, which by that time had started collaborating with the Greek government. In 1949, it is recorded that 538 children came back home, just from Yugoslavia (Margaritis: 612, 2002)[127]. Up to 1950, there were 9515 requests for repatriation of children. However, according to a letter dated 8 October 1950, written by the EVoP to the International Committee of the Red Cross which was in charge of the repatriation, there were many inconsistencies in the requests. Of 4,714 requests checked by the EVoP, it turned out that:

- 165 were made by the parents of the children or by close relatives who were with them in the Socialist Republics;
- 594 were made by relatives of children that were in the Socialist Republics with their parents;
- 824 were about young adults older than 18 years[128];
- 1,393 regarded children who were not in the Children's Centers;
- 125 were duplicate requests;
- 1,663 were cases without enough information to identify the child.

To the letter were attached many examples of such cases (Comitato Italiano per la liberatà della Grecia: 6-8, 1951).

It is difficult to sort the matter out, since many aspects should be taken into consideration for a conclusion. Speaking about *pedomazoma* is incorrect; nonetheless, it is very complicated to evaluate whether it was a voluntary act or not by the parents, not least due to the fact that it was not always the parents who permitted it, but other members of the family[129]. However, as confirmed by the UNOSCOB reports and recent works published by international and Greek scholars (See Vervenioti, 2010; Danforth and Van Boeschoten, 2012), is plausible that a large proportion of the parents, who were guerrilla fighters or supporters, voluntarily sent their children to neighbouring countries. Finally, as also reported above, the government also counted as children the men from 18 to 21 years old who most of time decided by themselves to join the war.

127 Up to 1954, almost 5000 children returned to Greece or joined their parents in the USA, Canada or Australia, according to the data of Mitsopoulos (81, 2005).

128 The government sent requests for people up to 21 years old (Margaritis: 612, 2002).

129 As in the case, for instance, of Mr. Stolakis's brother.

2.14 The children's long travel to Eastern Europe

We went by foot to Albania; there was a mum with us. Actually, she was a Greek girl that we called mum. Then in Albania, we were hosted by families. We stayed there a couple of months, and then they took us to Romania were we remained for almost four years.
(Mr. Katsiavalos)

The EVoP organized teams of 25 children and an accompanying girl (See R/S EE 1948.03.04 AD 461 AM: 272538 – KKE Archive "Charilaos Florakis")[130]. Mrs. Gogo was one of them. "At one point they called me and said that I had to go with the children to the Socialist Republics. I did not want to go but it was an order. So we started our journey on 1 April 1948. I had 26 children under my supervision. We passed through many villages on the way, and took other children with other accompanying persons. At a certain point, we had to bind their mouths because it was very risky if someone heard us. In Albania, they hosted us in a building[131]. Some of us worked also interpreters because we are Albania's neighbours and we can easily understand Albanian. Before Christmas, we were in Hungary". In Albania, the commissioners of the EVoP began to find teachers or people that could become teachers to teach the children: education was a fundamental aspect of the life of its members. Therefore, Mr. Tzintzilonis who was in Albania with his younger brothers and was 17 years old was ordered by the party to study in order to become teacher.

> We left Shkodër before Christmas, there were 850 of us. The others stopped in Romania, while 250, me included, went to Hungary. Since 1949, adults also had arrived, thus the Hungarian Party gave them lands where they could build their houses. In this way, the '*Ελληνικό Χωριό* – Greek Village'[132] was founded and I became the first headmaster of the first Greek school (Mr. Tzitzilonis).

Thus, the children were sheltered in the other Republics[133]. Children that were of school age, even if they were with their parents, as in the case of Mr. Stolakis and his brother[134], were sent to Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland or Eastern Germany. The children I interviewed were all sent to Romania with the exception of Mr. Katsanos, who was sent to Hungary. When they arrived, they were hosted in palaces and villas that once belonged to princes and lords. There, people, both Greeks and locals, who were in charge of the chil-

130 According to Mitsopoulos the ratio was 1 woman to 10 children (74, 2005).

131 Many children such as Mr. Katsiavalos and Mr. Vellàs were hosted in families where at least one member was Greek.

132 After the execution of Nikos Belogiannis the village was renamed in his honor.

133 "Thousands of Greek children, contrary to the spirit of that resolution [the resolution taken by the General Assembly on 27th November 1948 for facilitating the children's return], have been transferred from one Soviet satellite state to another" (Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 21, Jul- Sep 1949, 409).

134 Mr. Stolakis was reunited with his mother and grandparents in Albania. They also fled because of bombings.

dren washed them, burnt all their clothes and treated them for injuries and disease, and after a couple of months they organized for them school classes (Mitsopoulos: 79, 2005).

> Every day, before having lunch we said 'the enemy will not cross Vitsi'[135] and all of us had a small medal placed round our necks with the image of Markos Vafiadis in his honor. Later, when he was expelled from the party, they told us that he was ill and to take them off (Mr. Katsiavalos).

2.15 School, University, Institutes for everyone's ambition

Of course, we went to school! Courses at school were in both Romanian and Greek. We studied in Greek all the subjects that concerned Greece, like history, geography, Greek grammar and literature, the rest was in Romanian. Among ourselves we spoke in Greek, our mother tongue, but we soon learned Romanian also in order to communicate with our Romanian tutors.
(Mr. Dastamanis)

The majority of the Greek children had not gone to school in Greece or had only completed the first two classes. Moreover, many of them, especially the youngest, did not know how old they were[136]. Hence, at the beginning the tutors hardly tried and form homogeneous classes according to age (Mitsopoulos: 82, 2005)[137]. "We were older, but we had not attended any classes in Greece, so, in two years, they make us learn everything we needed to join the higher level." (Mr. Katsiavalos). Since the army was sent in Tashkent, there were few children[138]. Nevertheless, the fighters were very young, between the ages of 20 and 35. Therefore, some of them that had already studied and wanted to continue were allowed to take exams of the Russian language, after having taken the course, and enroll at university. Others were sent to professional schools in order to learn a trade. When the majority of the children arrived in 1954, they joined the classes with their Russian and Uzbek schoolmates. The structure was very similar to that in Romania: "when Russians had English classes and Uzbeks had Russian classes, we had Greek classes" (Mr. Papoulakos). The classes taken in Greek were: Greek language and literature, geography and history of Greece.

135 At Mount Vitsi and Grammos occurred the last battles, after which the DSE lost the war.

136 Only few of them knew the day and month of their birth because in Greece it was usual to celebrate the name day rather than the birthday.

137 It is recorded that 60% of the children were illiterate, 17.5% had attended the 1st elementary class, 14% the 2nd class, 5% the 3rd class, and 4% had attended a level higher than the 3rd class, (Mitsopoulos: 83, 2005).

138 Among few children, there was Mr. Dakoulas. He joined the DSE when he was 14 years old. "They did not want me to join the war because I was too young. But I insisted; I did not want to stay in the village looking after the sheep. So finally, they accepted me. However, they never let me fight; I only helped them like the women did". In Tashkent, he was ordered to work as a bricklayer. Nevertheless, when in the summer of 1950 the party proposed that people who had studied enroll in school, he decided to study. "The KKE did not let me because I had never gone to school, but I went to the Soviet officer and he allowed me. I entered the 4th elementary class".
By 1958, the number of the children in Tashkent sharply increased, thanks to the family reunification, and it was counted 3607 (TMAG: 73, nd).

In some cases, as happened for instance to Mr. Papoulakos and Mr. Fakiolas, there was only one Greek student in a class. Nevertheless, the USSR paid a Greek teacher specifically for him/her (TMAG, nd). Furthermore, since the students had to pass the admission test to enter university, the state provided fixed quotas for Greek students, so that they would compete only with other Greeks. The books came from Romania; a commission of the EVoP was in charge of writing books for all the classes and courses, in Greek obviously. The publisher was "Political and Literature Publications" which also published books by Greek refugees who were or became writers. Among the authors were Petros Kokkalis and Elli Alecsiou, who were the president and a member of the EVoP, respectively, and Mr. Alecsandropoulos. "The compulsory books met two needs: the learning of the Greek language and the national-patriotic formation, and the education of the children" (Mitsopoulos: 89, 2005). In fact, the KKE stressed education heavily; all the Greeks had to study intensively in order to take their knowledge back to their motherland[139], to become scholars, engineers, doctors, lawyers and serve their homeland but, particularly, to keep their identity alive. "These children, in spite of the times, had to form and educate themselves, in order to remain Greeks, to maintain their clear national sentiment, to learn the language of their fathers, to carry with them always their national identity, which means their Greekness" (Mitsopoulos: 84, 2005)[140]. Mrs. Maria Beikou was one of the KKE and DSE members. I knew something about her history thanks to the documents she gave the ASKI and the books she wrote. She attended Russian classes in Tashkent, as did all the other young people, but then she moved to Moscow to study theatre and work at the radio station. In her notebook at the ASKI archives, I read some essays that she probably wrote for the Russian classes because there were corrections. The first words of one of them were,

> *Almost five years have passed since I left my motherland. But she is always in front of my eyes", and she concluded it by saying, "I had, I have and I will have, a dream, an aim: to be worthy of my motherland, of my people, using for this aim all my knowledge, which I mostly acquired in the great country of the Soviets.*
> (ASKI Archive, Georgoula and Maria Beikou Archive, k.30, f.11)

As Mr. Motsios, the first translator of Kazantzakis into Russian told me "We fled as peasants and came back as scholars". However, the problems that they had, once back in the homeland, were many.

139 With regard to this argument, I find interesting a part of Mr. Stolakis's interview: "They [the Romanian Communist Party] never asked us for anything; they gave us everything and asked for nothing! For instance, we studied there, and the majority of us even completed university. Well, like us there were also Jewish people, for example, who enjoyed all the rights of the hosting state. When a Jew asked to move to Israel, they had to pay for all the studies they had done. However, when we came back to Greece, they did not ask us for even ~~a~~ one cent!" This is a point which the KKE and the refugees stress in support of their point of view on the *prosfigià*.

140 Thanasis Mitsopoulos was a kapetanios of the DSE and fled to the Eastern Bloc. In 1979, he published the first book about the political refugees, titled *We remained Greeks*. Indeed, one of the more common criticisms of the KKE was that it wanted to erase children's Greek identity and indoctrinate them with Soviet values and so on (See introduction**).** On the contrary, all the refugees, and all the interviewees, stress the fact that they are more Greek than the Greeks who remained in the homeland. More than once, the refugees told me that they learned more about Greek literature and history than the children in Greece did.

Third chapter

"Homeland is homeland": The return

3.1 "And the next year in the motherland"

Among the few things that Mr. Dimitriou remembered about his life in the USSR[141] there was this occurrence "During each feast, private or public, before toasting we said *'Και του χρόνου στην πατρήδα* – and the next year [we will toast] in the motherland'". The recurring thought of the refugees was their return to Greece. However, as the years passed, the more the Greeks of Tashkent were becoming alien to Greece, since the number of those who had never been to the motherland sharply increased. However, imprinted in nearly every one of them, was the feeling of belonging to another culture, language, tradition, nation, and land. During the years of the exile, the Greek community, in whatever country it was located, organized demonstrations, congresses, and protests asking the Greek government to let them return. "These protests were not even known in Greece, I think. But, we organized them also for us, for keeping our bond with Greece alive" Mr. Katsanos.

The majority of people came back in 1974-1975 when the Junta was overthrown and it became easier for the refugees to get the permission for repatriation. In 1982, the government passed the amnesty Law Number 400/76 allowing the repatriation of the refugees and the return of Greek citizenship to the refugees whose citizenship was revoked after the Greek Civil War. According to the data collected by the Greek Ministry of Health and Welfare, from 1974 to 1985[142], 25,701 refugees were repatriated from the Socialist Republics and the USSR, while according to the International Cultures' Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan between 1975 and 1991 18,900 Greeks repatriated specifically from Tashkent[143]. 7,872 Greeks from all the Eastern Bloc that were repatriated before 1974 should be added to the above data. Indeed,

141 Unfortunately, I knew Mr. Panos Dimitriou when he was at the age of 96. Thus, in some part of the interview he confused events and dates.

142 Greek Ministry of Health and Welfare. *Statistic data of the Repatriated Greeks*, Athens, 1985, pp. 1-2.

143 International Cultures' Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan http://www.icc.uz/rus/cultural_centre/tashkentskoe_gorodskoe_obshestvo_grecheskoy_kulturi/

since 1956, especially under Prime Minister George Papandreou, 6,786 refugees were allowed to return[144]. This latter group of refugees who returned before 1974 can be divided in three subgroups, according to the three main reasons that permitted their repatriation:

– during the civil war, people that "were not taken voluntarily by the *andartes*", as Mr. Karastathis explained me**.** The above sentence counters the theory supported by the KKE, and confirmed by all the interviewees, according to which "nobody was taken by force". However, when I replied to Mr. Karastathis on this issue, he said, "But this does not mean that they were taken by force! They were recruited because, for example, if they had these people, the National Army could not understand who was really a communist and who instead was not. Or they took them because they needed women, for example to carry wounded people and do other stuff, but not to fight. These were only war strategies; also the National Army did the same". I also recorded the same words, about the non-voluntarily recruitment carried out by the KKE, from other refugees. Mrs. Gogo, for instance, said, "Girls were recruited by the National Army. This was terrible because they did terrible things. Also the communists took some girls but at least they treated them very well. I also helped them, they always sent me to bring messages from one unit to the other, or, for example, when my father was hidden in the mountains, because the National Army wanted to kill him, my mum sent me to bring him food. I was proud of helping them. I cannot forget when Aris Veleouchiotis once came to our village. He was a real *kapetanios*! He took me on his knee and said, 'you, all of you children have to serve the DSE in the struggle against the fascism'. They fought to save us, not to hurt us". Mr. X, who later called me to say that he wanted to remain anonymous about this story, told of a crueler event. "I remember when once they [the DSE fighters] arrived to my village and took two girls. These girls cried and shouted because they did not want to follow the DSE. Thus, they killed them and hung their heads in the square of the village. And I also know other people who were taken by force, but I prefer stopping here".
  Hence, this confirms that not all the people fled voluntarily. These people, or those who declared something similar[145], mostly women and children, were the first allowed to return to Greece, as early as 1956[146].
– The second group constituted of elderly people, for instance Mr. Dastamanis's father, whose primary desire was "to die" in Greece. Nevertheless, despite their application for repatriation, these people were not always allowed to return; in fact, it depended on their files. If they were accused of war crimes, had been sentenced to death, or were active members of the party, they could not return.
– The third group was composed of high-ranking members of the party or intellectuals. I have no precise information about this, but from the interviews and the research I carried out, I noted that in the 60s many high-ranking members of the party returned to Greece, mostly illegal-

144 According to the date collected by Greek Ministry of Health and Care, 6786 Greeks repatriated between 1956 and 1969, while 1086 came to Greece during the Junta, for a total of 7872, Greeks that achieved to enter legally the Greek territory before 1974. Indeed, in this account is not counted the number of Greeks that came to Greece illegally to carry out outlaw activities according to KKE orders. This account is yet unknown.

