

Russian Greeks / Greek Russians

Parameters of Identity

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To my dear wife, close friend, and colleague

Alexandra Kasyanova

and

to our children

Artemiy and Beata

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Abstract

This thesis investigates how the ex-Soviet Greek populations used the reforms in Russia and the repatriation policy of Greece emerging in the 1990s in order to form a new discourse on Greek identity. This new understanding of the Greek identity was marked by the term “Pontians.” The populations (in a Foucauldian sense) known in Russia and the Soviet Union as Greki, “the Greeks”, were never presented as a unified group nor even as a conglomerate of interacting groups. The new identity discourse that emerged, the discourse on Pontianness, was formed after the Gorbachev perestroika and directed not only towards the Russian Government and the general public in Russia, but also to Greece where many ex-Soviet Greeks found a new “homeland” from the end of the 1980s. In this new, post-Soviet situation, people who in the Soviet Union would be identified as Greeks would now be identified as Russians or Russian Pontians in Greece. People holding this identity gained access to different social (and national) fields in Greece, and were allowed the possibility to cross borders as Schengen/EU citizens who could thus choose their places of work and residence in Europe. Thus, the main argument of my thesis is that the identities of various ex-Soviet Greek populations changed and were homogenized after the perestroika. The new Greek identity “Pontians” changed the status of Greek populations in Russia and was simultaneously accepted in Greece as an identity expressing Greek descent. Geographically, the thesis focuses on the southern territories of the Russian Empire (from southeast Ukraine, Crimea and North Caucasus to Abkhazia, Georgia and the Kars region of contemporary Turkey) and is based on fieldwork undertaken between 2006 and 2011 in Russia and Greece.

It is the existence of different historical discourses available in Russia and the Soviet Union for establishing “Greekness” and “Pontianness” that is the focus of the two chapters in Part One. My aim with this overview is to document some discursive facts as they appeared at the crossroads of Greekness and Russianness and to show their “constructedness” and in what ways the construction was linked to prior notions of Greekness. Although my historical discussion argues in favor of mosaicism and plurality in Greek identities, there was an attempt within the USSR in the 1920-30s towards a unification of discourses on Greekness. This was a result of a general ethnic policy according to which any ethnic group was to have its own ethnic territory. However, when the political situation changed, the process of unification/homogenization stopped to be continued only after perestroika

as a grass-root initiative among the Greeks. During this period the mass repatriation of ex-Soviet Greeks to Greece influenced significantly the process of homogenization. Therefore, the formation of the new identity was a discursive process that combined two concerns: 1) to establish a new identity in order to claim autonomy and territory; and 2) to establish a new identity to correspond with the new repatriation criteria in order to be recognized as Greek by the Greek authorities and the population in Greece.

The focus of the Part Two is on the Russian Greeks who have opted to move to Greece. This part of the thesis draws mainly on ethnographic material and interviews of informants collected during fieldwork in Greece. The new possibilities of Russian Greeks moving to Greece created new consequences also for the Greeks back in Russia, and it is an aim to compare the two situations: Greeks or Pontians in Russia and Russian Greeks in Greece. Chapters Three and Four present analyses of the problems repatriates face in Greece. I argue that only a few forms of symbolic capital (for example, matrimonial strategies) are able to be “repatriated” with the migrant, while education and work experience prove more difficult. This difficulty is connected not only with language barriers but also with closeness of social fields, in particular, the field of education in Greece. Herefrom, together with de-skillization and de-classization, a crisis of identity appears that is expressed as nostalgia for Russia. I also characterize two women’s biographies in comparative perspective. Both women migrated from Russia to Greece and were quite successful in their appropriation of Greekness. My main argument here is that the appropriation of Greekness may take place (and be used) in contrasting ways with the causes of those contrasts rooted in pre-emigration experience.

The last chapter, Chapter Five, sums up the historicizing and theorizing focuses of the thesis and concludes the argument and findings of the thesis. My main argument is that the identity of Greek migrants from ex-Soviet countries to Greece has not always been based on their common identity (as the Pontians, for example). This is a consequence of the more recent periods of migration. Although being labelled “Greeks” in post-Soviet countries, those labelled also maintained their local identity markers, such as Mariupol’skie Greki, Tsalkintsy, Rumei, Urum, Rum, or Romaikos. The post-perestroika mass migration to Greece introduced to these various populations the understanding that they all were “Pontians”, or “Helleno-Pontians”, or “Rousso-Pontians”, depending on the dominating discourses provided by the Soviet and Greek states. Although both states sought to unify identities, such efforts failed in Russia as well as in Greece. Their Greekness in Russia (or Pontianess in Greece) has always been “under construction.” The mosaic character of the discourses on Greekness in Russia and corresponding populations is a result of the failure of those state discourses. Rather than a unified state discourse, ethnic identity is connected with issues of citizenship, territory,

community, origin, marriage, family, education, and so on. In other words, my argument is that the identity of Greek-migrants may be constructed by state discourses, but that the populations of Greeks only adopt it if they deem it profitable. Now the situation is that for many it is more profitable to be Russian Greeks and to leave Greece for Russia.

The thesis is a contribution to the anthropology of migration and takes its place in a line of anthropological research from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union that explores identity changes and their ways.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Discourses on Greek identities

The formation of New Independent States (NIS) after the collapse of the Soviet Union led to a situation in which the statuses of different ethnic groups were changed radically. Representatives of these groups found themselves within the borders of new states whether as foreigners or as different sorts of minorities. The problems that resulted from this have been solved in various ways during the post-Soviet period and are currently being debated in different countries. Ethnic groups marked in Russia as Germans, Greeks, Poles, Czechs and others, due to political, social and legal changes caused by the perestroika as well as specific ethnic policy and legislative initiatives of Germany, Greece, Poland, and Czech Republic among others, were given the possibility of “repatriation.” This meant that persons relating themselves to these ethnic groups could be considered “Europeans” and that they could leave for their respective countries as legal residents of Europe.

This thesis investigates how the ex-Soviet Greek populations used the reforms in Russia and the repatriation policy of Greece in order to form a new discourse on Greek identity. This new understanding of the Greek identity was marked by the term “Pontians.” People holding this identity gained access to different social (and national) fields in Greece, and were allowed the possibility to cross borders as Schengen/EU citizens who could thus choose their places of work and residence in Europe. The new identity discourse, the discourse on Pontianess, was formed after the Gorbachev perestroika, although bearing certain historical precedent from the 1920-30s. This new discourse was directed not only towards the Russian Government and the general public in Russia, but also to Greece where many ex-Soviet Greeks found a new “homeland” from the end of the 1980s. In this new, post-Soviet situation, people who in the Soviet Union would be identified as Greeks would now be identified as Russians or Russian Pontians in Greece.

The background of this situation dates to the period after 1986 (i.e., after the perestroika), when Russia and the rest of the Soviet Union underwent reforms that led to deep changes in many elements of social life in the country. One can safely assert that the Soviet period of stagnation changed into a period of reform and construction of a new society initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev. New classes emerged, state institutions changed, new economic and management forms took over, and new types of social organization developed. Within the political field, a new party system and new methods of political struggle appeared, finally leading to new independent states. All these changes also produced new discourses on identities, one of which related to the Greeks and the new identity term “Pontian.”

The main argument of my thesis is that the identities of various Greek populations in the USSR changed and were homogenized after the perestroika. Several factors can be singled out to explain these changes:

1) **the opening of borders** resulted in several mass repatriation programs for various ethnic groups (including the Greeks), opening up a return to their “homelands”;

2) **the cancellation of ethnicity/nationality** as a significant marker of identity in former Soviet passports resulted in a (re-)construction of ethnicities;

3) **the development of private entrepreneurship** within the fields of cross-border trade and in work migration opened up opportunities for increased incomes and produced new patterns of mobility;

4) **the new development of NGOs** and voluntary associations among ethnic minorities resulted in unification identities, including that of the Greek identity in Russia;

5) **the revision of Soviet internal policies** to deal with the mass repressions of Stalin’s period resulted in adoption of the Law on Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples (No 5303-1) in 1991. Greeks were not covered by the law, but the work of Greek organizations to have Greeks included in the list of Stalin’s victims helped unify notions of “Greekness”.

As a result a new Greek identity—labelled “Pontian” in Russia and CIS and Rousso-Pontian in Greece—was formed and replaced earlier local identities in the political field. This new identity, as in the processes of the 1920-30s, changed the status of Greek populations in Russia and was simultaneously accepted in Greece as an identity expressing Greek descent (although a low-status one).

In the 1990s, Greece, as well as other European countries (for instance, Italy, Spain, etc.), turned from a country that produced migrants (to Europe, America, Australia) into a country that received migrants (first of all from the USSR and Albania) (Triandafyllidou, 2000, p. 186-187; Triandafyllidou, Veikou 2002, p. 190-191).¹ These circumstances demanded not only the development of new legislation on immigration, but also produced a new nationalistic formulation of the concept of “Greekness”, producing new effects in the economic and social situation of repatriates. Several problems emerged: arriving migrants did not speak the New Greek language; some of the Greeks were Turkish-speaking people (the so-called Urums); many of the repatriates were not ready to settle in the territories offered to them in Northern Greece (Thrace and Macedonia); Soviet degree diplomas needed to be translated and approved. Based on such problems Greece, at the level of Government and Parliament but also at the level of the general population and civil organizations, was faced with serious challenges concerning immigration.