145 People could go back only if they signed the declaration of repentance. "The vast majority of us did not repatriated in the 60s because our motto was 'or all of us return or nobody' and the main point was that we had to go back 'free' and not after having accepted all their values: we wanted our dignity and our beliefs to be respected" Mr. Fotou, president of the PEEPP.

146 Contrarily, during the same period, people that had close relatives as husbands, parents, in the Socialist Republics and the Soviet Union were facilitated to reunite with them in these countries [See chapter 2, paragraph 2.9]

ly, to carry out illegal work for the party. Greek intellectuals returned legally. In the case of the interviewees, Mr. Dimitriou returned illegally to work for the party; Mrs. Zei and Mr. Spathìs returned legally. These people, however, remained in Greece until the coup d'état by the Colonels and then they fled to Western European countries, mainly Italy and France[147].

3.2 To return or not to return: this is a dilemma

The overwhelmingly majority of the refugees went to Greece after the fall of the Junta. All the people interviewed, with the exception of three of them, said that the idea of returning was their first thought, they desired to go back to Greece. The exceptions are Mr. Dastamanis, Mr. Dakoulas, and Mr. and Mrs Papulakos. The latter eventually returned to Greece, while Mr. Dastamanis remained in St. Petersburg. "I tried to go back more than once, but I did not find a job. Then, I also took my wife with me [his wife is Russian]. She liked Greece very much but by the second time we went there, things in Greece were worse and we preferred to stay in Leningrad. Also because my son was here [in Leningrad], he was already married and with children, my apartment, my dog…in Greece I had nothing and I had only to quarrel with my relatives over properties and other stuff and I was tired of this" (Dastamanis). Mr. Dakoulas, instead, went back, but not in the 70s along with the majority of the refugees. He went in 1989[148]; he had doubts about his return until the very last moment. He told me "sometimes I wonder whether it was better to stay there. But, at least, we fled from Tajikistan before the fighting began. Today it is not what it was 40 years ago".

Indeed, Mr. Dakoulas' conditions in Greece are not as good as those of other refugees. Furthermore, from the very start, his return was complicated: he and his wife were pensioners but the latter's pension was not recognized, and his wife had to find a job. His son and daughters were already adults and did not speak Greek, therefore it was extremely difficult for them to integrate into the Greek society and, last, he had problems with his family too, as did Mr. Dastamanis over the family's properties.

The third refugee undecided about his return to Greece was Mr. Papoulakos. During the interview, he said,

> Basically we went back because our parents, both my wife's and mine, wanted to go back. We did not want very much to return. Our life there was good. Both of us worked, we had

147 During the dictatorship by the Junta, the majority of the Greek intelligentsia established in Paris (See Gibney and Hansen: 273-275, 2005). Nevertheless, contacts with the Eastern camp were the KKE groundwork, at least until 1968 when the schism occurred and the KKE Interior was founded (the latter branch followed the wave of the *Socialism with human face*, within the Eurocommunist group). Mr. Gakis, having become member of the party (now, he is member of the Maoist group), in the 60s, he went to Czechoslovakia via Italy, where he carried outlaw party activity, to meet, for the first time since he was a child, his father who was refugee there.

148 He delayed the departure also because he was next to retire and if he moved to Greece, he would lose part of the working years obtained in the USSR.

> gotten our apartment, our children were growing up… but then, besides our parents' insistence, we also thought that it was better to go back for our children, also because they had not started school yet, so they would be fully Greek and not half and half as we are.

3.3 Different generations, different inclinations

Mr. Papoulakos' reference to *being half and half* refers to the fact that, although he was born in Greece and had a strong tie with his country mainly conveyed by the living memories of his parents, he had never been in Greece before his repatriation (with the exception of his infancy). He grew up in Tashkent, in the Soviet environment, according to the local way of living his life, and consequently he did not consider himself to be *fully Greek*[149]. This sentiment can be linked to the fact that Mr. Papoulakos and his wife belong to the third category of Greeks in Tashkent and therefore, their feeling of belonging to Greece were far weaker than that of their parents. Indeed, in the 70s, when repatriation was allowed, there were already three generations of Greeks, if not four. The first category consisted of adults, either fighters of the DSE or not, who fled to the USSR older than 18-20 years-old. The second category, instead, was made up of the *children of the civil war.* Despite the fact that the youngest among them did not remember Greece very well, they grew up with the feeling of being forcibly separated from their motherland[150], a sentiment that remained always alive in their memories. Moreover, many of the *children's* parents or close relatives were in Greece. Consequently, the forced separation, their connections with Greece, and the idea of the family waiting for them there, constituted the core part of their feelings about returning, and increased as they aged. The third category was born in Tashkent or departed Greece as infants, as with Mr. Papoulakos and his wife. Therefore, they did not have real connections with Greece, with the exception of the monthly letter sent to unknown grandparents. They are people that knew about Greece only from stories told by elders, since they have never been to Greece or only in their infancy. Often, they were born to mixed marriages, thus they had a consciousness of belonging to two cultures rather than one, the Greek[151]. Thus, Mr.

149 At the beginning of the interview, he said, "I did not tell you to meet with us [him and his wife] in a café because I hate cafés. I cannot stand sitting there for hours, doing nothing. I do not know how Greeks can do it every day. Read a book, go for a walk, do something, but do not sit down doing nothing. And then, they complain that Greece is doing bad. Of course, it is in crisis. In the Soviet Union it was not like this". Sitting in a café for hours, drinking coffee and talking with friends is considered a typical Greek habit. As this habit, Mr. Papoulakos criticized many other Greek customs. During the whole interview he referred to Greece and Greeks as if he was not part of. The same attitude in this regard, I noted in all the refugees, with the exception of Mr. Fotou, Mrs. Gogo, Mr. Spathìs, and Mrs. Zei. The latter refugees had a great sense of belonging to Greece and of being Greek. I attribute the different sentiment to the differences in age. Indeed, the last four refugees belong to the first generation of Greeks in Tashkent, while the rest of the interviewees are second and third generation.

150 The idea of the forced separation is not intended by the refugees, as caused by the Communist Party but by the Greek government (see Chapter 2 par. 2.2, the question of the *pedomazoma* and the idea of the *necessary* emigration that they have).

151 However, it is worth highlighting that also the third and fourth generations had a great sense of being part of the Greek community, since they always participated to the Greek events, Greek parties, were friends of other Greeks and the bond with the Greek community was strong [see chapter 2 paragraph 2.7]. Consequently, the feeling of those as Mr. Pa-

and Mrs. Papoulakos's sons, Mr. Dastamanis', and Mr. Dakoulas' grandsons are part of the fourth generation[152].

3.4 Not everyone returned to Greece

Notwithstanding the claim that all the refugees wanted to repatriate, I suggest to identify at least four groups of refugees that, instead, did not want to go back to Greece, or could not go back:

– Young Greeks, as like Mr. Papoulakos and his wife, Mrs. Gingoklou. Belong to the third category that grew up in Tashkent, whose life, friends, and jobs were there. The third category, in their decisions about repatriation, took into consideration the economic factor and the future of their children, rather than the emotional aspect. An aspect that confirms the above statement is also the fact that these people were not willing to go back as soon as it became possible. From the research of Kasimati on the refugees' repatriation (1993), from 1986 to 1992 70% of those who went to Greece were born outside of Greece, thus our third and fourth category. Fifty six percent of this group went back because the living conditions in Greece were better[153], because the rest of their family was moving (as in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Papoulakos, Mr**.** Karastathis, Mr. Iankos), or because they would remain a minority[154] (Mr. Dakoulas). Thirty percent of this group, instead, came back because it was their desire since the first day of exile (Kasimati: 70, 1993). Contrarily, in the 70s, after the fall of the Junta, most of the people repatriated were those who had always desired to return to their motherland, mainly those of the first or second category.
– Economically or socially invested people that made an economic investment, or other business activity in the host country[155]. These people in many cases remained in the USSR

poulakos, Mr. Iankos or Mr. Karastathis arises from the fact that, in a way, they lived at the same time in two realities, the Greek and the local. This is why especially people of the third/fourth generation remained in Tashkent, but also why many of them went to Greece.

152 There are other ways of defining a generation. An interesting subdivision is made by Mihailidis. He distinguishes three generations of Greek political refugees, making an analysis of refugees' collective memory and their different way of interpreting and going through the same events (161, 2010).
In the specific case of the above analysis, instead, what matters is not the refugees' memory and way of facing the past and the subsequent building of a collective memory. The main divide is the refugees' bound with Greece and therefore their willingness to repatriate.

153 Indeed, 77 % of the people that repatriated after 1985 had already visited Greece at least one time (Kasimati: 66, 1993).

154 Specifically about the Soviet Union, it results that "three are the main reasons [for the return]: they followed members of the family (parents, brothers and sisters, etc.), this means that they decided to leave under the influence of the minority syndrome on the one side – if they wanted to stay they would face problems because of their small number – and a passive and impersonal attitude of uniformity to others' desires and decisions, on the other. They wanted also to live in the motherland, a dream that now they could realize and yet for various reasons that were mainly about the future of their children, the ethnic problems that began in the regions where they lived and the system there was" (Kasimati: 71, 1993). The reasons outlined by Kasimati about repatriation coincide with the answers the interviewees gave me. I would add the desire "to die in the motherland", since all the interviewees whose parents were also in the USSR, told me that this was their parents' main desire.

155 This information comes from the interview with Mr. Elliniadis. Elliniadis is a Greek director, who made documen-

or in the Socialist Republics since going to Greece meant to lose all what they had, and start again from zero. This group also included those who were married to locals. They integrated into a new context, into a new family and, especially if they did not have anybody in Greece, they were tempted to stay. Among these people are Mr. Dakoulas and Mr. Dastamanis. Both men's of their parents died before they went back to Greece. Mr. Dastamanis only had a brother who was in the Socialist Republics. His new family, his wife, his son, his grandchildren were in Russia. Thus, he decided to stay there. Mr. Dakoulas, instead, had fled from Greece when he was 14, because he had nobody there, in fact both his parents had already died. His childhood was not a happy one. For the whole period of the *prosfigià,* with the exception of some letters sent to his sisters and brothers, he had no contact with Greece. Later, he was sent from Tashkent to Dushanbe, Tajikistan, to work. Consequently, he almost lost contacts also with the Greek community in Tashkent. His daughters and his son were already adults in the 70s and none of them spoke Greek. Hence, the decision to go back was very hard. "I made a rule, if only a member of my family had said 'no, I do not want to move' we would have stayed in Dushanbe. But all of them said yes, and now we are in Greece, although with many problems".

– A third group constituted of all those elderly people who wanted to return to Greece, but did not have enough money or strength to face the long travel[156].
– Finally, the forth group is made of Slavo-Macedonians and other minorities that lived in Greece and fled with the Democratic Army of Greece. The majority of the Slavo-Macedonians have not yet gone back to Greece. Nowadays, these people are not allowed to enter the Greek territory.

The majority of refugees went back to their homeland, after 1974. They came back because "your motherland is and will be your motherland, forever" as they told me, hence for a sentiment of nostalgia. The main desire of elderly people was to return to their homeland to die there. Others came, thinking about Greece as a *Promised Land*. Obviously the shock was enormous, villages were not the same as 25 years before, their houses, their land were someone else's house, someone else's land. The difficulties that they faced were many, and the help they received was little.

3.5 Home is not always as sweet as we image

The refugees went to and returned from the USSR by ship. When they arrived in Greece, the first welcome was not the warmest. "We were on the ship, and we could not go

tary about the Greek in the former Socialist Republics and USSR. From the interviews he did to the Greeks that remained there, resulted that the majority of them or had a business activity, or was married to locals. Furthermore, he met also with many Slavo-Macedonians still living there, especially in Poland.

156 Elliniadis provides me with this information, too.

ashore, unless they called us. We arrived early in the morning, but we stayed on the ship until the afternoon. They called us one by one, and we had to present ourselves to a government commission. The commission asked us about all our family, where we lived when we were in Greece, what work did our parents did, our grandparents, our grand grandparents and so on" Mr. Vellas. "When it was my turn" – said Mr. Papoulakos – "they started asking me about all my family in Greece but I did not know anything. Hence, one of them said to another 'don't you see that he is young? How could he know about Greece in the 40s, in the 30s?' And finally they let me go". Nevertheless, the troubles did not finish after the interrogation. "Once I returned home, I had not yet greeted every member of my family, when the police arrived and took me to the police station. I was accused of war crimes and sentenced to death in 1950. Thus, I spent some days at the police station, awaiting for a solution" Mr. Fotou. Like Mr. Fotou, many others had problems with the Greek justice system. Mrs. Ilinskaya said to me that her husband, Mr. Alecsandropoulos, was sentenced to death and that they did not know anything about this, until their arrival in Greece.

In addition to old death-sentences and orders of imprisonment, there were also many difficulties for young people who were born in the USSR or in the Socialist Republics. For instance, before finding a job, the men who had not served the army (i.e. all of them because they were not in Greece), had to fulfill their duty[157]. However, many of them, as the former *children,* were already too old to serve in the army. Thus, in 1985, the government passed the Law 1540/1985, which envisaged that: no person who was born before 1944 had the duty to serve in the army; those people who were born between 1945 and 1959 could redeem the military service by paying a fee of 4,400 drachmas. Finally, those who were born after 1960 got postponement of service until April 1986; nevertheless, if they had a family depending on them, the service would be reduced from 24 to 12 months (Soultanià: 2002, 54).

> "When we arrived to Greece we were without money, because we could not bring money from Tashkent. Thus, as soon as we arrived gave us 1000 drachmas each. But then, they wanted us to pay 4000 drachmas for avoiding the military service. How could we pay?" Mr. Katsanos.