Greek Ethnic Identities in Russia

To pursue this type of problem I divide my thesis into two parts, one focusing on the evolvement of a Greek identity in Russia, later the Soviet Union, and then again, after the collapse of the Soviet empire, and the Greek identity in the context of Russia and the post-Soviet nation states as they emerged following the Soviet collapse. In the second part of the thesis my focus is on the Russian Greeks in Greece during the contemporary period of repatriation. Here I deal briefly with each one.

My main argument concerning the Greeks in Russia is that the populations (in a Foucauldian sense) known in Russia and the Soviet Union as *Greki*, “the Greeks”, were never presented as a unified group nor even as a conglomerate of interacting groups. Geographically, the thesis focuses on the southern territories of the Russian Empire (from southeast Ukraine, Crimea and North Caucasus to Abkhazia, Georgia and the Kars region of contemporary Turkey). My historical discussion of these

¹ Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatos (2008: 5) disagree with such a vision of the problem: “In recent years, when talking about immigration into Greece, people like to stress that ‘Greece has shifted from being a country of emigration to one of immigration.’ With this apparently simple statement, we are supposed to understand that here is a new problem for which we can hardly expect good government policies, or positive public reaction. In reality Greece since 1913 has witnessed mass immigrations, mass emigrations, mass population exchanges – perhaps more so than any European country in the twentieth century.”

areas begins with the formation of Greek populations across this region as a result of a migration that has mainly taken place since the seventeenth century. The Russian and Soviet states tried repeatedly to systematize the Greek presence on the territory of the late Russian Empire and the USSR correspondingly. However, those attempts came up against the impossibility (or perhaps inexpediency) of transforming "the Greeks" into a nation, separate from the nation of Hellenes (i.e. mainland Greeks). Moving to the Soviet political discourse on ethnicity I show that this field of problematization was developed in Soviet anthropology as part of an "ethnos theory." According to the Soviet concept of ethnogenesis the Greek populations of the USSR were viewed as being part of the "Greek ethnos," including Greek populations of Greece and numerous diasporas, and were considered descended from an "old-Greek ethnos." Greek participation in Russian history can be usefully articulated in chronological order, as follows.

1. The Greeks were present in the territories of states of the East Slavs from their very beginning. So, the Ancient Rus' accepted Orthodox Christianity from the Greeks (Byzantium), together with subordination to the Constantinople Patriarchate, their writing system, literary tradition and so forth.

2. There was participation by Greek priests, diplomats, agents, artists, philosophers and merchants in the economic, political, religious and military relationships between Russian medieval principalities as well as with their Western and Eastern neighbors.

3. The practice of *kormlenie* (lit. feeding) Orthodox monasteries and parishes was formed after the fall of Byzantium. Russian tsars personally considered applications for material and financial support from Orthodox priests arriving from the Ottoman lands, then delegated this function to a special institution.

4. A Greek theme ran through the foreign policy of the Russian Empire. This included: "the Greek Project" of Catherine the Great; support for Greek partisans, corsairs and pirates operating on the territory of the Ottoman Empire; support for the Greek revolutionary movement, which started with a secret society at Odessa; and the Greek revolution and the young Greek state. These "facts" are well documented and broadly familiar in Greece and Russia.

5. Studies of antiquities and Greek philosophy were popular in both pre-revolutionary Russia and the USSR. This popularity can be seen as a catalyst for interest not only in Ancient Greece, but also in contemporary Greeks; the discourses produced by social scientists concerning Ancient Greece encouraged a more general interest and formed the general attitude to Greekness. No less important

was a widespread Byzantium research interest; some Soviet Byzantinists became famous well beyond the limits of their discipline (Sergei Averintsev, 1937-2004, for instance).

These discursive elements are repeatedly activated by states or intellectuals in the form of "cultural memory" or as "archetypes of culture," that is, they constitute a set of texts, published and unpublished, attention to which could revitalize older discursive elements that might be recollected under particular political conditions. As a result, these discourses about Greekness can be assembled and disassembled in relation to a concrete discursive situation. Thus, there is no "objective" Soviet or Russian Greekness, but objectified discourses exist and satisfy a desire to be, or to become, a Greek or a Pontian. Suny (1993) notes, regarding combinations of facts of discourses, that

whether it is the discourse of class or of nation, of supranational religion or of sub-national regionalism, the political and intellectual actors can only borrow, adapt, and reproduce the discourses available to them – or, in rare instances, create from available material a new discursive synthesis. (Suny 1993: 13)

It is the existence of different historical discourses available for establishing "Greekness" and "Pontianness" that is the focus of the two chapters in Part One. My aim with this overview is to document some discursive facts as they appeared at the crossroads of Greekness and Russianness and to show their "constructedness" and in what ways the construction was linked to prior notions of Greekness. My discussion is historical as well as contemporary. First I turn to history.

As indicated above, the name "Greeks" (Rus., pl. *Greki*; earlier version: *Grechane*) as an "ethnonym" of Soviet concept of "ethnos" has always been associated in Russian historiography with Ancient Greece, Byzantium and the post-Byzantium Orthodox populations of the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, all those who came from these territories were also called "the Greeks", although sometimes additional attributes were noted: "Constantinople," "Anatolian," "Morean," and "Turkish," for example. I am not aware of such terms as "Pontian Greek" or "Pontian" in Russian periodicals and academic literature before the debates of the 1920s and 1930s, when the term "Pontian" appeared in relation to the possibility of a Pontian state and the political status of Russian Greek communities and vernaculars. In the field of language, the Russian bureaucracy considered the official Modern Greek language as a "mother tongue" ("*rodnoi iazyk*") for the various Greek communities of Russia after the foundation of the Greek state in the 1720s. Various Greek "dialects," which

were used by groups of Greeks in Russia, were viewed as “corrupted” versions of Greek (and sometimes even of Ancient Greek). It was considered that the pure Greek language was forgotten, corrupted or lost (the last term was especially characteristic regarding Turkish-speaking Greeks) during the process of migrations and contact with neighbors. This kind of bureaucratic logic underlies what was taught in some Greek secondary and professional schools about the history of the Greeks, being a history of a people originating from a common Greek source, but which, through historical developments, had been diversified. One example of such diversification was in language. As for religion, the crucial issue for the clergy was that people should understand the language of sermons, therefore priests led services and delivered sermons using local dialects. Although a common religious source existed, language diversity led to diversity in the practice of religious rituals. The theatre shows in many cases the same picture, with plays performed not only in Russian but also in local dialects. In pre-revolutionary Sukhumi, for instance, *Electra* was staged at the local Greek theatre in the “Pontian dialect” (Keramida 1999: 79).

Moving to the contemporary situation we see a Greek identity that was different in cultural content in various places, change into a more unified notion of “Pontianness”. Although my historical discussion argues in favor of mosaicism and plurality in Greek identities, there was an attempt within the USSR in the 1920-30s towards a unification of discourses on Greekness. This was a result of a general ethnic policy according to which any ethnic group was to have its own ethnic territory. However, when the political situation changed, the process of unification/homogenization stopped to be continued only after perestroika as a grass-root initiative among the Greeks. During this period the mass repatriation of ex-Soviet Greeks to Greece influenced significantly the process of homogenization. Therefore, the formation of the new identity was a discursive process that combined two concerns: 1) to establish a new identity in order to claim autonomy and territory; and 2) to establish a new identity to correspond with the new repatriation criteria in order to be recognized as Greek by the Greek authorities and the population in Greece. These dynamics are discussed in the second chapter.

The second chapter thus brings the Greek identity into the contemporary situation as represented by my fieldwork in a Greek village in Russia. In the chapter I demonstrate several issues that distinguish this contemporary situation from the historical patterns I discussed before. First, the new identity “Pontian” helps consolidate various groups of Greeks speaking different vernaculars and possessing different group identities – Romeikos and Urums. Thus we see a unification and homogenization process that we have not seen since the 1920s and 1930s and which signifies a break with the earlier pattern of diversified local traditions of Greekness. Second, the dynamics behind the

emergent new identity can be manifested through private business activities through which individual traders start embracing the new identity in order to promote their business, as well as through the activity of the local Greek society in which Pontianess emerges in schools and in museums as a collective identity, showing ways in which the group belongs to its territory.