3.6 Life in a capitalistic country

From the USSR, they could not bring money with them, but they could take their household goods. "We arrived at the airport full of stuff: kitchen stuff, personal stuff, ev-

157 Indeed, in 1947, the government enacted the law 307, according to which the people who fled to the Socialist Republics were sentenced of desertion and insubordination. However, in 1974, under ministerial decree 519/1974 that pardoned all the crimes committed up to the *metapolitefsi (*the turnover of the regime from dictatorship, under the Junta, to democratic government in 1974), also the 307 law was not enforced, while it was formally abrogated by the Article 9, Law Number 1540/4-10, April 1985.

erything we had, we brought to Greece. However, the transportation of these things to our apartment was 1000 drachmas, thus it was not convenient." Mr. Papoulakos. "We did not have money, so we decided to sell all the stuff we carried from Tashkent, but we did not earn so very much. We had lots of problems" Mrs. Paganià.

This time the state did not provide them with apartments and jobs. In her work about the refugees' living conditions after their arrival in Greece, Kasimati concludes, "The political refugees, despite the fact that they returned to their homeland and not to a foreign country faced the same problems of any other population in immigration" (145, 1993). In fact, according to her study, 62% of the refugees lived in worse conditions than during the life abroad (146, 1993). When they first arrived, 82% of them rented an apartment, 14% had their own apartment, and 2% were hosted by their relatives (Kasimati, 1993). At the time when I carried out my research, 38 years after their repatriation, the situation was different. With the exception of one of the interviewees, who still faced some economic difficulties for reasons other than exile, the others were settled, they had their pensions, and did not have any major problems, different from those of other Greeks. Indeed, every one of them affirmed that the initial difficulties (housing, job, integration in the new environment) disappeared after some years.

Nevertheless, "at the beginning, there were many problems" Mr. Fotou. First of all, the overwhelming majority of refugees had properties in Greece. Family disputes became more and more frequent; all the interviewees had problems with some member of their family over inherited properties and rights. When the refugees fled from Greece, their properties and their houses were given by the state to other people or more frequently, were gotten by relatives. Therefore, once the refugees returned, huge disputes began. In 1985, the Law 1540/1985 was enacted by the government about refugee property issues. In Article 2, Paragraph 1, it is said, "Property stated in the previous article [i.e. properties that were of people whose citizenship was revoked or who fled to Eastern countries] is returned to the beneficiaries, political refugees that reside in Greece or repatriate and have or regain or receive Greek citizenship. The return is not hindered if the property was devolved to a Local Government Organization (LGO) by possession or occupancy[158]. If the property was devolved to an LGO by ownership, it can be returned only with the LGO's consent", and it continues in paragraph 4, "If the political refugee is deceased, return beneficiaries are, to the extent that they are heir-at-law and to the percentage of their hereditary share, the spouse, children, parents and from the other heirs only the ones that are political refugees and reside in Greece or repatriate. In case that a lot of the above individuals found hereditary rights, the Civil Code provisions for hereditary succession are to be implemented" (See Lambert CM/AS (2007), Quest.530, 22.08.2007).

According to the above law, if preferred, the refugees could get a compensation for the loss, instead of the landed properties. "We established this association [the PEEPP], mainly for these battles, and we won. Many refugees got either their properties back or compensation. However, I must say that in the majority of cases, they gave the refugees a compen-

158 Indeed, the state had also got many properties: "For the landed property that came to the State's possession or for which the State has received additional price after it has retained seller rights according to Law 1323/1949, due to the fact that the seller was deprived from the right to buy back the property he/she had sold for violations of the Articles 1,2,3 and 5 of the 3rd Petition or lost Greek citizenship according to the provisions of the 27th Petition or fled to a foreign country to organize the civil war. (Written question Number 530 to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc07/EDOC11356.htm)

sation that was far less than that agreed" Mr. Fotou, former president of the PEEPP, Panhellenic Union of the Repatriated Greek Political Refugees.

3.7 "They came back to take our jobs"

Once in Greece, after filling in all the questionnaires and forms for documents[159], they had to pass an exam for the recognition of their degrees and diplomas gotten in the Socialist Republics and in the USSR. "I went to take the exam without any book or worksheets or bloc notes, but I only took the Russian-Greek dictionary. It is true that we spoke Greek in our everyday life, but at work we did not, we spoke Russian and also at the university we studied in Russian, so I did not know how to say in Greek the technical words I needed at work. And for this, I could fail the exam. When I entered the classroom, the professors look at me in a strange way because of the dictionary; but actually, it was all that I needed" (Mr. Katsiavalos). The recognition of the diplomas and degrees did not mean that they would find a job immediately. According to Kasimati, the main problem was that the refugees could not find a permanent job, therefore causing further problems. From the interviews, I noted that also stereotypes played a role in finding a job. Indeed, stereotypes and clichés were hard to cancel. "They came to take our jobs! Do you know how many times I had to hear this sentence?" (Mrs. Paganià), "they said: 'they are not suitable for important positions because they are not trustworthy' because we were communists" (Mr. Motsios), and finally, "She is a woman, she cannot do this or that job"[160] Mrs. Eleutheriadou.

Consequently, at the beginning, a significant number of refugees did not work in accordance with their education from the Soviet Union/Socialist Republics. "Of the 3800 scholars only 1520 exploit their studies. The same occurs to 6200 technicians of which 3827 work as technicians" (Soultanià: 32, 2002). For instance, among the interviewees, Mr. Fakiolas, Mr. Motsios, and Mr. Vellas were academic professors in the USSR. When they came to Greece, the first achieved to enter the academic world, and almost since the beginning worked professor. The second, Mr. Motsios, and the third Mr. Vellàs had to do lots of other works before being hired at a

159 Many of them were called back to the villages where they were born to register again, to solve disputes that have been created in their absence and, particularly, to check their files. Furthermore, they did not get immediately their Identity Card. In an interview given to *The Telegraph* in April 1978, Alekos Papageorgiou, the then president of the Panhellenic Union of Repatriated Greek Political Refugees said, "The refugees wait almost three years, before their applications for repatriation are approved. Once here, they are only given temporary residence permits, which bar their right to work. Many have their citizenship reinstated leaving them in a limbo." (Dopoulos, The Telegraph, 25.04.78, p.11)
Another interesting certificate, which they had to have, was the Church certificate that people were married and children were baptized, otherwise marriages were not recognized and children could not enroll in school. "I remember when all of us went to the only church in Tashkent. We usually did not go there, but the pope knew that we needed those certificates for Greece. The whole situation was so hilarious" Mr. Papoulakos.

160 In the Socialist countries, at the job level, women were far more emancipated than in Greece. "In the job market, young people are preferred. Women rather than men are disadvantaged. In the Eastern countries, the women that worked in accordance to their studies were 90%" (Soultanià: 32, 2002).

university. Another problem related to employment was that in Greece many common jobs of the USSR, especially many specializations of engineers such as chemical engineering or aeronautic engineering did not exist or were not as developed as in the USSR. Thus, people such as Mr. Karastathis, who was an aeronautic engineer, had to work in other fields for many years, since Greece, in this regard was not as progressed as Soviet Union. Doctors and dentists, instead, did not have big problems in opening their offices. "It was well-known that medicine in the USSR was one of the best. Thus, people trusted us." (Mrs. Eleutheriadou).

3.8 The pensioners

During the first years we had thousands of problems. I was a pensioner, but pension was not enough.
Thus, I started looking for a job, but nobody wanted me because I was old.
My sons, on the other side, were young but they did not speak Greek.
Only my wife found a job, quite early, as a stair cleaner.
(Mr. Dakoulas)

Many of the refugees were at an age to receive a pension when they arrived to Greece. Who had to pay their pensions? This was a burning argument, since, although the Greek government signed two bilateral agreements with the Soviet Union (1981, 1986) for the transfer of the pension funds to Greece[161], it failed to recognize all the working years of the refugees. Indeed, the Greek government recognized to the people who were at the age for pensions solely 13 and ½ years of experience which guaranteed the refugees the minimum pension (Psarrou: 56, 2005). In contrast, people that were younger than 50/55 years (for women and men respectively) lost the contributions for pensions and for insurances for their years of work abroad. Only five years of previous experience were recognized to this latter group by the Greek government. This is why many people delayed the departure, in order to gain the retirement age before repatriating.

Furthermore, although the USSR sent to Greece the pre-concerted amount of money for the pensions[162], the Greek government delayed the payment of the pensions of some years, and only after a huge pressure by the refugees, it eventually started lavishing with pensions. Hence, the pensioners faced serious problems at the beginning, while young people had to work longer to get a better pension.

161 The regulations defined by the bilateral agreements were to be valid solely for five years after the sign (Psarrou: 56, 2005).

162 The amount of money envisaged in the second agreement signed between Greece and the USSR on 1 July 1986, that the USSR owed to Greece for the payment of the pensions was fixed at 5,250 drs. (Psarrou: 55-57, 2005).

Fourth Chapter

The fatality of the 'National Question': the disputed fate of the Slavo-Macedonians political refugees

Saying that the Slavo-Macedonian question is one of the most burning arguments of this work is reductive. It is not only a complicated, tangled and burning issue, as well as painful for many people, but I would say, it represents a sort of leitmotiv in Greek foreign affairs, the main Greek government concern in its decisions about Greek foreign policy since the Independence of the state. In both Balkans Wars, in WWI, and WWII, the Greek state's main aim was to assure its predominance on Aegean Macedonia (after Greece took it in the Second Balkan War) and to enlarge as much as possible its territory in order to encompass present day Bulgarian Macedonia and part of present day FYRM. Failing in the latter attempt, its primary task has been to defend *Macedonia from Slavs*. During my participation in the military parade on 25 March 2012 (the Greek Independence Day), where I heard the soldiers shouting, "Macedonia and Cyprus are Greek" and all the population answering "bravo, bravo" and the long discussions with friends, academic professors, and journalists, make me understand to what degree this question is still alive, vital, and crucial to both the Greek state and the Greek people. Indeed, Greek historians, the media, and common people address to it as *National Question*: it concerns the Greek nation and state since its birth. Hence, it is extremely hard to narrow it to the period of the Civil War.

The main difference between the Civil War and the other wars that Greece fought is that, this time, for the first and up to now the last time, not foreigners but other Greeks had an opposite stance on the National question. Indeed, for the first time apparently some Greeks were against Greece's interests. In point of fact, as explained in the first chapter, during the 20s, in the first accords among the KKE, the CP Yugoslavia, and CP Bulgaria, the KKE accepted and to a certain extent propagandized the slogan "For a Unified and Independent Macedonia and Thrace" within the framework of a future Balkan Federation. Nevertheless, in the 30s, they actually abandoned it, and shifted towards a national policy, which encompassed equal rights for minorities like those of Greeks[163] (See Kousoulas, 1965; Kofos, 1989; 1993). However, the position of the KKE on the issue has never been clear-cut. Its ambiguous behavior facilitated the exploitation of the Slavo-Macedonian question in accor-

163 It is worth highlighting that Greece up to the 30s did not grant any right to the minorities. On the contrary, it pursued a policy of assimilation and forced Hellenization towards them (See Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, 1994).

dance to the internal and external support it needed, abandoning the issue or claiming to support it as the situation dictated[164].

Notwithstanding the National question and the events in the 40s, which I have already examined in the first chapter, the primary focus of this section concerns the Slavo-Macedonians political refugees. Indeed, in the second chapter, where I illustrated the life conditions of the Greeks in Tashkent, I purposely avoided talking about the Slavo-Macedonians. The complexity of the argument forced me to deal with the topic separately. In fact, if on one side, I decided not to deeply discuss the question since it is not the core part of my research, nor constituted my fieldwork, on the other I could not leave it out because of its undeniable importance. The central pivot of the whole question tackled in this section is the repatriation, or better the prohibited repatriation of the Slavo-Macedonians to Greece in 1974, along with their Greek comrades. Nevertheless, this decision, which was officially made by the Greek government in 1982 and not fiercely opposed by the KKE, can be understood solely within the frame of the entire National question.

In order to give the reader a broader picture and not to lose the thread of the research, I now start again from the beginning of the political refugees' history, from their escape until their repatriation. Nevertheless, this time I expressly refer to the Slavo-Macedonians.

4.1 The Slavo-Macedonian fighters of the DSE

The DSE in large part was made of Slavo-Macedonians. Despite the lack of exact data, Slavo-Macedonians claim that they were half of the army (Kofos, 1989; Van Boeschoten, 2005). According to Woodhouse's account, the Slavo-Macedonian component of the Democratic Army "numbered 11,000 out of 25,000 in 1948, but 14,000 out of less than 20,000 by mid-1949" (1976). Kofos puts the figures at 6,000 in 1947 and 14,000 in 1948, claiming, however, that the entire DSE force was 40,000 (Kofos: 13, 1989). Vajnas, one of the colonels of the Slavo-Macedonians units of the DSE, claims that in 1948 they numbered 11,000 (Rossos: 43, 1997). Clogg, though, affirms that they constituted around 40% of the army (Clogg: 139, 2002)[165]. The figures are in dispute; nonetheless, the data shows that from the beginning to the end of the civil war the number of Slavo-Macedonians in the ranks of the DSE significantly increased. Furthermore, aside from the numbers, it is widely agreed that the contributions of the Slavo-Macedonians were of crucial importance to the KKE struggle (Kofos, 1989; Rossos, 1997).

164 Nowadays, the KKE defines again its position on the question, apparently according to the internal support it needs. Indeed, it affirms that, due to the population movement, exchange, and international and intranationl migration, "the conditions do not exist for the recognition of any [Slavo-Macedonian] 'minority' [in Greece]" (Aleka Papariga, Secretary General of the CC of the KKE, interview to the newspaper *Dnevnik* – FYRM, 2010). Hence, the KKE align itself on the side of the Greek government who completely deny the existence of the Slavo-Macedonian minority in Greece, while affirming that some Greeks "are slavophones" (HRW/Helsinki, 1994).

165 According to Clogg the renewed declaration of the KKE for Slavo-Macedonian self-determination in 1947 is due to the fact that they were 40% of the army (Clogg: 139, 2002).

As explained in the first chapter, the Communist Party was the only advocate of Slavo-Macedonians' rights in Greece. For this reason, it gained their support, but also the enmity of many Greeks. Despite the aforementioned ambiguous behavior of the KKE towards its Slavic branch, since the 20s, the recognition of equal rights and duties for Slavo-Macedonians like for the Greek members of the party, as future citizens of the People's Democracy of Greece, has never been challenged. On 10 September 1947, the principal newspaper of the NOF (Popular Liberation Front) *Непокорен*-Nepokoren, which was published in the Slavo-Macedonian language with Greek parallel translation, welcomed the new directives of the Interim Greek Democratic Government, saying

> with the Legislative Rules begins the exercise of the People's authority in the territories controlled by the partisans, that is the first step towards the People's Democracy for which [X] his blood today the fighter [X]. Among the democratic [X], the Statutory Acts [X] Number 4 says, 'All men and women have the same political and civic rights. The ethnic minorities have the same political and civic rights and full rights and freedoms to enhance their ethnic culture'. Act Number 5 says, 'About the children that belong to ethnic minorities, special schools are founded by the People's Council. Teaching occurs in the language of the minority'. This means that our population, the Slavo-Macedonian, which for years now has suffered under the three-fold slavery: economic, political and spiritual, today thanks to the Legislative Rules of the DSE finds justice (AM: 250191 – Archive KKE "Charilaos Florakis").

When the DSE fled in 1949, its Slavo-Macedonian branch fled as well to the Socialist Republics and the Soviet Union. There, they underwent the same path as their Greek comrades. Many of them, those who were not fighters of the DSE, were mainly sent to the Slavic countries, namely Poland and Bulgaria, because of the similarities in the language (See Kovatsi: 222, 2009). Meanwhile, the fighters went to the Soviet Union, following the rest of the army. The only certain data on the Slavo-Macedonians abroad are given by Bartziota during the Third Congress of the Communist Party. According to him, out of 55,881 refugees, 19.912 were Slavo-Macedonians, and 2,954 of these went to the Soviet Union. Many Slavo-Macedonians had fled to Yugoslavia previously, in the 1940s, were sheltered mainly in Voivodina or in the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, while many others fled to Canada and Australia (See Van Boeschoten, 2005, MCRHI site).

4.2 The Slavo-Macedonian children

Like the adults, the children underwent the same path as the Greek children living in the northern part of Greece, or better, they preceded them in the travel to Eastern Europe. Indeed, in February 1948, when the first commissions for the rescue of the children were organized by the EVoP, the KKE committee for the aid to the child, many children departed

from the regional units of Kastorià and Florina, which were areas of the Aegean Macedonia mostly inhabited by Slavo-Macedonians. According to research of Van Boeschoten[166], there were 9,058 Slavo-Macedonian children living in the Socialist Republics between 1949 and 1950 (Van Boeschoten: 51-52, 2005).

In a broadcast dated 10 March 1948 of Radio Free Greece, the radio of the DSE, reported the departure of the first commissions in charge of accompanying the children to the neighbouring countries, in February. The radio broadcasted correspondences it had with the mothers of these children living in many villages of the Greek Macedonia. This is an excerpt,

> Here we are preparing to accompany our children. We will send 70. People from Vevi [a village of the Florina region] say that *burandades* brought 20 kids, in addition to ours. The gathering continues in Antartikò and St. Germanòs of Florina and in Vatochori of Kastorià. They are writing the lists. […] Ok, but how could you do mums – I ask [the radio reporter] – We know – she answers – that, where they will go, they will love us a lot. They will take care of our kids, as if we were there near them. Consequently, we stay here, and all those among us who can, will be free to take a gun and fight. The others will work harder in the fields, in order to produce much more bread for the front. – It just took a couple of hours and 711 kids were registered (R/S EE 1948/03/10 AD 476 AM 305263 – Archive KKE "Charilaos Florakis").

These children were taken to Yugoslavia[167] and Albania, and later to the other Republics. They were hosted by families or by institutions, were given medical care and in September of 1949, everyone enrolled in school. The Slavo-Macedonians children studied in both Greek and in the language of the hosting country. The EVoP's central offices were in Bucharest, while each country hosted a branch office of the EVoP that were directed by a Greek and a Slavo-Macedonian so that both communities were represented. Below is an excerpt of the registration of a Slavo-Macedonian child who studied in Romania, broadcasted by Radio Free Greece on 30 October 1952, during the broadcast "News about the life of the refugee fighters for the People in the Socialist Republics":

> *Here we understood what Peace, culture and life mean. In Greece, I was 10 year-old and I only had attended a class because the teacher of the village fled as soon as the Americans arrived and started the war. In Greece, I did not speak either Greek or Macedonian very well, since I am a Macedonian kid. The teacher had not managed to teach me Greek before the school was closed, while I spoke Macedonian not well and in secret, because we were afraid. Nowadays, I am in the seventh class and I speak and write Greek, Macedonian, and Romanian. I live with my mum in a nice bright room, in a big three-floor building. Here [in Romania] the huge buildings and the palaces belong to the eaglets and to the workers. In Greece, kings and wealthy people have the palaces. […] The school, where the Greek and Macedonian children go, is also a palace.*
> *The Greek and the Macedonian teachers constantly tell us about Greece and its population, about the friendship and the unity of the Greek and the Macedonian people. (R/S EE 30/10/1952 AM: 367014 – Archive KKE "Charilaos Florakis")*

166 The scholar, in order to have more precise data, filled the gap of the EVoP archive's data that went lost, with data collected at the Archive of the Institute of Ethnic History in Skopja, and those presented during the Third Conference of the KKE in 1950 by Bartzota.

167 After the Tito-Stalin split, in June 1948, and the subsequent end of relations between KKE and CPY, no refugee or child was taken to Yugoslavia.

The propaganda carried by the KKE about friendship between the two populations was huge, because the ancient hatred and the stereotypes were deeply rooted in the narrative of both sides. During my interviews, I asked the refugees about Slavo-Macedonians and all of them said that they had good friends among them and that usually they did not make distinctions between one or the other population. Only Mr. Stolakis had bad memories of Slavo-Macedonians:

> "It is right that Slavo-Macedonians did not return[168]. I remember, in Romania, when I went to school, at the beginning, there were Slavo-Macedonians kids, then, they were all transferred to Poland, and then probably they went to Skopje. By the way, I remember that at school, they told us about the Greater Macedonia that they would like to build once they returned to Greece and that the capital of this Greater Macedonia would have been Thessaloniki. These kinds of ideas were taught to them by their parents".

4.3 The Slavo-Macedonians and their collaboration with the KKE

The studies Mihailidis (2003, 2005) confirm that during the war in the mountains, the Slavo-Macedonians already had their own party organizations, newspapers, and a Slavo-Macedonian broadcast hosted by Radio Free Greece. Under the Interim Democratic Government of Greece and during the exile, Slavo-Macedonians feats and accomplishments were also celebrated by the Greek members of the KKE. One of the most important occurrences was, without a shadow of doubt, the Ilinden. The Day of St. Elias, Ilinden, was the commemoration of the Macedonian uprising in 1903 against the Ottoman Empire, as well as, the first attempt to declare an independent republic, the Republic of Krushevo. It is understood that the feast's celebration was prohibited in Greece. Contrarily, the KKE saluted and honored the occurrence. In the front page of the newspaper *Борец*-Borez, of 2 August 1949, Ilinden Day, the author, reminded the reader about the crucial events of the Ilinden, then writes:

> Nevertheless, the aim of Delchev's IMRO[169] remained deeply rooted in the souls of the people, who continued to struggle for its cause under hard conditions during Metaxas, during the Occupation with the ELAS, and during the second Occupation in the ranks of the DSE. Thus, in 1949 it found us armed, with the decision to fight off the foreigner and the local exploiters. Nothing could change the decision of the people or of the army. One and only one is the route that will guide us to national and social liberation: decisive struggle on unshakable unity with the Greek people for the common victory that will yield fruitful benefits for both Greeks and Macedonians. […] The aim of the opposition from both sides[170]: was to destroy the UNITY and the BROTHERHOOD [capitals in the

168 He refers to the Greek Law passed in 1982. I come to it in the last part of the present section.

169 IMRO, International Macedonian Revolutionary Organization founded in 1893. Delchev was one of the founder as well as leader of the organization.

170 The author refers to the Greek National Government who claimed that the KKE wanted to sell out the Aegean Macedonia, and to the organization of Slavo-Macedonians, headed by Keramitsev and Gotse, that after the split with Tito aligned with the latter, accusing the KKE of not doing justice for their cause (See Borez, 2.08.49, p.1 – Archive KKE "Charilaos Florakis").

original] of our two populations, because it is a real slap in their faces (Borez, 2.08.49, p.1 – Archive KKE "Charilaos Florakis").

This cooperation continued throughout the exile. "For this reason [i.e. the rights granted by the KKE to its Slavo-Macedoanian members in Greece], in Eastern Europe the Slavo-Macedonians were recognized as a separate ethnic group, with its own cultural rights, but only within the structural frame of the party and in close collaboration with the Greek comrades" (Van Boeschoten: 54, 2005). However, it is worth casting light on the fact that only the cultural rights were recognized. Although the KKE provided both the Greek and Slavo-Macedonian people with all kinds of necessities, it prevented the Slavo-Macedonians from having their own political organizations. In fact, their party organizations ceased to exist in 1956, when Ilinden[171], the last organization, was dissolved. While, I must say that based on my interviews the Slavo-Macedonians, or at least those living in Tashkent, were allowed to become members of the Soviet party[172]. The interviewees attributed this different treatment[173] of the Slavo-Macedonians to the fact that they had many more similarities in language and culture with Russians than the Greeks. On the other hand, considering the USSR-Yugoslavia relations, I would argue that the Soviet Union probably granted more rights to Slavo-Macedonians in order to avoid a mass exodus of Slavo-Macedonians to the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Nevertheless, this is only an assumption, which requires appropriate research.

Aside from the political organizations, the Slavo-Macedonians enjoyed the same rights as the Greeks: children studied their native language, books were published, theatrical companies were founded and two pages of each newspaper, published by the refugees, in the host country (in Tashkent it was the *New Route*) were written in Slavo-Macedonian (See KKE Archive "Charilaos Florakis", "Radio Free Greece" Broadcasts folder, 1950-1951).

4.4 Slavo-Macedonians again exploited for national purposes

"[…] after the dramatic end of the Civil War, for the majority of the Slavo-Macedonian *andartes* or not, the escape to Yugoslav territories represented, the most appropriate, necessary, and concrete choice that they had" (Mihailidis, 35, 2005). The People's Republic of Macedonia was in part a dream for many of them: a state where they finally could exercise their political, social, and cultural rights. Before 1949, many people had fled to Yu-

171 The Ilinden organization was founded in 1952 to replace the old organizations of the mountains as the NOF, which was no longer adapted to the new environment. The Ilinden, within the framework of the Central Committee of the Union of the Political Refugees of Greece (KEEPPE), dealt with the everyday needs of the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees.

172 Greek people were prohibited from joining the party because they were not Soviet citizens, unless they were high-ranking members of the KKE.

173 Remember that it was not allowed to the Greek refugees to become member of the CPSU because they were not recognized as Soviet citizens.

goslavia, either to escape from war or because they came into conflict with the KKE leadership. For instance, the aforementioned group headed by Keramitsiev, Gotse, and other former high-ranking members of the SNOF (Slavic National Liberation Front) supported Tito's plan of a Unified Macedonia within the Yugoslav Federation and accused the KKE of hampering the realization of the project. Therefore, in 1945, they fled to Yugoslavia with the military units that they commanded in the NOF (Mihailidis, 2005). According to the data, at the beginning of 1950, the People's Republic of Macedonia hosted about 19,000 Slavo-Macedonians from Greece (Michialidis: 40, 2005)[174].

Nevertheless, the problem required an urgent solution. The majority of the Slavo-Macedonians who fled after 1949 to Yugoslavia were not against the KKE and Zacharidis, indeed they were their supporters. On the other side, many Slavo-Macedonians who escaped with the DSE were Tito's sympathizers. Consequently, to avoid turmoil on both sides, propaganda was carried out to subvert and enhance Zechariadis's mistakes in leading both the party and the struggle; or to blame Tito and his company of traitors. Meanwhile, in the People's Republic of Macedonia, the EP (Union of the Refugees from the Aegean Macedonia) was founded, whose main task was to help the political refugees settle in the new environment, while informing them about the 'true face' of Nikos Zachariadis (Mihailidis: 37, 2005). On the opposite side, "the way the KKE faced this problem [the spread of Tito's sympathizers] was to use the Slavo-Macedonians who were 'judicious guys', which means those who were loyal to the line of the party, due to fear or because really they believed in 'Unity and Brotherhood'[175]. This was the strategy it used in the educational field and later in the organization Ilinden (1952-1956)" (Van Boeschoten: 58, 2005)[176].

Nonetheless, there was a third party that tried to attract the Slavo-Macedonians on its side, the Bulgarian. Bulgaria launched many programs to encourage the Slavo-Macedonians living in the other Socialist countries and the Soviet Union, to move to Bulgaria. Indeed, programs and summer camp holidays were organized for students who wanted to spend a few months in Bulgaria and for workers who wished to settle in the country. Privileges, awards, offers of work, and the possibility of a career were given to all the Slavo-Macedonians that expressed the desire to live in the country and felt themselves to be Bulgarian. Furthermore, in some cases they could also acquire Bulgarian citizenship and become full citizens of the state. "Bulgaria thus began to compete with Yugoslavia to attract the allegiance of the Slav speaking refugees. The Bulgarian authorities granted requests for immigration "mostly to Macedonians" from Poland, between 1958 and 1960 alone, over 2,300 people were admitted into Bulgaria" (Marinov: 6, 2004).

However, in the applications for moving to Bulgaria, the Slavo-Macedonians rarely referred to a feeling of belonging to the Bulgarian nation. In fact, from Marinov's study, it emerges that in the majority of the applications, the refugees declared to be Macedonians. While, their main reasons for the transfer were, the Bulgarian proximity to Greece, the similar

174 19,000 Slavo-Macedonians in Yugoslavia plus about 18,000 of them who fled with the DSE, as reported during the Third Congress of the KKE, means that 37,000 Slavo-Macedonians fled during and immediately after the end of the Civil War. According to Kofos, they numbered 35,000 (186, 1993).

175 Van Boeschoten uses the motto *Unity and Brotherhood* referring to the characteristic of the KKE of acting as a father-party that calls for unity among its members.

176 Van Boeschoten discusses another Slavo-Macedonian organization "Egeiska Zora", which was founded in 1960 in Poland. However, information about its activities and aims are limited (Van Boeschoten 61, 2005).

weather, the fact that relatives or friends lived there, and the similarities between the languages (Marinov: 22, 2004). Nevertheless, Bulgaria's good deed did not last very long. In the 1960s, Bulgaria shifted its policy to a more nationalistic one. The Aegean Macedonians, as they were called to distinguish them from the Slavo-Macedonians, who inhabited Bulgaria prior to the arrival of the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees, could not found associations, either political or cultural, and could not have a newspaper in their language. In addition, particularly young people were indoctrinated by the state about their identity, their history, their language. "'Repatriation' to Bulgaria was to be accelerated. Discrimination of refugees from the Greek Civil War, according to their ethnic background, was recommended: for national propaganda institutions, such as the Slavic Committee and the Union of Macedonian Associations, Aegean Macedonians were more desirable than 'ethnic Greeks'" (Marinov: 10, 2004).