The Conceptual Basis of Part One

The theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of my discussions in these two chapters draw on the concepts of ethnicity, identity and discourse. My approach to ethnicity is a constructivist one. Observing the situation in Russia concerning the issue of migration, I argue that Greekness is a construct—a discourse on identity that is used as an instrument in the project of repatriation—which is also used as capital, “ethno-capital,” and as a key to the appropriation of “mainland” Greekness, both in terms of citizenship and in terms of perceived discourses and practices. “Greekness” as a kind of discourse on ethnicity is a product of discursive work (see Hall 1996, below). As Sara Mills notes:

a discourse is something which produces something else (an utterance, a concept, an effect), rather than something which exists in and of itself and which can be analysed in isolation. A discursive structure can be detected because of the systematicity of the ideas, opinions, concepts, ways of thinking and behaving which are formed within a particular context, and because of the effects of those ways of thinking and behaving. (Mills 2004: 15)

Foucault divides discourses according to various categories. One of his divisional principles is the creative or commenting character of a certain discourse (Foucault 1972: 220). But commentaries can sometimes substitute for creative discourses or even work without them (Foucault 1972: 220–221). Thus, I approach the discourse on “Greekness”/“Pontianess” as a complex discourse: on the one hand, it has been elaborated on as a remake of (and a commentary on) other nationalistic or “ethnic” discourses; on the other, as a specifically “Greek” invention, using history and descent (or “blood ties”) to ground the political rights of those able to appropriate them. There are several key problems in “identity” problematization within the framework of social science, for example: identity

as process or phenomenon; as acquired or created; as fixed or fluid/shifting; as given or taken. These and other such open-ended questions were posed to a considerable degree by the political change brought about by the breakdown of the Soviet Union and the so-called Soviet Bloc. As Ruth Wodak argues (2002), the attention to “cultural and historical identities” in Europe was renewed as a result of such contemporary political processes as the transformation of the former Eastern bloc, Germany’s unification, the inclusion of new states in the EU and its “deepening integration” (Wodak 2002: 143), as well as discussions about immigration and integration. She also argues that new ethnic and national identities in Europe have an unstable and fragmented character, which soon challenged the propagation of a new European identity and led to new political struggles. In my discussion here I think it is possible to avoid a constructivist objectification by viewing identity as discourse. Thus, taking into account the complex character of the discourse on Greekness, I agree with Stuart Hall’s understanding of “identity.” Although he does not consider “identity” directly as a kind of discourse, he supports a “discursive approach” in studying it, and his definition of the concept and his interpretations of its parameters are close to those I seek to elucidate in this work.

Hall emphasizes that identification is an ever-continuing construction, a process “in process”, as a subject of “play”, which is relevant to the present case. He also argues that identification as a process requires consolidation of this process, which uses material outside it, and binds and marks symbolic boundaries; as a practice, he observes, identification results in discursive work (Hall 1996: 2–3). As for identities, Hall (1996) states that they are

never unified and, in late modern times [they are] increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation.
(Hall 1996: 2–4)

In agreement with Foucault’s (1989: 23–33) ideas concerning unities of discourses, Hall thus shows that discourse on identity depends and builds upon existing discourses, as well as upon practices which should be viewed here as “pre-discursive” practices, that is, as practices themselves, without grounding, without discourse. But in so far as these practices become an object of interest, reflection, or research, they generate discourses that ground and legitimize them. Brubaker and Cooper (2000) also seek to merge two notions – “discourse” and “identity”, which are

[u]nderstood as the evanescent product of multiple and competing discourses[;] 'identity' is invoked to highlight the unstable, multiple, fluctuating, and fragmented nature of the contemporary 'self.' This usage is found especially in the literature influenced by Foucault, post-structuralism, and post-modernism. In somewhat different form, without the post-structuralist trappings, it is also found in certain strands of the literature on ethnicity – notably in 'situationalist' or 'contextualist' accounts of ethnicity. (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 8)

My field materials, as well as some written sources concerning “repatriation”, testify to the largely discursive character of the “self” that has been constructed and labelled as having Russo-Pontic identity. In the present research, I use the approach described by Hall, Brubaker and Cooper.

Their perspective is undoubtedly inspired by Foucault. He showed and justified the idea that discourses “are to be treated as practices which systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault 1989: 54). Hall (1997: 45) comments on this stance, suggesting, “What he does argue is that ‘nothing has any meaning outside of discourse’ ... The concept of discourse is not about whether things exist but about where meaning comes from.” So, in Foucault’s understanding of “discourse,” the idea of construction is already present in explaining how discourse acts. Ruth Wodak, a proponent of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) states, in analyzing what she terms “fragmented identities,” that CDA understands “discourse”, written or spoken, as “a form of social practices” (Wodak 2002: 149). Thus, a relationship between particular “discursive events” and situations, institutions, or social structures is dialectical. Discourses are perceived as “embedded” in situations, institutions, or structures: these contexts shape and affect discourses and, simultaneously, discourses influence “social and political reality” (2002: 149). She continues, “in other words, discourse constitutes social practice and is at the same time constituted by it” (2002: 149). She adds that “identities, social roles, interpersonal relations, situations, and knowledge itself are constituted by social actors through discourses” (2002: 149). Many CDA authors demonstrate their main methodological background as embedded in *dialectics*.² At the same time Foucault’s own point of view on dialectics was encapsulated by him in the next phrase: Cf.: “ ‘Dialectic’ is a way of evading the always open and hazardous reality of conflict by reducing it to Hegelian skeleton” (Foucault 1980: 115). In keeping with Foucault’s position

² See more about the role of dialectics in CDA, for example: Fairclough 2005; Fairclough 2003; Scollon 2002.

I consider discourse as a kind of reality and support the argument that discourses create identity, social roles, institutes, situations, as well as social actors and selves.

Russian Greeks in Greece

Moving to Part Two of the thesis, the focus is on the Russian Greeks who have opted to move to Greece. This part of the thesis draws mainly on ethnographic material and interviews of informants collected during fieldwork, and shows examples of processes that were ongoing during the time of my fieldwork. The new possibilities of Russian Greeks moving to Greece created new consequences also for the Greeks back in Russia, and it is an aim to compare the two situations: Greeks or Pontians in Russia and Russian Greeks in Greece. I will come back to such a comparison towards the end of the thesis; here I proceed by framing my discussion in two types of contexts.

1. The Greek state. A “repatriation” project was launched by the Greek government in terms of being “ethnic”. It provides special conditions of “coming back” to the motherland, and means repatriation only for Greeks from the former USSR. In arguing for the importance of the “ethnic” component in contemporary Greek policy, it is possible to adduce at least three reasons for it.

(i) Various minorities, such as “Slavo-Macedonians”, Turks, Pomaks, Vlachs, Jews, Albanians now live in Greece (Clogg 2002; Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatos 2008) but only Greeks have a right to “repatriation”. Thus, the Greek “repatriation” project equates the ethnic and the national, the ethnic and the state. Moreover, official nominalizations used in the Greek conception of citizenship are produced by the discourse on ethnicity: “Greeks” (*ellines*), “ethnic Greeks” (*homogenia* – people of the same origin), “non-Greek Greeks” (*ellines allogeneis*), “Greek non-Greeks” (*allodapoi homogeneis*), and “others” (*allogeneis/alloethneis*) (see Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatos 2008: 13; Voutira 2004: 539).

(ii) Greek consulates in post-Soviet countries are given the task of evaluation/determination of “ethnicity” (namely, Greekness); that is, they operate as mechanisms producing “Greekness” from members of former Soviet populations who are able in one way or another to prove their relationship to Greeks.

(iii) The policy of settlement of repatriates from the former USSR is directed to the creation of a Greek “ethnic” majority in northern regions of Greece, where the presence of other “ethnicities” is viewed as a threat, as expressed in contemporary nationalistic discourses.

Thus, the question of repatriation is posed “ethnically”. The foundations for this “ethnic” approach lie in the Greek Constitution (Art. 4) and the Code of Greek Nationality, as outlined by Eftihia Voutira:

The main criterion for inclusion in the category of future Greek ‘repatriates’ remains ethnic affiliation. Specifically, in the case of Greek nationality law, which like that of Germany and Israel is based on *jus sanguinis*, the possibility of ‘repatriation’ is predicated on proof of descent, something that allows for a wide margin of ‘error’ or ‘fraud’ in view of the limited data in possession of the Greek consular offices throughout the FSU (Voutira 2011: 31).

We should add that there is a second reason linking the point about ethnicity to concrete historical developments and sufferings, which is “to pay tribute” to victims of political repression in Turkey in the 1920s and in the USSR of the 1930–50s. For example, it seems that with the repatriation program descendants of these victims are given Greek citizenship and economic and social privileges.

2. People’s opinions. These are found in the discourses on identity (Greekness and others) that appear in conversation with my informants and in their interviews. Here, it is helpful to note the following three points:

(i) The term “ethnicity” (“etnichnost” in Russian) is seldom used; another Russian term, “natsional’nost’”, is usually applied instead. This latter term is not a calque of the western notion of “nationality” but rather corresponds to “ethnicity” (Shanin 1989; Gellner 1975). In other words, my informants sometimes use the abstract term “ethnicity” in its Russian equivalent, “natsional’nost’”. They often use terms that can be characterized as “ethnic” because they assign a specific “ethnic” dimension to their reasoning, especially concerning “Greekness”, but also concerning Turks, Albanians, Bulgarians, Vlachs, Macedonians, Russians, and Armenians, as well as Pontian, Cyprian, Ionian, Egyptian, Crimean, Mariupol, Tsalkean, Russian, American, Georgian, Minor Asian Greeks, and even

“Partisan Greeks” (*partizanske greki*) and “Greek Greeks” (all these examples are taken from my field materials).

(ii) When my informants talk about Greeks they usually compare various sorts of Greekness with one another, highlighting “purity” or “naturnality”. Sometimes they speak about higher or lower “cultures” when they mean “ethnicity”, in their comparisons of different groups of Greeks; at other times they discuss educational background—also giving this an ethnic dimension—but never make class distinctions in the context of ethnicity.

(iii) Various terms are used for the designation of differences among Greeks. Primarily these terms include all regional names that refer to the area from which individuals or groups originate. In speaking about history and common origin, my informants might use the term “Ancient Greeks”, for instance. In speaking about a political situation, they might use terms such as “Greek Communists”, “Partisan Greeks”, and others. However, “pure ethnic” clichés may be used with political aims, too, in order to stress somebody’s foreignness; for example, “Pontian Greeks”, “Greek migrants”, “Russian Pontians”.

These two factors, or two sources of discourse—the Greek state and people’s opinions—refer to different manifestations of the same discourse on “Greekness”, and as stated above, my interest in the present work lies in “ethnic” interpretations of such markers of identity. The bipolar character of the production of Greekness (from above and from below) is noted regularly by contemporary writers on Greek society and migration (see, for instance, Kaurinkoski 2008: 75; Demetriou 2004). Therefore, in my analyses of particular cases I seek to retain a focus on this twofold character of the discourse on Greekness.

According to J. K. Campbell’s argument (1983) concerning the structure of, in particular, a resident’s membership in a Greek village, there is no middle ground in such concepts as “us/them”, or “one’s own people/strangers”:

[T]he world is divided between own people (*dikoi mas*) and strangers (*xenoi*), friends and enemies. Unlike their English glosses, these terms are antonyms and leave no room for a middle category. They express inclusion in, or exclusion from, a group or category to which loyalty is unquestioned. Their use leads inevitably to the disparagement of those who do not belong (Campbell 1983: 189).

Discussion of “Greekness” is a popular topic among my informants, both among themselves and in conversations with the researcher. Any question they touch upon in their interviews and conversations they connect with the topic of “Greekness” in one way or another, with “difference” understood in terms of “cultural” or “ethnic” specificities. My impression is that it is difficult to determine the foundation for these endless discussions on which they ground the right “to become a Greek,” as Eftihia Voutira’s informant expressed it (2004: 540). It is a feature that seems typical not only of migrants from the former USSR, but also of those who were born and grew up in Greece. James D. Faubion notes:

Athenians of all cadres are in fact quite avid historians and quite avid anthropologists of personality and personhood, whatever their formal education may be. They are of course constantly exposed to foreigners, whether sojourners or tourists. They are, almost as constantly, exposed to the rhetoric of ethnic identity and difference, and even the least-schooled of them can be adept enough with that rhetoric to deploy it not only for analytical but for critical purposes as well. (Faubion 1995: 163–164)

In her article, Voutira outlines some of the patterns of dispute around the concept of “Greekness” relevant for the immigrants coming from the former Soviet Union:

'You are not real Greeks, because Stalin didn't exile you,' said the repatriates from Kazakhstan. 'How can you be Greeks, with faces like those? Why are your eyes slanted? From the dust of Kazakhstan?' the people from Georgia would reply. A third group of repatriates – the Turkish-speaking Greeks of Tsalka – who also settled in Thrace, trumped this with another criterion, that of given names: 'We're more Greek, because our first names are Greek, see our names: Epameinontas, Pericles, Odysseus, Sophocles' (Voutira 2004: 541).

Voutira goes on to observe:

It is characteristic that such dialogs on the intra-group level have frequently been this repetitive since 1989, regardless of cultural context. In other words, they are similar, whether they occur in the kolkhoz of Kazakhstan, in the markets of Tbilisi, or in the queues outside the Greek embassy in Moscow between 1991 and 1993, when I studied these groups prior to their repatriation. They also appeared in the EIAPOE [National Foundation for Reception and Resettlement of Repatriate Greeks] facilities in Thrace between 1994 and 1997. (Voutira 2004: 541n11)

“Greekness” thus appears to be a contested identity—a fact that necessarily opens discussions concerning “pure Greekness”—of first or subsequent classes of Greeks, and the ways such classifications or categories are based on a hierarchical model of “ethnicity” construction. Such processes of categorization also generate a specific form of capital—“ethno-capital”, as Comaroff and Comaroff (2009: 65) have called it—which can be recognized, evaluated, and confirmed in Greece as well as in post-Soviet countries. To answer such a question, why one can speak about “Greekness” as a special field capable of generating “ethno-capital”, I turn to Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu (1991: 220) characterizes “ethnicity” as a “scientific euphemism that has been substituted for the notion of ‘race’, which is none the less still present in actual practice”. But he did not reject “ethnicity” or “regionalism” as possible objects of analysis, although he saw them not in the form of particular “essences” but in the form of “emblems or stigmata,” or “mental representations” (Bourdieu 1991: 220); in other words, he regarded them as “acts of perception and appreciation, of cognition and recognition, in which agents invest their interests and their presuppositions, and of objectified representations, in things (emblems, flags, badges, etc.) or acts”; he concludes that they are “self-interested strategies of symbolic manipulation” (Bourdieu 1991: 220).

In Greece, the field of ethnicity is a field of everyday encounters and struggles, where rights to access this field (as well as many others) are argued, discussed, approved and disapproved. One important element of ethnic classifications in Greece is represented by what could be termed “regional identities”. For example, Greek political elites have long been connected with particular “Old Lands”, and the political capital of ministers from these regions has been stronger than that of ministers from other parts of Greece. As Sotiropoulos and Bourikos argue (2003: 174–176), the Peloponnese as a region has always been and remains over-represented in terms of Greek cabinet ministers; that is, this region has generated and continues to produce political capital stronger than that of other regions.

From another perspective, Michael Herzfeld notes that during the formation of the doctrine of Hellenism in the newly independent Greece, there was considerable rivalry between local variants of folklore for superiority in matters that were both “revolutionary” and as they concerned “Greekness”:

The folklores of various regions are set in competition with each other to determine which of them best approximates pure Hellenism. Local scholars seek evidence not only that their respective regions have preserved the ancient customs and values better than any other. Logically, in a revolution which is also a resurrection of the past, antiquarianism and revolutionary ardour go hand in hand; archaeological folklore is the intellectual expression of patriotism. (Herzfeld 1982: 23)

Despite the unifying processes of industrialization (Kakridis 2009) and globalization, and a politics of homogenization (Karakasidou 1997: 162–189), as well as a recent orientation in Greece towards the doctrine of multiculturalism, regional attachment and regional identity in Greece remain essential elements of the discourse on Greek identity. Indeed, Mackridge (2008) even views “cultural difference” in terms of “national identity”. Herzfeld, in comparing sources of nationalism and anthropology, argues:

[M]odern Greek nationalism, like many similar movements in Europe and elsewhere, resembles anthropology in the degree to which it is historically embedded in romantic ideology, as well as with its concern to distinguish clearly between identity and otherness. They also share a concomitant ability to suppress internal contradictions between unity and variety. (Herzfeld 1987: 16)

Thus, the divisiveness, or variability, of Greek identity has always been a characteristic feature of the national development of Greece. Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatos (2008) discuss this issue in their analysis of “ethnic approaches” to the issue of minorities in Greece, which they characterize in terms such as sporadic “ethnic cleansings,” the formation of migrant and refugee status as leading to “second class” people and exclusion of otherness. From a historic perspective, they note:

[B]y 1990, Greek society had largely incorporated its diverse ethnic groups and constructed an 'imagined community' with a shared belief in its common history and roots, albeit with a large dose of imagination ... For the first time in its history, Greece was stable, moderately prosperous, and without visible signs of ethnic divisions. To a remarkable extent, the diverse regional traditions of dance, music, costumes and folklore ... had been brought under the broad umbrella of Hellenism and unconsciously embraced across the land. (Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatos 2008: 14)

But, as the same authors observe, this "brief period of ethnic consonance" resulted in a new flow of migrants, which started in the late 1980s, when many people, whether they were homogeneous or not, migrated to Greece from Russia, Georgia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania; and so a new stage of xenophobia began in Greek society (Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatos 2008: 14–15). When so many variants of Greekness appeared simultaneously in the same discursive space it could do nothing but provoke new ethnic discussions Olga Demetriou observes (2004: 96) that "the discourse on ethnicity and its implications ... took shape in Greece mainly during the 1990s." During the migration outlined here, two categories of people met: "repatriates" educated in the spirit of Soviet propaganda and theory of ethnos, who at the same time participated actively in post-perestroika social and economic change, and "mainland" Greeks, who perceived ethnic and nationalistic discourses as they were produced by the state. When they met, these two categories of the contemporary population of Greece readily agreed on interpretations of "ethnicity", giving the impression they had already possessed a common discourse on "Greekness" before the migration of ex-Soviet citizens. I am not arguing that this indicates any special quality of a "Greek nature" or a "Greek tradition" or a special manifestation of "Greekness". This becomes clear when we observe that some of my informants (both from Greece and from the former USSR) also demonstrate cosmopolitan, "European" discourses, which rather indicates that Greek society in itself is not politically homogeneous and nor monolithic in its aspiration to support nationalistic discourses (see Tzanelli 2006). A more plausible conclusion would be that the question of ethnicity and the question of nationalism for many Greek citizens are not in fact different questions.