An important change occurred in the late 50s, when Yugoslav-Soviet relations improved and Slavo-Macedonians were given the opportunity to move to the Socialist Republic of Macedonia (Lampatos: 12, 2001)[177]. Thus, many, if not the majority of them, moved to the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (See Van Boeschoten, 2005). "The refugees who moved to Yugoslavia, will certainly never return to Greece" Mr. Fotou.

4.5 Where were you born?

The title I have chosen for this paragraph, although strange, as such encompasses the complexity of the issue. During the First Postwar period, the Greek government enacted the Decree Number 332 (1926), which ordered the Slavic names of villages, mountains and rivers to be substituted with Greek names. Consequently, Lerin village became Florina, Kostur became Kastorià, Labanica – Agios Dimitrios, Drenovo – Glikoneri, Kusovo – Kokina, Krecovo – Agios Georgios and hundreds more. Mr. Papoulakos said, "Hence, when the Slavo-Macedonians in the 1970s asked to repatriate to Greece, the authorities, among all the others endlessly questioned them, 'Where were you born?'- 'in Lerin, for example' – 'it does not exist. Thus, or you were born in Florina or it means that you were not born in Greece'. And consequently you have not the right to return". Birth and origin became the main ways of defining one's identity. This attitude towards the Slavo-Macedonians and the other minorities was formalized in 1982, when the government approved the Ministerial Decree No. 106841, whose excerpt as have reported as follows:

> OFFICIAL GAZETTEER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GREECE[178]
> Athens, January 5, 1983 Part two Page no. 1

177 According to Kovatsi, Yugoslavia permitted the Slavo-Macedionians from the USSR to move to Yugoslavia since 1973 (Kovatsi: 218, 2009).

178 Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, April 1994, annexes.

MINISTERIAL DECREES AND APPROVALS
No. 106841

Free repatriation and restoration of Greek Citizenship to political refugees.

The Ministers of Internal Affairs and Public Order Having in mind:
The provisions of Law 400/76 "Concerning the Ministerial Council and Ministries" with the amendments of Law 1266/1982 and within the frames of the Greek government policy for national reconciliation and unity, decide:

Free to return to Greece are all Greeks by genus, who left Greece during the Civil War of 1946-1949 and because of which went abroad as political refugees, in spite the fact that Greek citizenship had been taken away from them.
[…]
The decree shall come into force with the day of its publication in the Official Gazetteer of the Government.
Athens, December 29, 1982

THE MINISTERS OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC ORDER
Georgios Genimatas
Joanis Skoularikis

The decree was specifically passed to hinder the return of minorities that up to the Civil War lived in Greece. In fact, although less known, the discriminatory sentence *Greek by genus* (HRW/Helsinki, 1994) encompasses all minorities and not only the Slavo-Macedonians. However, the main reason why it was enforced was to specifically hamper the Slavo-Macedonians' return. As aforementioned, the Slavo-Macedonians were almost half of the political refugees (Van Boeschoten, 2005) and could constitute a threat to the Greek territory[179]. The repatriation of such a large number of Slavo-Macedonians to their homes[180] could enhance the separatist sentiments among the small community of Slavo-Macedonians who remained in Greece, which, had sharply decreased during the decades, because of wars, refugeeism, persecution, and emigration[181].

In the interview with Mrs. Gogo, discussing the Slavo-Macedonian issue, she said

> But the same thing occurred to some people of my region and village [she comes from a Vlach region at the border with Albania, Distrato]. They settled in Romania and got Romanian citizenship, because, you know, we speak a dialect, which is similar to the Romanian language[182]. Well, they were not allowed to return[183]. But if you say that you are Ro-

179 The continuous reference to a likely secession of the Greek Macedonia in favor of the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has always been one of Greece's main fears.

180 It is estimated that around 40,000 Slavo-Macedonians would have returned to Greece (See Lambert CM/AS (2007) Quest.530 22.08.2007).

181 According to the Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, from the beginning of the 20th century to the 1950s, more than 100,000 Slavo-Macedonians fled from Greece (15,000 fled voluntarily after the Second Balkan War, 52,000-72,000 after the convention of 1919 which allowed Slavs to flee to Bulgaria, 5,000 were interned under Metaxas dictatorship, and about 35,000 fled after the Civil War, although Slavo-Macedonians accounts claim 213,000 people fled). Furthermore, Aegean Macedonia, the Greek government settled the Pontic Greeks from Asia Minor after the Treaty of Lausanne (around 500,000-600,000 people), consequently changing the ethnic composition of the region (HRW/Helsinki: 1994, 5-7).

182 The Vlach population speaks Aromanian.

183 According to the Law 3370/1955 art. 20, a person can lose his/her Greek Citizenship: When, while residing abroad,

> manian why should you go back to Greece? Stay in Romania" and she continued: "many people of my village were stupid. Image that when Italians arrived, I am sorry for you but this is true, I remember it, they wanted to create a kingdom of Vlachs and they killed many of us, while others allied with the Duce and established a small principality in our village. But all this is stupid: we are Greeks first of all. In a few days, it is our feast [i.e. the Independence Day, 25 March] and I will hang the Greek flag on the rail of the balcony. I am proud of being Greek.

4.6 Differences in affirming one's own identity

There are people, like Mrs. Gogo, who speak about their identity as Greek first, and then eventually they add that they are able to speak Aromanian, Macedonian etc. On the other side, there are people who consider themselves to be autochthonous inhabitants of Greece (Slavo-Macedonians, Vlachs, Pomaks, etc.), and thus, they claim their right to return to their homeland, although they are not ethnically Greek.

The Human Rights Watch/Helsinki recorded both cases among Macedonians. People who affirm, "I speak Macedonian, but I am Greek. The people who claim to be Macedonian are really Slavs", and people on the other side, who say, "I am a Macedonian. I am different from other Greek citizens. I have a different culture; I got it from my father and my grandfather" (HRW/Helsinki: 1994, 14/18). As far as our topic is concerned, the return of the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees, the HRW/Helsinki states that thousands of people, who declared as the former interviewee to be primarily Greek, could avail themselves of the amnesty Law 400/76, and therefore repatriate to Greece. To this day, the Slavo-Macedonians who declare to be firstly Macedonians still cannot enter the Greek territory. It is also extremely difficult for them to get the visa for visiting relatives in Greece. Solely in 2003, the government allowed the former refugee children to go to Greece between 10 August to 30 October, and to stay no longer than 20 days [See MHRMI report, 2003].

The Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in the April 1994 report expresses itself on the issue, stating:

> The Greek government's actions in admitting "Greek Greeks" who fought against the government during the civil war, but not ethnic Macedonians or their descendants, are discriminatory. It violates international human rights laws and agreements that prohibit discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin to which Greece is a party, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 7), the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Article 14), the Paris Charter of the CSCE (Section on Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law), and the 1993 Vienna Declaration of the heads of state of the Council of Europe (HRW/Helsinki: 1994, 29).

he/she acted in benefit of another State, in ways that do not comply to the Greek citizen status and against Greece's interests (See MHRMI site). The same law was applied also in the case of Slavo-Macedonians.

In 1997, the Human Rights Watch/Helsinki together with other NGOs, Forums, and Groups for minority rights, both from Greece and FYRM, started a close cooperation in order to demand the Greek government recognize the refugees' rights. In 1998, as the United States' Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor reports[184] the Greek government repealed Article 19, which affirmed that the government had the right to strip the citizenship from non-ethnic people who traveled abroad, but did not repeal Article 20, which revoked citizenship from people who acted against Greece's interest. Yet in 2009, the Greek Helsinki Monitor affirmed no progress or change was embarked upon by the Greek government in this direction[185]. The United States Department of States in the last report on Greece (May 2012) does not mention the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees case, however it confirms that the Greek government still refuse to recognize the Slavo-Macedonian minority[186].

4.7 The interviewees' positions on the issue

There are many differences in tackling the issue even among the refugees. The clear and strong position of Mrs. Gogo against the Slavo-Macedonian group was shared by almost all the interviewees with the exception of Mr. Fotou and Mr. Vellas, the two exponents of PEEPP.

> It is not true that they could not return, they could. I went once with a friend of mine to the embassy. He is Slavo-Macedonian. We went to the embassy to obtain his documents for Greece. There he declared that he was Bulgarian. 'Are you stupid?' I told him. And he said that he declared the truth. 'So why do you want to go back to Greece if you are Bulgarian?' From that moment, we stopped talking to each other. He did a stupid thing. By the way, I know for certain that now he is in Greece. Because now, despite the law, they actually can return. All of them returned. (Mr. Motsios).

The fact that many Slavo-Macedonians repatriated was confirmed by other refugees. "Of course, they came back. I know many of them that were in Tashkent and now are in Thessaloniki. I think that only those that moved to Skopje are prohibited to come to Greece". Indeed, it is far more difficult, if not impossible for people that now live in FYRM to enter the Greek territory. Difficult, but not impossible, this law is for all those refugees who remained in the Socialist Republics or in the USSR. "This law [Decree No. 106841] is a racial law that cannot subsist in a democratic country in 2012" Mr. Fotou, former president of the Panhellenic Union of the Repatriated Greek Refugees (PEEPP).

184 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, February 23, 2001 (http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2000/eur/769.htm).

185 "Information Related to the Questions by the Rapporteur in Connection with CERD's Consideration of the Sixteenth to Nineteenth Periodic Reports of Greece", August 2009.

186 See http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USDOS,,GRC,,4fc75a9a33,0.html.

Nowadays, also the KKE stance on the issue is a nationalistic one. In fact, the KKE along with the Greek government do not recognize as minority the Slavic-speaking community who inhabits Greece because, as the current general secretary of the KKE, Aleka Papariga, stated in an interview to *Dnevnik* (2010) "the conditions do not exist for the recognition of any 'minority'" (*Dnevnik*, 26-02-2010). Furthermore, although concerning the Slavo-Macedonians political refugees she affirms, "They were unjustly deprived of their Greek citizenship due to their political activity. Unacceptably, the PASOK government in 1982 excluded these militants from the law concerning repatriation of political refugees", Papariga actually does not answer explicitly to the main question of the journalist, whether the Greek government is ready to revoke the law enacted in 1982 about the repatriation of the political refugees.

It emerges that in the decades the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees were always more perceived by both the KKE and the other refugees as foreigners rather than comrades. Hence, the fear that once in Greece they could foment separatist sentiments in the Greek Macedonia brings the Greek government to maintain in force the racist Decree No. 10684.

Fifth Chapter

Memories of the past and comments for the future

The academic literature that I could use for the production of my thesis was extremely narrow, being mostly books written by the refugees, hence in an autobiographical form. Nevertheless, the interviews are also autobiographical in form, since they are the accounts of actors who experienced these events, or actively participated in them, or were passively affected by them. Hence, it is worth highlighting the limits of this source in order to analyze fully the period of the refugeeism in Tashkent. The autobiographical memory distinguishes itself from the historical memory because it is richer in personal feelings (Halbwachs, 1950): people that remember lived those events personally, and thus, they inevitably show their emotions in the process of remembering. Although autobiographical memories contain much knowledge, they are "interpretations rather than true records of the events" (Conway: 168, 1996). Hence, the constituting element of this kind of memory is emotion and the personal involvement of the interviewee in the events he or she tells about.

In this last chapter, I explore and comment this and other factors that influenced the refugees' autobiographical memory as well as the limits that this source posed to my research, through analysis of the following points:

– The refugees' willingness to remember;
– their hesitation to talk about some occurrences;
– their attitude towards their experience;
– the different ways they approached topics.

5.1 Individual and Collective memory

According to Halbwachs (1950) a group has the capacity to remember its shared past, and therefore to form a collective memory. The collective memory is "a collective phenomenon but it only manifests itself in the actions and the statements of individuals. […] It is as

much a result of conscious manipulation as unconscious absorption and it is always mediated" (Kansteiner: 180, 2002). The fact that it manifests itself through people's accounts does not imply that it is the same for all the members of the group. In fact, Halbwachs underlines that "each member of the group recollects in his or her own manner the common group past", thus forming his or her individual memory. In this process, communication with others is fundamental. "These 'others', however, are not just any set of people, rather they are groups who conceive their unity and peculiarity through a common image of their past" (Assmann: 127, 1995).

From this point of view, the account told by the interviewees must not be considered solely as individual memory, but as part of the collective memory of the refugees. The interviewees are selected from the whole group of the political refugees, a group that underwent the same path, has been affected by same events, and created its collective memory based on this experience. Solely in the frame of the collective memory, we can fully comprehend the refugees' answers to the interviews, their behavior, and their willingness to talk about some events and avoid others. In fact, the group formulated its collective memory that has been then developed by each member in his or her *own manner*. Consequently, in the process of construction/reproduction[187], the autobiographical memory is influenced *in primis* by the group, to the extent that, in Halbwachs's opinion, if a group disappears, the memories that correspond to that group are forgotten.

However, people do not belong solely to one group, but to many groups and "therefore entertain numerous collective self-images and memories" (Assmann: 127, 1995). Halbwachs says, "We cannot properly understand their [memories'] relative strength and the ways in which they combine within individual thoughts unless we connect the individual to the various groups of which he is simultaneously a member" (Halbwachs: 53, 1950). According to Halbwachs, these groups are family, neighbourhood, profession, party and many others. In our analysis, we must add to the above groups mentioned by Halbwachs also specific groups that are linked to the main group we are dealing with, i.e. political refugees in Tashkent. Thus, it is possible to identify at least six groups, besides family, neighbourhood and associations: the children of the Civil War, the fighters of the DSE, the members of the party and the non-members, members of the Greek community, the workers of socialism but not citizens of the USSR, the Slavo-Macedonians and so on. Each of these groups inevitably enhances the individual memory and creates constraints on it.

Ultimately, we cannot fail to consider as a crucial factor in the refugees' collective memory construction, the Greek Communist Party and its unquestionable presence in the refugees' everyday life. Each question, public or private, was tackled by the party; children at school studied both Greek and Soviet history from a communist perspective; in fact education was instrumental for conveying an agreed, by the KKE and CPSU, interpretation of history, literature, contemporary issues; life was marked by communist feasts and celebrations, and the refugees were fully immersed in a communist view of the world. Hence, the KKE had a pivotal role in influencing both the reproduction of the past memories of the refugees, about the resistance and the civil war, and the formation of new memories about life

187 According to Halbwachs, the collective memory reproduces the past, while Thelen affirms that the memory both individual and collective is constructed by people "in conversations with others that occur in the contexts of community, broader politics, and social dynamics" (Thelen: 1119, 1989).

abroad. To what extent this influence can be defined as indoctrination is a question that requires further analysis. Nevertheless, it can be affirmed that the KKE played the major role in shaping the collective memory.