Chapters Three and Four present analyses of the problems repatriates face in Greece. I consider the experience of Georgios a Greek from Tsalka, Georgia, and argue that only a few forms of symbolic capital (for example, matrimonial strategies) are able to be "repatriated" with the migrant, while education and work experience prove more difficult. This difficulty is connected not only with

language barriers but also with closeness of social fields, in particular, the field of education in Greece. Herefrom, together with de-skillization and de-classization, a crisis of identity appears that is expressed as nostalgia for Russia. I also characterize two women's biographies in comparative perspective. Both women migrated from Russia to Greece and were quite successful in their appropriation of Greekness. My main argument here is that the appropriation of Greekness may take place (and be used) in contrasting ways with the causes of those contrasts rooted in pre-emigration experience. These two biographies demonstrate different variants of appropriation: first, where Greekness is the aim; second, where Greekness is purely a context for career building.

Conceptual Underpinnings of Part Two

For the analysis in these chapters I continue the focus on ethnic identity and identity discourses, but add a focus on identity introducing Bourdieu's concept of capital and Arnd Schneider's concept of "appropriation". Over the course of my research, I have found Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of "capitals", "fields" and "practices" to be significant, and to some extent I simply employ Bourdieu's terms. At other points in the present work I also interpret these ideas in line with the findings of my fieldwork. For example, migration can be understood as a play of capitals, as a mutual overflow and conversion, and as a formation of specific migratory capital. Others have also interpreted Bourdieu's work broadly in this regard. As outlined in the following excerpt, Rogers Brubaker (2004) evaluates Bourdieu's impact on social science as providing a form of "metatheory", consisting of separately elaborated but connected and mutually dependent theories:

Bourdieu develops a theory of symbolic violence, a theory of symbolic goods and symbolic capital, and a theory of the real efficacy of agents' representations—in particular their misrepresentations—of social reality. These theories (I'm using the term 'theory' rather loosely) come together in a general metatheoretical account of what Bourdieu calls the 'economy of practices'. (Brubaker 2004: 39)

In these two chapters specifically, but over the course of the entire thesis, I use the concept of capital in relation to the construction of the discourse on identity. More generally, I discuss sym-

bolic, social, and economic capitals, as well as, more concretely, educational, political, linguistic, and other field-related variants of capital.

Arnd Schneider's concept of "appropriation" is based on his analysis of the spaces that link the indigenous and European imaginaries in Buenos Aires. The category of appropriation (Schneider 2006, Sansi 2007) seems highly relevant to the phenomenon of "repatriation" and can be applied as a theoretical concept substantiating it. In Schneider's work, appropriation is studied through the example of art-practices in Argentina where the process of appropriation is based on a play on identity in the art field and is considered by the author in the context of such concepts as "globalization" and "hybridization." Ricoeur's interpretation of the pair of concepts "appropriation" and "distanciation" has served as a base for Schneider's research (Schneider 2006: 26) and the hermeneutic perspective allows him to view "globalization" and "cultural" processes from positions of individual actors in order to discuss intersections of collective and individual identity constructions (see, for example Schneider 2006: 33, 169-170).

Roger Sansi examines appropriation in the frameworks of the history of Candomblé, a semi-forbidden system of Afro-Brazilian sorcery, in its contemporary transformations. The author shows three stages of this transformation: objectification, appropriation and re-appropriation (see Sansi 2007, especially chapters 2, 3, 8 and 9). He understands appropriation in the following way:

I use 'objectification' to describe processes in which things, persons and places are recognized as bearers of specific and different forms of value and quality. This notion of objectification always has to be accompanied by its complementary term: appropriation, or the process by which strange things are recognized as familiar, as parts of the self. (Sansi 2007: 4)

As for re-appropriation, Sansi argues that by virtue of it, ordinary people "overcome and (involuntary) mock both the official and the critical discourses [...] They create their own story around objects [...] They are doing something more than 'resisting', because they are not aware of opposing an official interpretation; they are producing something else, something new, inscribed in a time and a space" (Sansi 2007: 178).

Appropriation in Sansi's book as well as in Schneider's volume is a post-colonial process; in the case of Brazil (Bahia) the object of interest is discourses and practices of descendants of the Afri-

can population of the country; in the case of Argentina (Buenos Aires) of indigenous Indian populations. Both authors emphasize persons, individual actors as subjects of appropriation. The concept fits well with Bourdieu's concept of capital and provides a micro-dynamic dimension to Bourdieu's more top-down analysis. Thus, the problem of identity may be determined through the possibility and ability to appropriation; as Schneider puts it, practices of appropriation "are intrinsically linked to the contested spaces of identity construction" (Schneider 2006: 22).

The last chapter, Chapter Five, sums up the historicizing and theorizing focuses of the thesis and concludes the argument and findings of the thesis. My main argument is that the identity of Greek migrants from ex-Soviet countries to Greece has not always been based on their common identity (as the Pontians, for example). This is a consequence of the more recent periods of migration. Although being labelled "Greeks" in post-Soviet countries, those labelled also maintained their local identity markers, such as Mariupol'skie Greki, Tsalkintsy, Rumei, Urum, Rum, or Romaikos. The post-perestroika mass migration to Greece introduced to these various populations the understanding that they all were "Pontians", or "Helleno-Pontians", or "Rouso-Pontians", depending on the dominating discourses provided by the Soviet and Greek states. Although both states sought to unify identities, such efforts failed in Russia as well as in Greece. Their Greekness in Russia (or Pontianess in Greece) has been always "under construction." The mosaic character of the discourses on Greekness in Russia and corresponding populations is a result of the failure of those state discourses. Rather than a unified state discourse, ethnic identity is rather connected with issues of citizenship, territory, community, origin, marriage, family, education, and so on. In other words, my argument is that the identity of Greek-migrants (including those who stay home, because many of them visited Greece more than twice and often possess Greek passports) may be constructed by state discourses, but that the populations of Greeks only adopt it if they deem it profitable. Now the situation is that for many it is more profitable to be Russian Greeks and to leave Greece for Russia.

My overall argument is thus that the Greek case is not typical from the point of view of classification of international migration, because it is difficult to determine in general whether it is economic or non-economic, individual or group, short-term or long-term, temporary, circular or permanent, voluntary or forced, etc.³ According to Voutira, it is even difficult in many cases to state whether Greek repatriates are migrants or refugees (Voutira 1991). This uncertainty has led to formation of various types of ex-Soviet Greek identities, sometimes based upon positive attitudes to repatriation, sometimes negative ones.

³ See the analysis of different approaches to migration in Sinha (2005).

As Benedict Anderson (1993) and Arjun Appadurai (2000) argue, the reference to ethnicity is generated by the development of nation-states and national/nationalistic ideologies. Anti-racism as declared by Europe often remains rhetorical while real world practices of states depend on nationalistic interests of particular elites (Van Leeuwen and Wodak, 1999; Wodak, Matouschek, 1993; Van Dijk, 1999). The legislation that regulates ex-Soviet Greek migration to Greece formulates an ethnic principle as a basic factor to allow such migration, opening for priorities and privileges being available for particular categories of migrants only (Triandafyllidou, Veikou, 2002; Voutira 2004).

Ethnic identity thus becomes a “scarcity”. In view of the absence of the column “nationality” in Russian passports, Greek consular four-member committees placed within territories of post-Soviet countries have the responsibility of checking applicants regarding their belonging to Greek nation. Thus, these committees are called on to ascertain the “real ethnicity” of the applicant (Voutira, 2006, p. 405, n. 19). Through their interviews and questionnaires they help form Greekness, not only as a criterion of ex-Soviet citizens’ ethnicity but also influencing what happens in Greece to the persons carrying these identities. As families and persons migrating from post-Soviet countries to Greece have quite different life experience than the population in Greece, the content of an identity as “Greek” as defined in the place of departure is not enough to become a full member of the Greek society enjoying equal rights. Therefore, rather than disappearing into a homogenous Greek society, migrants from post-Soviet countries create their own social milieus on the basis of the Russian language. They register “societies” and “associations” of different kinds representing their interests in the Greek public sphere that allow them to maintain links between Russian-speaking Greeks. Often the ex-Soviet Greeks who have received Greek citizenship (as well as those who have not) are in no hurry to resettle permanently in Greece, and many of them make a living through shuttle “business” (so-called circular migrants). They are in Greece during the summer and in Russia in the winter. This “nomadic” arrangement suits many people because it allows them to earn money in Greece and later spend or invest in business or real estate in Russia. Many families cannot make a definitive decision: to move to Greece or to stay home. And although researchers argue that this migration is leading to a fragmentation of ex-Soviet Greek families (Voutira, 2006, p. 386-387), the fragmentation Voutira saw is not absolute as different family members can go to Greece and later come back to Russia (Popov, 2003). Other families that obtain Greek citizenship aspire to leave Greece for Germany, America and other countries.⁴ Thus, Greek citizenship does not only open a possibility of “coming back to the

⁴ Field notes by A.Manuylov, Krasnodar, Russia, Dec.2007, informant: Greek woman, about 35 years old.

motherland” but also opens further possibilities for the migrants to seek their social, economic, and political priorities elsewhere.

Many repatriates arriving in Greece become politically active. They aspire to solve their problems using not only social networks or referring to the formal institutions of the authorities, but by seeking to change the political way. It is known, for example, that lobbying for the law acknowledging the 1914-1922 events in Asia Minor as “genocide” against the Greek population was organized by different institutions of Greeks-migrants (Voutira, 2006, p. 391). Also, the question of creation of a new political party is being discussed—a party that would represent the interests of repatriates in Greece as well as abroad—in the European Union. Ex-Soviet migrants are also active in journalism (there are some Greek newspapers published in Russian), in the field of culture (Pontian Theatre in Thessalonica, fiction and non-fiction literature⁵), and in many other fields.

The contemporary economic crisis in Greece forced many repatriates to repatriate again, back to Russia or other post-Soviet countries. This new shift in European migration is still difficult to evaluate, but I feel certain that it will lead to new identity crises and new work in discourses on Greekness.

Fieldwork and Methodologies

The area of my fieldwork includes two countries, Greece and Russia, because I wanted to know the situation in both populations of ex-Soviet Greeks, those who left Russia and those who decided to stay in Russia. This approach allowed me to look at the process of repatriation from two angles and have a more clear understanding of Greek migration and the changing identity of Greek populations. In Greece my field research was conducted at various locations: villages (two not far from Patra, and one to the south-east of Lamia), town (Alexandroupolis, Northern Greece), and the city of Athens. The choice of locations was determined by my own contacts and the possibility of access to ex-Soviet Greeks who live throughout Greece (although there are two big enclaves, in Athens and Thessaloniki). I spent about ten months among ex-Soviet migrants in Greece during the period of 2009 to 2011. My fieldwork in Russia covers the period of 2006 to 2011, lasted about one year in total, and was located in two south Russian regions, the Republic of Adyghea and Krasnodar Territory. I conducted

⁵ See the analysis of some of them in: Kaurinkoski 2010.

my fieldwork mainly in villages among the Urum, migrants to Russia from Tsalka, Georgia, and Romeikos, a local Greek population since the 1860s. I also had many contacts among the Krasnodar Greek diaspora.

I used various methods of data collection. The basic method was participant observation; therefore, I preferred to be in the field with my family. This had more credibility among local people. Together with participant observation I did not hesitate to use non-structured and semi-structured interviews recorded on dictaphone. Usually I used this technique in my conversations in cities during short-term meetings with people with whom I could not communicate daily. For example, I used an audio record of conversations with Anna in my preparation of the fourth chapter. Georgios (third chapter) was interviewed with the help of a notepad because he did not want to be recorded by dictaphone. I did not make any audio records with Irina (fourth chapter) because I lived in her household and had the pleasure of everyday communication with her and her family members.

I communicated with my friends and other informants in Russian where they prefer to speak: in families and in groups when ex-Soviet people come together in taverns. Not only was the Russian language a common foundation for communication between me and my informants, more importantly, we shared the common experience of a Soviet past and the post-Soviet turbulent times and a common understanding of many contemporary issues. This circumstance allowed me to make useful contacts in Greece easily. In Russia, on the other hand, my acquaintance with Greece brought me closer to those people who had visited Greece. My Russian experience is presented in more detail in the second chapter of the thesis.

Part 1.

RUSSIAN GREEKS

Chapter 1

Russian Greekness: A mosaic of Populations and Discourses

Introduction: Demography of Ethnic Groups of Greeks in Russia and the USSR

Statistical data are barely relevant in order to estimate the process of migration of ex-Soviet Greek populations to Greece. Nevertheless, in some cases such data can help us to understand the process in general. For example, the situation in Tsalka (and in Georgia more widely) changed dramatically in terms of Greek populations after the collapse of the Soviet Union. According to *Demoscope Weekly's* analysis of Georgian censuses of 1926–2002,⁶ Greek population changes in Georgia were as follows:

Year	1926	1939	1959	1970	1979	1989	2002
Greek population	54 051	84 636	72 938	89 246	95 105	100 324	15 166

Table 1. Greek population changes in Georgia, 1926–2002

The numbers in table 1 are useful in helping us to understanding the process of migration because of their obvious dynamics. In any case, official numbers provide an approximate scale of “Greek presence” in Russia and in other post-Soviet countries.

no	Country	Year of census	Number of Greek population
1	Russia	2002	97 881
2	Ukraine	2001	77 516

⁶ See: www.demoscope.ru, last visit 01.06.12.

3	Georgia	2002	15 166
4	Kazakhstan	2009	8 846
5	Uzbekistan	1989	10 453
6	Armenia	2001	1 176
7	Azerbaijan	2010?	530

Table 2. Greek population of post-Soviet countries.⁷

These numbers should be regarded as approximate data only, because during the Soviet period the Greeks often entered into interethnic marriages, descendants of which could not have the designation “Greek nationality” in their passports; that is, they were registered, for example, as Russians, Georgians, Armenians, or Ukrainians. Nevertheless, such descendants who were officially marked as non-Greeks could confirm their Greek origin and leave for Greece as “repatriates”. There are many self-descriptions of those who consider themselves to be Greeks (or Pontians, or Helleno-Pontians) in my field materials, or who can be found in Internet searches touching upon ethnic origin and “purity”. For instance:

It has always been, by God, a little flattering for me that blood of the Hellenes and the Slavs is mixed in me. My grannies – one round-faced and snub-nosed, the second with the chiselled Greek profile – seemed to me for a long time the living pictures of those two bases. The second granny spoke two languages but did not aspire to make a show of her knowledge of Greek. As well, my other relatives, uncles and aunts, did not make a show of their Greek roots. All of them were signed up in their passports as Russian and Ukrainian, as the saying goes, to be on the safe side. (Kazakov 2010; my translation)

⁷ Sources: website All-Russian Population Census (<http://www.perepis2002.ru>, last visit 09.09.2008); website All-Ukrainian Population Census (http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/rus/results/nationality_population/nationality_popul1/select_51/?botton=cens_db&box=5.1W&k_t=14&p=25&rz=1_1&rz_b=2_1%20&n_page=2, last visit 15.02.2012); website Geostat: National Statistics Office of Georgia (http://www.geostat.ge/index.php?action=page&p_id=677&lang=eng, last visit 15.02.2012); website The Agency of Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan (http://www.stat.kz/p_perepis/Pages/default.aspx last visit 16.07.2012); Demoskop Weekly, (http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/sng_nac_89.php?reg=4, last visit 10.09.2012); National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia (<http://www.armstat.am/en/?nid=52>, last visit 10.09.2012); World Council of Hellenes Abroad (<http://www.greeks-su.com/ru/about/periphery/Countries/>, last visit 10.09.2012).

As Tereschuk argues (2004a: 170), “The Greeks have never lived in isolation ... mixed marriages have been rather ordinary phenomenon ... Often Greek families in their communication interwove closely with other nations by Godparents’ relationships” (my translation). Many authors have noted this tendency as being characteristic of both the nineteenth century and the period after the Second World War.⁸ Aradzhiony (2007) suggests that the autochthonous Greek population of Crimea was formed as a result of exogamy.⁹

In post-Soviet countries, the Greeks reside both as compact populations within particular villages or towns as well as more dispersed across larger areas. The 2002 Russian census registered Greek residence in 88 of 89 regions of Russia (although in 24 regions, there were no more than 100 persons of Greek origin).¹⁰ At the same time, some locations are connected historically to Greek populations, such as the rural district of Tsalka in Georgia, the Mariupol region in Ukraine, or the Krasnodar region of Russia. The contemporary Greek populations living in post-Soviet countries arrived mainly during migrations from the territory of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey to Russia; they also arrived as a result of mass exiles of Greek populations to Siberia, the Russian Far East, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. The origins of the majority of Ukrainian Greeks, the so-called Mariupol Greeks, are unclear; they are descendants of the Orthodox Christian population of Crimea. The rest of the Ukrainian Greek population is made up of Greeks from various regions of contemporary Greece, Turkey, Romania, and Bulgaria (Odessa’s Greeks, for instance).