5.2 Collective memory and generations

In the third chapter, I defined four categories of refugees in Tashkent, i.e. fighters of the DSE or adult people that followed it, the children of the Greek Civil War, the people that fled from Greece as infants or who were born in Tashkent in the 1950s, and those who were born in Tashkent after 1960. The criterion used was the refugee's bond with Greece and their subsequent willingness/unwillingness to repatriate. In contrast, Mihailidis makes an interesting study on generational differences specifically referring to refugees' collective memory. In fact, the evaluation of an event by one generation will not be the same as that of a member of another generation, which is older or younger. This occurs because of the different view of the world that the generations already have or must yet acquire (Mannheim, 1952).

Mihailidis affirms that the collective memory of a nation also shapes the development of identities "not only because each generation experiences different historical moments and events but also because, even though experiencing the same events as another generation, it evaluates and is affected by them in a different way" (Mihailidis: 160, 2010). Therefore, he distinguishes three generations of Greek political refugees, stating that,

> "To the first generation belong all who were active members in the Resistance and/or the Civil War, and who experienced those events as adults. The second generation amounts to those who were at least ten to twelve years old at the time they were expatriated and all those who were born abroad soon after expatriation. Finally, the third generation consists of those who were born abroad in subsequent years and were repatriated at a young age, together with those who were born in Greece after their parents' repatriation" (Mihailidis: 161, 2010).

Mihailidis's division works in relation to the refugees' memories of the Civil War, since both groups of children (those who were at least ten years old at the time of the expatriation and those born later) learnt about the events from parents' accounts. With regard to the life abroad, instead, I would maintain the same division I proposed in the third chapter, therefore splitting Mihailidis's second generation into two. As argued in the previous chapter, children who were at least 4-5 years old when evacuated approach their exile differently, since they vividly remember their departure, the separation from their parents, their sentiments throughout the travel, the adaptation to a new environment. However, people who fled as babies, or were born in Tashkent during the first years abroad, were with their family and thus did not suffer separation, and do not remember almost anything about the first

years of adjustment to the new reality. Hence, for the latter group of people, it is as if they always lived in Tashkent[188].

Generational differences have consequences on the way people interpret an event. "Younger people must base their knowledge of earlier events on what they have heard or read which may have the advantage of greater perspective but is less likely to be personal or concrete" (Schuman and Scott: 371, 1989). In fact, from the interviews, I noted that while the refugees of the first two generations talked about their personal life, their grievances, their sentiments, their thoughts during the initial period of the refugeeism, the younger generations, who did not directly experience it, focused more on historical and political events, adding occasionally some story they heard from relatives.

5.3 "This is the first time I tell someone this story"

Taking into consideration what is said above, I now explore the four points. The first element that requires analysis is the refugees' willingness/unwillingness to remember.

As explained in the introduction, I got interviews thanks to a "domino effect" from one refugee to another. Nevertheless, not all people agreed to be interviewed. People refused for two main reasons, either because they were sick and old, or because they did not want to talk about their experience. I got five rejections. Besides the rejections, I noted an initial unwillingness to talk among all the interviewees, with exception of the youngest refugees, Mr. Papoulakos, Mr. Eleutheriadou and Mr. Karastathis. Age was the first justification for avoiding the interview: "I am old, what can I tell you? Nothing." (Mrs. Gogo). The majority of them were at the age of 80, 90 even 96; hence, their initial hesitations are understandable. In fact, I did not face the same problems with the younger refugees, who instead immediately agreed to be interviewed. The second obstacle was my age, 22 at the time of the research. I noted that they were doubtful about talking to me because I was "too" young. On five occasions, the interviewees first interviewed me before I could ask them anything. In contrast, once they knew me, they proved to be very friendly as well as helpful.

Thirdly, at the beginning, their unwillingness to talk was also due to the fact that they strongly distrusted me. They could not conceive that I was interested in this history for academic research only. They frequently asked me if I was a journalist, who I voted for, if I was communist, and in one case, a refugee asked me if I was a member of the Civil War Study Group. They tried to find a motivation for this "strange" interest, as Mrs. Paganià told me. A last factor to take into consideration is the emotional, which hampered them from remembering, particularly if those years were linked to grievances. Although they mostly referred

188 I cannot compare, for instance, Mr. Stolakis's account, who evacuated from Greece at the age of five, and Mrs. Eleutheriadou's account, who was born in Tashkent. In fact, Mrs. Eleutheriadou knew about the events thanks to her parents' and brother's stories, while Mr. Stolakis lived those events.

to the same events, which could be considered as part of the collective memory of the group, each of them had also his/her own individual memory, which was full of feelings, perceptions and emotions, and thus, brought back to the surface past joy, and particularly sorrow. More than once, they were moved to tears and this frequently hampered the narration. Mr. Dastamanis told me, "This is the first time I am telling someone this story. This is the first time someone is asking me about my past". Therefore, at the beginning, the emotional factor constrained the refugees' willingness to remember events, which were almost forgotten.

5.4 Hesitations and omissions

The environment in which they grew up, i.e. the Soviet system, without a shadow of doubt played a key role in their attitude of distrust. As I already said, they needed to know me before telling their story. However, more than a few times the interviewees hesitated to tell me something and in the end said, "Please do not write about it!" This occurred particularly when they talked about the KKE or the Soviet system. In fact, this was the most difficult part of the interviews I did. Only after we had entered into confidence, and they felt more comfortable in their narrations, could I hear some criticism of the system or some story that was not official. Their complaints were almost all about the lack of freedom of speech. The stories or examples, which they told me not to write about, are simple and small criticisms, which everyone familiar with the Soviet system can imagine. Nevertheless, just the fact that after so many years the interviewees did not want to talk openly about them is a sign of fear of something.

Twice it happened that on the telephone they told me "OK, we can meet, but I will decide if I answer or not". More than once, I could not use a recorder in certain parts of the interview, while once I could not use the recorder at all. Surely, their fear of telling their story can be attributed to many factors and not solely to their past conditions in the USSR. Nonetheless, it reveals the fact that the political refugees had constructed a collective memory, which I could hear almost unchanged by every refugee; while, it was far more difficult to hear something which had been deleted from the memory of the group.

"People depend on others to help them decide which experiences to forget and which to remember and what interpretation to place on an experience. People develop a shared identity by identifying, exploring, and agreeing on memories" (Thelen: 1122, 1989). In this process, the role of the KKE, the main filter of the refugees' memory, is unavoidable.

Look, you would hear from all the refugees that at the University of Tashkent worked the best professors of the Soviet Union. But none of them will tell you that these professors were there because they were in exile. Indeed, academic dissidents often were sent to Tashkent, so that they were away from Moscow and Leningrad, Mrs. Zei told me. Indeed, it occurred as she said.

5.5 Attitude towards the experience

The leitmotiv of the interviews is the refugees' sentiment of gratitude towards the USSR. "We owe everything to the Soviet Union, to its leaders and to its citizens," said Mr. Vellàs. "You must write in your work that they gave us everything, although they lived in worse conditions than ours" (Mr. Stolakis). None of them had bad memories about the refugeeism or grave complaints, and all of them concluded saying that Tashkent was not the city of their exile but their second homeland. Nevertheless, some of them, such as Mr. Katsanos, added, "This is only at the material level that I am talking". This latter group claimed that materially they received all kinds of help; the Soviet authorities provided them with houses, jobs, schools. They did not feel they were treated differently from Soviet citizens, nor did they face problems as immigrants. However, they recognize that as far as freedoms and rights are concerned, the Soviet system was not the best guarantor. They acknowledge the shortcomings, the disadvantages, and the mistakes of the Soviet Union, and blame its leaders for its demise.

Nevertheless, the sentiment of gratitude and debt towards the USSR is common to all the interviewees alike. This is due to three primary factors: age, problems during repatriation, Greece's conditions at the time of the research. The age factor is based on generational imprinting and nostalgia for a past age. According to Schuman and Scott, "memories of important political events and social changes are structured by age, and […] adolescence and early adulthood is the primary period for generational imprinting in the sense of political memories" (Schuman and Scott: 377, 1989). The majority of the refugees in Tashkent were between 20 and 25 years old, indeed. Hence, the decisive defeat of the DSE at Mount Grammos, the first years in Tashkent, and the initial help that the refugees' received from the Soviet party, constitute the core of their memories, and imprinted the sentiment of loyalty described above.

In addition, the interviewees who evacuated from Greece at the age of 6-10 behaved similarly to the above group, despite not being in their adolescence. Nevertheless, the interviewees that were in their adulthood when they escaped centered their accounts on the atrocities of the war compared to the peace they found in the USSR, giving a political meaning to the differences between Greece and the Soviet Union. In contrast, those who evacuated as children focused particularly on aspects typical of children. They underlined the love and care they received from their tutors, they told me about the foods that they ate for the first time or about the first swim they had in the sea, about the games organized by the party. They were still proud of having attended the school and having received awards as the best students. Furthermore, I noted that the majority of them collected material that they found in newspapers and books, cut out pictures about the Civil War and the refugeeism, as if trying to reconstruct their past about which they did not know very much.

However, the refugees who did not experience this first period in Tashkent/abroad or were too young to remember it, as also demonstrated by Schuman and Scott for their case study, showed "a tendency to contrast the event implicitly with events from their own adolescence and young adulthood" (Schuman and Scott: 377, 1989). In fact, during the interviews, the first two groups referred principally to the 1950s rather than to the 1960s or 1970s. In contrast, the younger refugees mostly referred to the latter period. For instance, although both groups talked about the greatness of the Soviet Union, the first group, as mentioned above, talked about the aid that it provided to the Greek refugees. The second, instead, mentioned Gagarin, the space race, and other important events of the 1960s.

The second aspect of age is nostalgia: "That faraway world where we remember that we suffered nevertheless exercises an incomprehensible attraction on the person who has survived it and who seems to think that he has left there the best part of himself, which he tries to recapture" (Halbwachs: 49, 1950). Halbwachs assigns this attraction to people's youth. Indeed, the older people become, the more they idealize the past, particularly if their present is troubled. The fact that, although difficult, the years in exile were the years of youth for the majority of the refugees, had a huge influence on individual memory, placing this period as one of the best of their lives.

Besides age and nostalgia, the problems that the refugees faced at repatriation enhanced their idealization of the past. As shown in the third chapter, they did not receive much help in Greece and they faced the same problems that any immigrant faces when he/she arrives in a foreign country (Kasimati: 145, 1993). However, after the initial difficulties that characterized the first years, it was not so difficult for the refugees to settle and find a job. In fact, in the 1980s, when the majority of the refugees repatriated, Greece was "in its golden era" said Mr. Papoulakos. Greek economic conditions were improving rapidly, the country joined the European Community, and the democratic government was restored. In contrast, the economic conditions of Greece in 2012 highly influenced refugees' accounts about the past. As Scott affirms in relation to his study on Malaysian peasants, "Their memory focuses precisely on those beneficial aspects of tenure and labor relations that have been eroded or swept away over the last ten years" (Scott: 179, 1985); the same is true for the refugees.

I arguye that the economic and social conditions of Greece in 2012 brought the refugees to compare the native country with the efficiency of the Soviet system, which was faultless, in their opinion. Hence, this situation contributed much to their vilification of Greece and praise for the USSR.

5.6 Different approaches towards the arguments

Mihailidis identifies two main approaches of the refugees towards the Resistance and the Civil War, life abroad, and repatriation: institutionalized or axiomatic memory and crit-

ical and sentimental memory. In the first case, "memory emerges as institutionalized-axiomatic and strives to justify the shortcomings and the errors of the party by appealing to the values it professes". In contrast, the second type of memory "expresses criticism towards the party, largely as an authority mechanism and not as purveyor of principles and values" (Mihailidis: 164-165, 2010). Nevertheless, even this second group does not discredit the life abroad. Their major complaint is about the KKE system.

From my research, it emerges that there were three ways of approaching the argument. First, the official party lines; to this group belonged people who are still active members of the party, such as the three exponents of the PEEPP, the Panhellenic Union of the Repatriated Political Refugees. They deny any mistake by the party, any shortcomings of the USSR, and completely idealize the Soviet Union. Second, simple people who were not interested in politics; their conclusions about the past are positive, since they base them more on the material level, saying that they had everything, and this was enough. Third, the educated people. This group is constituted not only of intellectuals but also of people who went to universities, studied, became interested in politics and always tried to defend their ideas, even in Tashkent. These people acknowledge the aid that the USSR gave them, and for this reason, they feel themselves in debt to that country. Nonetheless, they were disappointed by not finding in the USSR what they were fighting for: socialism. "When I arrived in Tashkent, I was very much disappointed. The Soviet Union was not the country we dreamt about. Then Khrushchev came to the power, and we got cheated a second time!" said Mrs. Zei. These people are aware of all the shortcomings of the USSR, acknowledge Stalin's crimes and realize that it was better to go back to Greece in 1980s rather than staying in Uzbekistan.

5.7 Final comments

When the refugees fled from Greece, the government launched a propaganda campaign against them and the Soviet Union, making people believe that Greeks were almost under torture there. Mr. Gakis[189] is the son of a Greek *andartis* of the first and second resistance[190] who eventually became a political refugee in Czechoslovakia[191]. When the DSE units escaped, his mother, his brother and he remained in Greece[192]. They underwent many difficulties because of their situation. "Our village [Karditsa] was divided into two: the right-wing families and the

189 Mr. Spiros Gakis, Athens, 12.03.2012.

190 Like Mr. Gakis, other refugees or members of the party also talked to me about second resistance referring to the civil war period.

191 During the war, when his father was injured he was sent to Yugoslavia and from there transferred to Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, they knew about this only in 1956 when they finally got news from him.

192 He told me that his mother wanted to escape too but she could not flee because Mr. Gakis was two years old and it was not allowed for women with children unable to walk on their own to escape with the DSE. Thus, in order not to abandon him, his mother decided to remain in Greece.

left-wing families. The latter side was constituted mostly of women and kids whose husbands, fathers, sons and brothers fled to the Socialist Republics." Four members of his family were in forced exile: his father, his father's sister with her husband, and their son. Because of this, the rest of the family who were in Greece faced problems and humiliation. "For instance" – he told me – "they did not want me to enter the gymnasium, and when I finally enrolled, there was a professor who never spoke to me". Mrs. Paganià and her family had the same troubles because her father was in the USSR, "my uncle, my father's brother, could not find a job, since people said bad and false things about him and his brother".