In Soviet and post-Soviet anthropology there have been many attempts to classify Greek populations of the USSR; however, the majority have followed the dominant theory of ethnos (see below in this chapter). In the post-Soviet academic literature, mainly written by Greek authors, the dominant point of view is that ex-Soviet Greek populations constitute a comprehensive whole – “the

⁸ Cf., for instance, Dmitriev’s opinion representing the Soviet approach to endogamy and “ethnic purism”: “Through the centuries, in spite of stormy historical events, their specific ‘closeness’ allowed Greeks not to be assimilated and to save their self-consciousness” (Dmitriev 2000: 55; my translation). Thus, identity is reduced by this author to biological predetermination. Cf. the opinion of Ulunian concerning the origin of the Urums—below in the present chapter. It is possible that rules of endogamy varied from group to group. Ivanova explored this topic in her work; she reported that “interethnic marriages were impossible” (Ivanova 1976: 45) and argued that interethnic and even inter-village marriages “were hindered” among the Mariupol Greeks until the Bolshevik revolution, which was accompanied by some aspects of emancipation (Ivanova 2004a: 268–269).

⁹ See also biographical notes on “international marriages” in Chitlov, Chitlov, and Gurieli 1992.

¹⁰ According to materials found at <http://www.perepis2002.ru>, last visit 09.09.2008.

Greeks” (leading to such notations as “the Soviet Greeks” or “the ex-Soviet Greeks”). These populations, in turn, are viewed as an ethnic component of the Greek population of Greece, or as a part of world’s Greek diaspora (depending on the discourse under consideration).

As I have explained above, the history of Rus’/Russia may be seen as a history of contact between the “Russian world” and the “Greek world” during the Byzantium epoch. Soviet specialists have conducted research into archaeological sites, written texts, language borrowings, and even wedding rituals in order to argue various Byzantine influences on Ancient Rus’ society. Soviet semiotics and philology expert, Iurii Lotman, has argued that the relationship between Byzantium and Rus’/Russia has to be understood as a dialog between producer (Byzantium) and acceptor of information (Ancient Rus’). This dialogic process, according to Lotman, has three stages: collecting texts in the memory of the acceptor; the adoption of rules generating texts by the acceptor; and “a critical moment” when the tradition of the donor is transformed cardinally on the base of acceptor’s own semiotic substrate and changes its character. In the eleventh century, Russo-Byzantine dialog reached a point where Russian writers aspired to separate “Christianity from the Greeks”; they attempted to represent their faith as having been given directly from the apostle Andrew, or as a result of military victory over the Greeks. However, this “rebellion of the periphery against the center” led to a new dialog as a result of historical circumstances (Lotman 1992). Lotman analyzed the major national discourses of that time¹¹ and was able to demonstrate that development of early Russian texts, ideology, and religion were rooted in Byzantine originals although they passed through the stage of rejection of these originals and the whole Byzantinism (Lotman 1992). The Greek/Byzantine legacy had to be rejected in order to be adopted.

The Constantinople Patriarchate aspired to make its representatives Russian Metropolitans and it often did so successfully. Tikhomirov, for instance, discusses the activity of two successive Russian Metropolitans, Photios and Isidor, during the first half of fifteenth century, who had arrived in Russia from Constantinople; they began as theologians and philosophers in Morea (in the Peloponnese). Tikhomirov argues that their (and that of their numerous escorts) activity in Russian lands “played a big political and cultural role in Russian history”: they introduced the humanist ideas of the early Enlightenment originating from the philosophical schools of the Peloponnese, to the field of contemporary Russian literature and fine art (Tikhomirov 1964: 166, 172).

¹¹ Although he did not use the term discourse; see Schönle and Shine 2006: 8.

After the fall of Byzantium, Russia retained many connections with the Greek Church and its centre in Constantinople/Istanbul. As Tsatsanidi notes, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, “church connections became more active, Greek theologians participated enthusiastically in the correction of Russian prayer books and church practice. Greek monks dwelling inside the borders of the Ottoman Empire, took upon themselves the role of agents of Russia, providing it with valuable data about the Moslems (*‘basurmanakh’*)” (Tsatsanidi 2004).

The Russian Empress Catherine II (1729–1796) was benevolent towards the Greek populations of Russia. Greek traders were successful as a result of their commercial networks through Russian cities and some foreign countries, and were not required to pay taxes, despite repeated protests by Russian traders’ guilds (Kardasis 2001: 14–15). The pro-Greek orientation of Catherine the Great was also apparent in one of her letters (dated 10.09.1782) addressed to Joseph II (1741–1790), the Holy Roman Emperor; the letter contained details of the *Greek Project*, which aimed to annex Balkan territories from the Ottoman Empire with the intention of reviving the old Greek monarchy. The main candidate for the Greek throne was the second grandson of the Russian Empress who was named Constantine, after Byzantium emperors; he had had a Greek wet-nurse, was taught the Greek language, and was trained as a future Greek monarch (Vinogradov 2003: 111).

Sometimes, intensive contact between Ottoman Greeks and Russia led to the formation of new Greek communities or quarters in Russian or Ukrainian cities. Thus, we have Greek Street in Moscow where Greek traders, priests, and others preferred to live; there were Greek brotherhoods in Kiev, Nezhin, Taganrog, and Elisavetpol (now Kirovograd). At the same time, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not witness mass migrations of Greeks to Russia; rather, there were sporadic visits to Russian cities by people of various social backgrounds who had predominantly commercial, religious, or political aims and interests. They have, therefore, been studied in the framework of biographical research of separate persons or of families of Greek origin, or in explorations of the history of the Orthodox Church. The town of Nezhin was probably the first Ukrainian/Russian settlement in which a compact Greek community was formed. Nezhin (Ukr. *Nizhin*) was situated on the road that connected Kiev to Chernigov, Kharkov, and Moscow. A Greek community first settled there in the 1660/70s; their Church brotherhood was registered in 1687 and was sanctioned by the Kievan Metropolitan in 1696 (Storozhenko 1890: 541).

Traders of Greek origin were so successful at this time because in 1657 the Hetman of Ukraine, Bohdan Khmelnitsky, granted two of them a special estate (a *universal*), providing them with the means by which to trade without having to pay taxes. These privileges were then extended

to all merchants of Greek origin. Khmelnitsky allowed them to seek legal redress at traders' courts; he also forbade anybody bringing legal complaints against Greeks to apply to any except these traders' courts. The Greeks received a right to litigation between them and their menials "with their own court" (Storozhenko 1890: 540). In 1658, Hetman Vygovskii added the right to customs-free trading to all Greek merchants to their privileges (Storozhenko 1890: 540–541). These favorable conditions promoted the development of Greek social life as well as the city of Nezhin itself; trade between cities and countries was controlled by the Greek brotherhood of Nezhin. The privileged status of the Nezhin Greek community was maintained by subsequent Hetmans of Ukraine, as well as by Russian tsars.¹²

The community lost its importance, however, towards the end of the nineteenth century in part due to state reforms that were enacted mid century, but also due to conflicts between established and newly arrived Greeks (Volonits' 2007: 5). In any case, Arsh argues that Nezhin's importance as a trading area had decreased as far back as the end of the eighteenth century, due to Russia's annexation of vast territories adjacent to the Black Sea. Merchants from Nezhin moved to New-Russia's port cities, such as Odessa, Nikolaev, and Kherson, that were now being established along the Black Sea coast (Arsh 2004: 36).

When Russian official D. N. Bantysh-Kamenskii visited his native Nezhin in 1806, he noted,

The merchants of Nezhin, who are mainly Greeks and Armenians, produce sales with Turkey of no small value; many of them, especially the Greeks, are rather prosperous. The first house in Nezhin is a house of a Greek merchant, Bonia. Two brothers, the Zosimas, rich Greeks, are living here too; I have been familiar in Moscow with their brother Zoi Pavlovitch since my early years. (Quoted after: Berezhkov 1895: 6; my translation)

Bantysh-Kamenskii also describes the contacts and activities of the Zosimas brothers, shedding some light on the position of Greek merchants in Russian society of the day:

¹² Since 1649 Nezhin as a part of Ukrainian lands had been under the rule of autonomous Hetmanate, or the Ukrainian Cossack Republic. According to the 1654 Treaty of Pereyaslav (*Pereiaslavskaiia Rada*), the Republic was under Russian sovereignty, but from 1858 it was under Polish sovereignty (after the Treaty of Hadyach). In 1663 Nezhin became a part of pro-Russian Left-Bank Hetmanate; then, in 1667, Russia obtained Left-Bank territories (east of the Dnieper River) under the Treaty of Andrusovo. In 1780, the Hetmanate was incorporated into Russia (for a history of Ukraine in this period, see Kubicek 2008: 34–63).