The plan to misinform people about the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc continued until the 60s, and intensified during the Junta. Once, people in a café asked Mr. Gakis, after he came back from Czechoslovakia where he visited his father, whether there was the sun or not on the other side of the curtain. That was the idea about the Socialist countries: darkness, poverty and, particularly, dissolution of all values. They made refugees' wives believe that their husbands were cheating on them, refugees' children that their fathers were traitors and had abandoned them and so on (interviews source). Therefore, life for those who remained probably was made more difficult than for those who left.

Although things in this regard changed in the 80s, these conceptions were hard to eradicate from people's minds. The first book that was published about the Greek political refugees was *We remained Greeks* by Thanasis Mitsopoulos, in 1979. Mitsopoulos, a *kapetanios* of the DSE who evacuated to Tashkent, intended to write a book which presented the true life of the refugees abroad in contrast with all the clichés and stories that circulated in those years in Greece. In fact, the common beliefs in Greek society were still centered on the old political credo of the left and right-wing parties. On the one hand, people believed that the refugees had the honor to live in the great USSR and, on the other, which was comprised the majority of the Greek society, that the refugees lived in terrible conditions, that the refugees were not Greeks anymore, that they had forgotten their origins and so on. Hence, Mitsopoulos presented organically the everyday life of the refugees, claiming that they were and remained Greeks for the whole period as refugees abroad.

Nevertheless, Mitsopoulos' work, as well as the other publications about the topic written by the refugees themselves, mostly reflects the refugees' personal experience highlighting the benefits or the shortcomings of life in Tashkent, principally according to the writers' good/bad relations with the KKE. The first work that approached the topic in a scholarly way was *Greek political refugees in Tashkent* by Lampatos. After a detailed analysis of the refugees' life in Tashkent and a particular focus on the clashes of 1955, Lampatos concludes, "In the years of life abroad, the majority of the refugees in Tashkent were not in line with the party for which they had sacrificed everything. Socialism, the dream for which they had sacrificed everything in their homeland, was in deep contrast to the harsh reality in which they lived in Central Asia" (254, 2001).

Not only from the book but also from the conversation that I had with Lampatos[193], it emerges that according to him the refugees' idealization of life in Tashkent is due to the deep influence exercised by the party on the refugees' memory. In fact, as Lampatos and other members of the Civil War Study Group, namely Marangidis and Tsekou, made me note, during the

193 Athens, 13.03.2012.

interviews, the words that the refugees used, the events they casted light on, were pretty much the same, as if they *had learnt* this story. This fact, along with the idealization of the past, led me think that the refugees were indoctrinated. According to the Study Group, the refugees that tell the whole story about Tashkent, hence about the imprisonment, the exiles, the harsh living conditions and so on, are just a few and are those who oppose the KKE line.

On the other hand, the literature produced by the PEEPP, the Panhellenic Union of the Repatriated Greek Political Refugees, and by the KKE completely contradict the above thesis. In the last book published by the PEEPP *Our life* (2002), life in Tashkent is described as idyllic, perfect, as if the refugees lived in the best political system ever and they had never had any kind of difficulties.

From the research that I conducted, I could hear the stories from the refugees, read the documents of the KKE, and compare my research with the current academic interpretations of this topic. What I noted is that the story has been and still is strongly politicized. Each side tries to demonstrate its versions of the facts, both about the living conditions and about the clashes that occurred in 1955, which were the first of many clashes that led to the schism of the KKE in 1968. Like the refugees' life abroad, the question of the children also has been exploited extensively for political propaganda. However, nowadays the majority of the Greek and international academic scholars agree on the fact that the majority of the children were evacuated with the consent of their parents. In contrast, the argument that has completely faded into oblivion in the Greek literature concerns the Slavo-Macedonians. This topic, although highly politicized in the past, is today avoided by both the left and the right-wing party. In fact, to comprehend the complexity of the issue, it should be considered the Greek government's policy towards minorities and especially towards the Slavic speaking minority since Greece's independence. Greece's fear of a likely secession of the Greek Macedonia in favour of FYRM or Bulgaria has always been alive and the likely repatriation of the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees, which would increase the number of the Slavic speaking community of Greece, is seen as threat to the territorial integrity of Greece.

The work I presented pretends to fill partly the gap in knowledge at the academic level about the refugeeism. My intention was to introduce the reader to the topic, giving as much as possible information about the life of the Greek political refugees in Tashkent, while including the question of the children, the repatriation, and the Slavo-Macedonian political refugees. As explained in the introduction to the work, it was a choice agreed with my supervisor, since we preferred to present the key questions of the refugeeism rather than linger over one of them. Nevertheless, I am aware of the fact that because of this choice I focused solely on the crucial points of each question, leaving out the details. Another limitation posed to the work has been the lack of academic literature, which forced me to make assumptions about the topic, relying mostly on my research, the interviews and the Greek archival documents. Aware of these limitations, I tried to be as much exhaustive and clear as possible.

Comparing my research with the past conclusions diversely reached by the KKE, the interviewees themselves, and the Greek academic world, I think that it is as wrong to affirm that life in Tashkent for the refugees was idyllic as to say it was harsh. The KKE for political propaganda cannot but conclude that the experience in Tashkent was extremely positive. On the other hand, Lampatos, whose interesting analysis casted light on many aspects

omitted by the KKE, in my opinion, in his final comments on the life abroad misses an important point: the living conditions in the USSR. It is incomplete to reach conclusions about the living conditions of the Greek community in Tashkent without taking into consideration the whole picture. In fact, if on one side it is true that the life in Tashkent was not straightforward and perfect as the KKE pretends it was, it is also true that the Greeks in Tashkent lived in the same conditions as those of the other citizens of the USSR. The refugeeism period was not lived as an exile. Particularly during the first years, Soviet aid was crucial to their settlement in Tashkent. The refugees were embedded in the Soviet system, experiencing both the advantages and the disadvantages that characterized this system. In certain cases or periods, the refugees lived in difficult conditions, and many of them underwent exile and imprisonment, especially after the "registration period"[194] and the clashes between Zachariadikì and anti-Zachariadikì, in 1955. Nevertheless, in my opinion, this occurred within the frame of the Soviet system, of which the KKE was also a part, and was not aimed specifically against the Greeks.

As Lampatos already suggests, it can be opposed to the KKE the fact that, contrarily to its claims, many refugees did not find in the USSR the Socialist system they had fought for. Nevertheless, I think that this is not a peculiarity of the Greek refugees; many other communists shared the same sentiment, having been disappointed by the huge gap between the principles declared by the Communism and their implementation in the USSR and the Socialist camp. In addition, given the analysis of the factors that influenced the interviewees' accounts, i.e. the refugees' old age, their nostalgia for the past, their disappointment about repatriation, and the disastrous economic conditions of Greece at the time of the interviews (September 2011-April 2012), I conclude that the majority of the interviewees had certainly been influenced by the KKE in the process of collective memory construction, but this influence cannot be considered indoctrination. In fact, out of 22 interviews, 16 people acknowledged the difficulties and the problems in terms of democracy and freedom that characterized both the Soviet system and the KKE. Nevertheless, the above four factors, not just the party propaganda, helped them to remember mostly the positive aspects of the refugeeism.

Furthermore, I noted that because of the Soviet aid they received, also those among the interviewees who opposed the KKE and/or the Soviet system, cannot but feel a sentiment of gratitude and debt towards this country and its citizens. This contrast sentiment, which sees on one side the acknowledgement by the majority of the interviewees of all the deep and serious problems that affected the USSR, and, on the other a deep rooted sentiment of debt towards the USSR, mixed to anger towards a motherland, Greece, that *chased away its sons,* shows the complexity of this story which, basing itself principally on memories, is full of contradictory emotions.

194 As registration period, I refer to the years 1952-1953 when the KKE stored in files the previous experiences of its members, their behavior during the resistance and the civil war. If someone resulted not loyal to the party was exiled, or imprisoned, or lost its job (See Lampatos, 2001).

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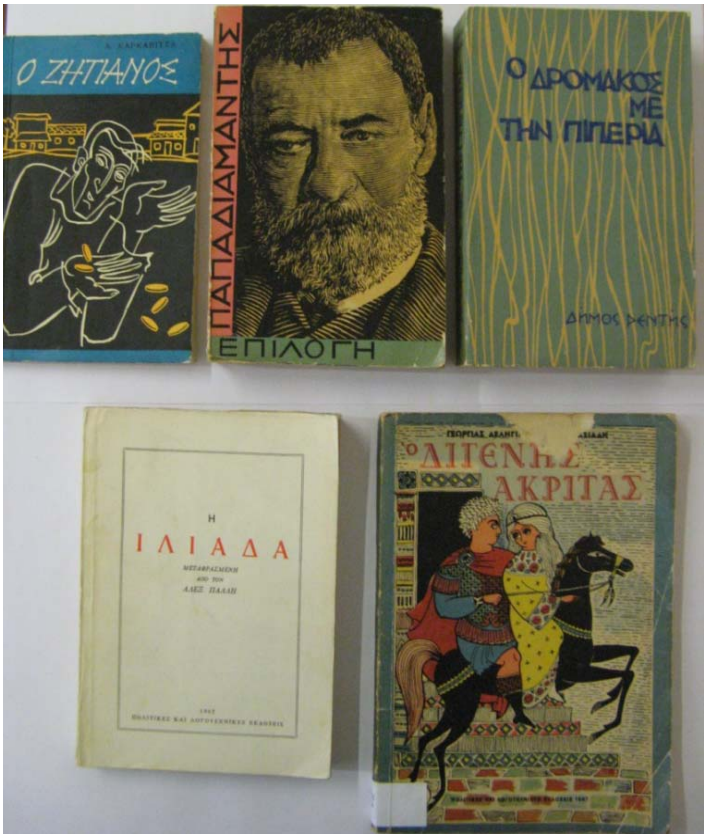
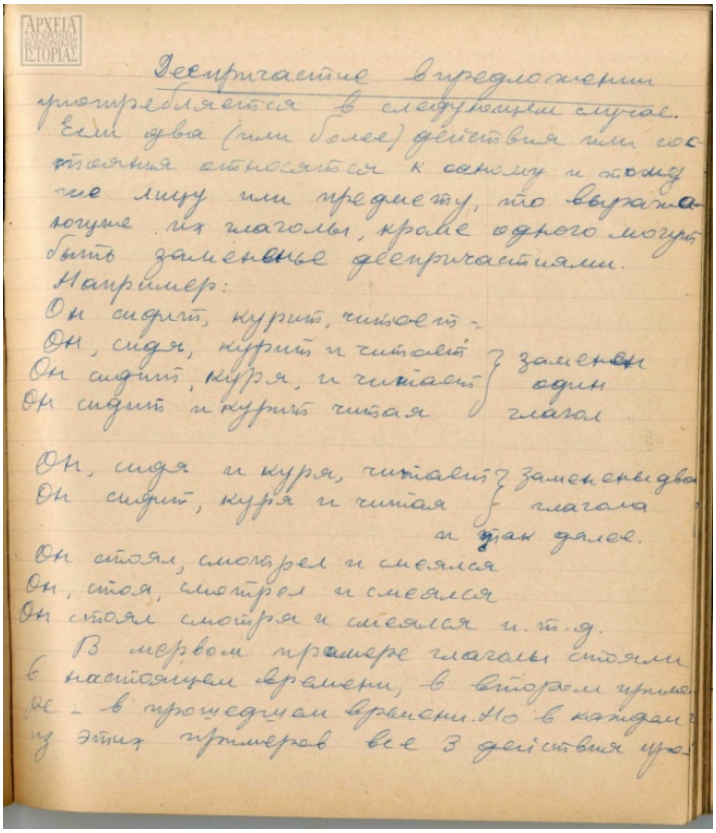
Annex 1

List of questions of the interviews:

- When and why did you expatriate?
- Where did you go?
- Were the children abducted by the Greek Communist Party?
- Why did you settle in Tashkent?
- Did Soviet Union help you to settle?
- How was your life in the USSR?
- Did you face many obstacles?
- Where did you live?
- What job did you do?
- In what language did you interact?
- Did you study?
- Did children go to school? In what language did they study?
- Did you easily integrate into the new environment?
- Could you travel?
- Was there a Greek community? Did it publish newspapers?
- Did you have Greek feasts?
- Were you a member of the Greek Communist party or of the Soviet party?
- In Tashkent, there were Slavo-Macedonians?
- In what language did they interact? In what language did they study?
- Did they have their own community?
- Did you have any contact with Greece?
- Did you have contact with the other Greeks already living in the USSR? And with the other refugees in the Socialist Republics?
- Why did you repatriate?
- Why did not you repatriate before 1974?
- How was life in Greece?
- Did you face many obstacles?
- Did you maintain contact with people in Tashkent?
- What did you bring with you to Greece?



Greek books published by Politikes kai Logotoechnikes Ekdosis, Bucharest, 1965-1968, KKE Archive “Charilaos Florakis”.



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ХУРМАТЛИ УРТОК!

Тошкент шаҳар Ижроия Комитети ва УзК(б)П шаҳар комитети сизни халқ аро хотин—қизлар куни 8-нчи мартга бағишланган тантанали мажлисига таклиф қилади.

Кун тартиби:

Доклад: халқаро хотин—қизлар куни 8 март ҳақида
докладчи УзЦК ЛКСМнинг секретари уртоқ
Насреддинова.

ДОКЛАДДАН СЎНГ БАДИЙ ҚИСИМ.

Мажлис 8 март 1950 йил соат 8-да ***НАВОЙЙ*** номидаги опера ва балет театри биносида бўлими.—

УзК(б)П Тошкент шаҳар комитети ***Тошкент шаҳар ижроия комитети***

УВАЖАЕМЫЙ ТОВАРИЩ Бейку Мария

Ташкентский Горком КП (б) Узбекистана и Ташгорисполком приглашают Вас на торжественное собрание посвященное Международному женскому дню—8 марта.

Порядок собрания:

Доклад О Международном женском дне—8 марта
Докладчик Секретарь ЦКЛКСМ Узбекистана
тов. ***Насреддинова***

ПОСЛЕ СОБРАНИЯ—ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННАЯ ЧАСТЬ

Собрание состоится 8 марта 1950 г. в 8 часов вечера в театре имени ***НОВОИ.***

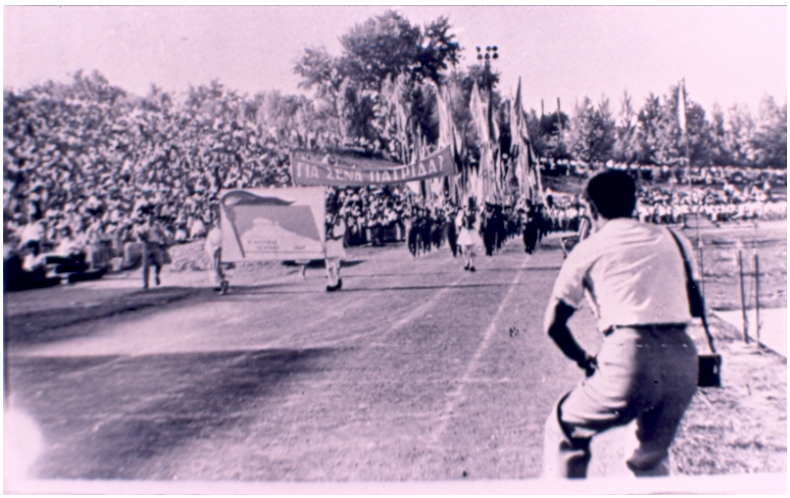
Ташгорком КП(б)Уз ***Ташгорисполком***

Invitation for Maria Beikou to “8 March” Feast, Tashkent, 1950,
“Maria and Georgoula Beikou” Archive, k.30_kartes, ASKI.

Greek in Tashkent, nd, KKE Photographic Archive

Greek children, Tashkent, nd, KKE Photographic Archive

Greek theatre, Tashkent, nd, KKE Photographic Archive

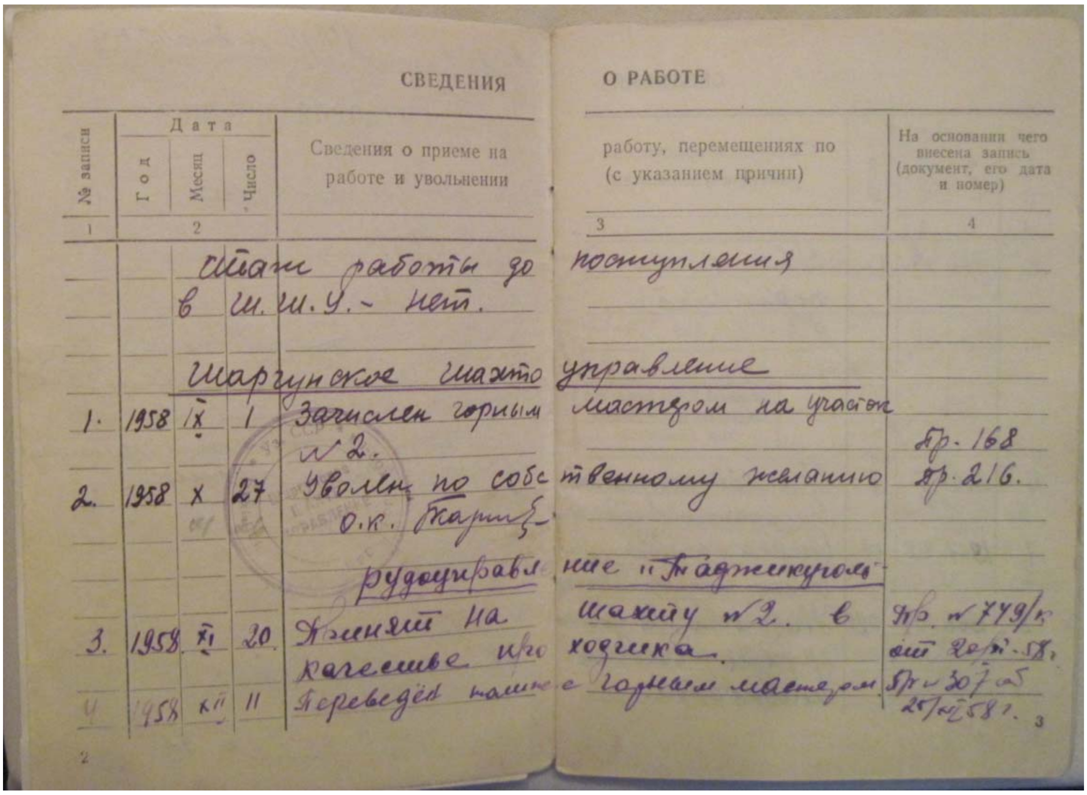


Greek Communist Party demonstration, Tashkent, nd, KKE Photographic Archive

Greeks in Tashkent, 1953-1955 circa, Mrs. Eleftheriadou private archive

Greek children, Tashkent, 1958-1960 circa, Mrs. Eleftheriadou private archive

Mr. Dastamanis, Tashkent, 1954-1955 circa



СВЕДЕНИЯ О РАБОТЕ

№ записи	Дата: Год	Месяц	Число	Сведения о приеме на работу, перемещениях по работе и увольнении (с указанием причин)	На основании чего внесена запись (документ, его дата и номер)
1	2			3	4
				Стаж работы до поступления в Ш.Ш.У. - нет.	
				Шаргунское шахтоуправление	
1.	1958	IX	1	Зачислен горным мастером на участок №2.	Пр. 168
2.	1958	X	27	Уволен по собственному желанию О.К. [illegible]	Пр. 216.
				Рудоуправление "Таджикуголь"	
3.	1958	XI	20	Принят на шахту №2 в качестве [illegible]	[illegible] №779/к от 20/XI-58
4	1958	XII	11	Переведён [illegible] горным мастером	Пр. №307 от 25/XII 58 г.

Mr. Dastamanis Soviet document which records his personal details and the previous employment

The wedding of Mr. Vellas's cousin, Tashkent, 1959.

УзССР
МИНИСТЕРСТВО ПРОСВЕЩЕНИЯ
АТТЕСТАТ ЗРЕЛОСТИ

Настоящий аттестат выдан Качавалос Костас Христос, родившемуся в Греции в 1940 году, в том, что он, поступив в 1957 году в среднюю школу № 9 рабочей молодёжи, окончил в 1958 году полный курс этой школы и обнаружил при отличном поведении следующие знания по предметам:

Родной язык греческий	5	(отлично)	Конституция СССР	5	(отлично)
Литература	5	(отлично)	География	5	(отлично)
русск. язык и литература	4	(хорошо)	Физика	5	(отлично)
Алгебра	5	(отлично)	Астрономия	5	(отлично)
Геометрия	5	(отлично)	Химия	5	(отлично)
Тригонометрия	5	(отлично)	Иностранный язык англ.	5	(отлично)
Естествознание	5	(отлично)	Черчение	5	(отлично)
История СССР	5	(отлично)	Физкультура	—	( )
Всеобщая история	5	(отлично)			

Настоящий аттестат дает его владельцу право поступления в высшие учебные заведения Союза ССР.

М. П.

Директор школы
Заместитель директора по учебной части
Учителя

Выдан 1 июля 1958 г.
г. Янги-Юль
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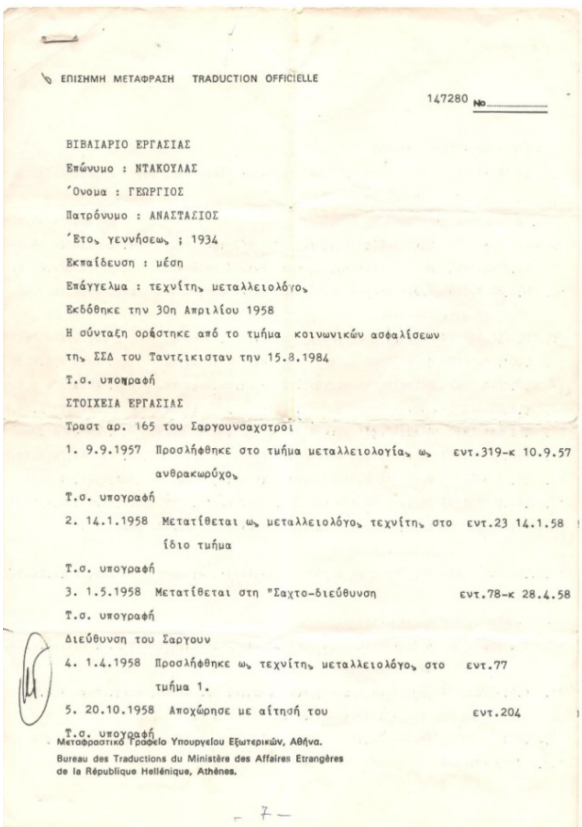
School certificate of Mr. Katsiavalos, Tashkent, 1958



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147280 No

ΒΙΒΛΙΑΡΙΟ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ
Επώνυμο : ΝΤΑΚΟΥΛΑΣ
΄Ονομα : ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΣ
Πατρόνυμο : ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΟΣ
΄Ετος γεννήσεως ; 1934
Εκπαίδευση : μέση
Επάγγελμα : τεχνίτης μεταλλειολόγος
Εκδόθηκε την 30η Απριλίου 1958
Η σύνταξη ορίστηκε από το τμήμα κοινωνικών ασφαλίσεων της ΣΣΔ του Ταντζικισταν την 15.8.1984
Τ.σ. υπογραφή
ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ
Τραστ αρ. 165 του Σαργουνσαχστροι

1. 9.9.1957 Προσλήφθηκε στο τμήμα μεταλλειολογίας ως ανθρακωρύχος — εντ.319-κ 10.9.57

Τ.σ. υπογραφή

2. 14.1.1958 Μετατίθεται ως μεταλλειολόγος τεχνίτης στο ίδιο τμήμα — εντ.23 14.1.58

Τ.σ. υπογραφή

3. 1.5.1958 Μετατίθεται στη "Σαχτο-διεύθυνση — εντ.78-κ 28.4.58

Τ.σ. υπογραφή

Διεύθυνση του Σαργουν

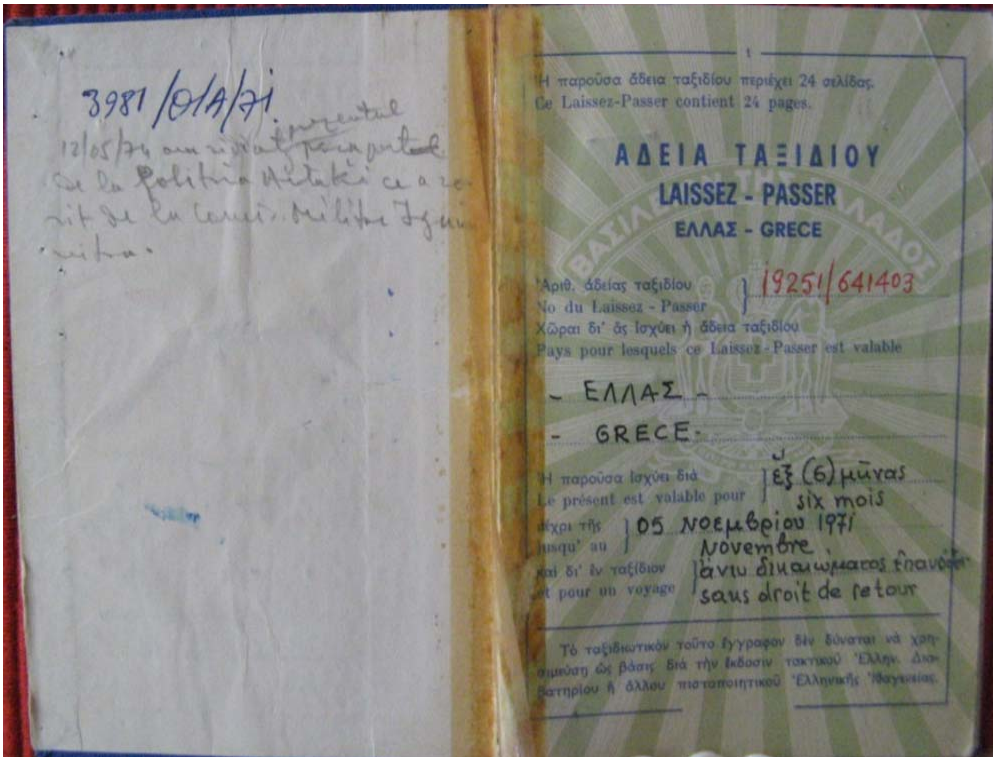
4. 1.4.1958 Προσλήφθηκε ως τεχνίτης μεταλλειολόγος στο τμήμα 1. — εντ.77
5. 20.10.1958 Αποχώρησε με αίτησή του — εντ.204

Τ.σ. υπογραφή

Μεταφραστικό Γραφείο Υπουργείου Εξωτερικών, Αθήνα.
Bureau des Traductions du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères de la République Hellénique, Athènes.

- 7 -

Mr. Dakoulas Soviet document which records his personal details and the previous employment



Η παρούσα άδεια ταξιδίου περιέχει 24 σελίδας.
Ce Laissez-Passer contient 24 pages.

ΑΔΕΙΑ ΤΑΞΙΔΙΟΥ
LAISSEZ - PASSER
ΕΛΛΑΣ - GRECE

Αριθ. άδειας ταξιδίου / No du Laissez - Passer: 19251/641403
Χώραι δι' ας ισχύει ή άδεια ταξιδίου / Pays pour lesquels ce Laissez - Passer est valable: - ΕΛΛΑΣ - - GRECE -
Η παρούσα ισχύει διά / Le présent est valable pour: Εξ (6) μήνας / six mois
μέχρι της / jusqu' au: 05 Νοεμβρίου 1971 / Novembre
και δι' εν ταξίδιον / et pour un voyage: άνευ δικαιώματος επανόδου / sans droit de retour

Το ταξιδιωτικόν τούτο έγγραφον δεν δύναται να χρησιμεύση ως βάσις διά την έκδοσιν τακτικού Έλληνος Διαβατηρίου ή άλλου πιστοποιητικού Ελληνικής Υπηκοότητος.

Laissez-passer of Mr. Stolakis, 1971

Mrs. Gogo and her schoolchildren, Hungary, 1970

Newspaper published by the Greek political refugees in Tashkent, July 1973, Tashkent
Municipal Association of Greeks Archive

Newspaper of the repatriated Greek political refugees "Epanapatrismos", May 1976 n.1,
Historical Archive A/Sinechia

The Greek folk group of the Tashkent Municipal Association of Greeks

Author's Biography

Maria Olimpia Squillaci is a third-year PhD student at the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages at University of Cambridge, and a Trinity College scholar. She is co-founder and current vice-president of the Cambridge Migration Society. M. Olimpia's main research interest is Greece. She has worked with several Greek minorities among which the Rumeiko community in Mariupol' (Ukraine), the Greko community in southern Italy, and the Greek political refugees in Tashkent and St.Petersburg. Maria Olimpia has received her MA from MIREES.

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