The Zosimas were born in the city of Ioannina, that is, in Epir province. They are descendants of a noble Greek family ... Two brothers, Anastasii and Nikolai, have their residency in Nezhin, and Zoi – in Moscow. In spite of a long distance separating them, they are tied by the same love to their fatherland, the same feelings of compassion as their compatriots [*edinozemtsam*]. About fifteen years ago they founded a professional school in the city of Ioannina, consisting of about 300 students, where Theology, Philosophy, and Mathematics serve as the main subjects of education. For the same professional school they deposited in perpetuity a significant amount of money at the Imperial Education House, and determined the interest on the amount that should be paid in salaries for all teachers, support for numerous poor students, buying them classic books, additions to the library, and other expenses, as well as for the support of a local hospital. Moreover, they send annually to Ioannina a rather significant amount for distribution among the poor, bail for those who were jailed, and other pious affairs. Their welfare is spread partly to some of our poor compatriots [*sootechestvennikov*]. Recently, they put into perpetual circulation in the Imperial Moscow Education House a handsome amount for churches and the hospital situated at Nezhin. Publishing by them, by their own maintenance, many Greek books such as philosophical, mathematical, and historical ones, issued in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Wien, Leipzig, Venice and Paris, and sending by them to their fatherland for free distribution does no little credit to them. (Quoted after: Bereztkov 1895: 6–7, my translation)

Thus, Bantysh-Kamenskii outlines the various activities of wealthy Greek merchants of Nezhin and their interests in Greece, as well as in Russia. However, not all Greek traders were so wealthy (nor so generous). In 1884 V. Iastrebov, a contributor to the historical and ethnographic journal *Kievan Antiquity* (*Kievskaiia starina*), examined the archives available concerning a Greek settlement in New Serbia (Ukraine). His article helps us to trace the formation of a local Greek community from 1750 to the 1770s. Iastrebov reports that the Greeks settled in Elisavetgrad soon after the construction of the Fortress of Saint Elisaveta. In the 1760s/70s, there were 50 persons of Greek origin in this settlement and about 100 persons by the end of the eighteenth century. The Greek community was made up of immigrants from Macedonia mainly, but also from Constantinople, the Aegean Islands, Zaporozskaia Sech, Austria-Hungary, Bessarabia, the city of Nezhin, and Venice. Almost all of them were engaged in trade and a few in crafts. They had their own houses and one or two shops per merchant. The Greeks mainly traded in groceries, but they also traded in wine and vodka, tobacco and grain. They conducted trade on the territory of New Serbia, and had commercial

connections with Malorossia, Zaporozhskaia Sech, Poland, and Russia, although they visited Turkey most frequently. They were granted passports for 4, 6, or 12 months. In 1760, they asked officials to allow them to build a church and to hold services in Greek. In 1761, they started to build the temple, inviting Greek specialists from Nezhin. In 1766, they began to hold services in the temple (the middle altar was consecrated in the name of Vladimirskaia, Mother of God), although the building was not yet complete. To start with, the hieromonch Papazovlu served in the church, although he left his position after a year because he was too elderly to continue. Of Venetian origin, Efim Temelei became the churchwarden; he served for many years in this post. After the Greek priest left the church, services were conducted mainly by Russian (or at least by non-Greek) priests. One of these priests struggled (successfully) against “Greek rules” in the church: “He did not like one thing in the Greek Church: Greek *ktitors*¹³ control all material affairs, and a priest does not have access to these material affairs but does serve as a contractor” (Iastrebov 1884: 667). The church had capital, although the source and the amount remain unknown. However, it was known that this capital was used for giving loans with interest to local traders: in 1766, for example, three traders received 300, 230, and 200 rubles from the church; for comparison, the annual salary of the priest was 40 rubles.

In 1764, Efim Temelei applied to municipal officials with a request to establish a traders’ society (a brotherhood; *bratchika*) and a traders’ court. In 1765, the brotherhood was established and two foremen (*starshiny*) were appointed, who formed an executive board of local self-government. The foremen were personally responsible for local records management and for the members of the brotherhood, both traders and craftsmen. As visible attributes of their power, they had “shotguns and shotgun shells with bullets” (Iastrebov 1884: 680). The foremen were the administrators of the Traders’ Society, which had some social functions:

1) Membership. Anybody who wanted to be a member of the Greek Traders’ Society had to submit an application indicating what kind of capital he possessed. If the administrators considered that the capital was significant, it sent two to four members to examine the applicant’s merchandise and to check their financial capital with a view to them being a future member of the Brotherhood. After that, the members sent a report to the administrators in which they indicated the type of merchandise and the amount of money the applicant had. The Traders’ Society based its decision on this information and sent their response to the commander of the fortress, who then included the new member in the Brotherhood if the decision went that way.

¹³ *Ktitor* is a title of the churchwarden of an Orthodox church or monastery.

2) Control of the population. The Traders' Society provided its members with travel documents with which they were able to leave Elisavetgrad. Those members of the Brotherhood who stayed acted as guarantors for those who travelled with commercial aims. These guarantors had to provide written reassurance to the brotherhood that the traveller would come back in due course.

3) Tax collection. The foremen collected taxes (*okladnye den'gi*) and exacted arrears from traders and craftsmen of the Brotherhood. They passed the money received to the magistrate of the fortress.

4) Court functions. The administration examined litigation among members.

In order to examine a couple of these cases of litigation and, thus, the everyday life of a small Greek community at this time, it is useful to look in some detail at an extract from Iastrebov (1884), who published details of some of the cases of the 1760s:

A Greek, Pavel Dmitriev, lived at the fortress. Once he was elected as a foreman ... but he was distinguished by having an extraordinarily hot and, as the saying goes, bad temper. Here is, for an example, a pattern of his conduct. He borrows some Bessarabian wine from trader Funduklei and starts selling it in the yard rented by the same Funduklei. When the time [to pay the debt] is up, he pays instead of the full amount of debt only part of it. Although the rest of the debt was only 8 rubles 50 kopeks, Pavel Dmitriev not only refused the payment, but also in Funduklei's own yard touched upon intimate deals of his benefactor in abrasive and indecent phrases and then even challenged him to a duel, showing the sabre under his cloak. The offended man complained to the commander of the Fortress Magistrate and requested satisfaction. (Funduklei was engaged as foreman; therefore the case did not go directly to the administration but to the Fortress Magistrate.)

And here is another complaint against the same Dmitriev handed to the administration by a certain Moldavian widow, Maria Grigor'eva. The essence of the case follows. Dmitriev, having heard from somebody that Grigor'eva was a sorceress (*znakharka*), called her to his house and asked 'whether she knows any incantations in order to use one against Greek foremen Efim Temelei and Konstantin Burgazlii and also trader Iurii Funduklei, so that they would become mindless and absolutely crack-brained.'. He explained this wish with the consideration to get the inheritance of the deceased trader, Ian Murait, the way to which two mentioned persons were obstacles. As a reward for her work, he suggested he would buy her an undershirt and caftan. But she replied that she

could not fulfill his requests and she did not know any sorcery. When she left his house, Grigor'eva on the same day appeared to Funduklei who was harmed before that by Pavel Dmitriev, and told him about the conversation. When Dmitriev found out about it, he began to persecute her: if they met anywhere, he abused her with various 'obscene and reproaching words,' and afterwards, he beat her 'with fists and boots to his full satisfaction [*do ugodnosti*],' according to the document, and he showed the épée from under his cloak, threatening that he would decapitate her. However, when he heard that the offended side had made a complaint against him, Dmitriev escaped. Four months later, he appeared at the fortress again, came to house of his opponent, the foreman Temelei, abused him with various 'nasty words', and 'uttering oaths searched for a means to kill him, Temelei, and asked for that reason for a knife from Greek Pavel Kushner.' Temelei called for help and ordered that Dmitriev should be detained. But he gripped Temelei's hair and 'pulled out a lot,' so they were barely separable. The brawler was chained, but he escaped again 'together with the chain.' Then Temelei had nothing to do but to apply for assistance and satisfaction to the fortress authorities. And he did so. When he found out that the criminal hid himself in Novomirgorod, he asked to return him to the place of his permanent residency, referring to that, among other things, Dmitriev was indebted to many people. The further circumstances of that case as well as its finale are unknown to us. (Iastrebov 1884: 681–683; my translation)

Thus, the Greeks in Elisavetgrad, as well as in other places, had an opportunity to settle together, to organize their own institutions regulated by customary law, and had significant privileges regarding tax and customs; as a result, some were able to accumulate significant capital and could even be philanthropists. These political and economic conditions attracted increasing numbers of Greeks to Russia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Greek migration to Russia was undertaken by all social groups of that time, from peasants to aristocrats. Many Greek political and religious figures had a significant influence on the development of political institutes in Russia. For instance, Pavel (Panayot) Kondoidi (1709–1760), a native of Corfu, had a doctoral degree in medicine from Leipzig. He led the Medical Chancery at Petersburg and “laid the strong foundation of medical education in Russia: he streamlined terms of studying, the circle of disciplines, and exam requirements, established an assistant professorship, and invited professors from abroad. The Petersburg Library of the Medical Chancery was founded by him ... He organized Obstetrical Schools in Petersburg and Moscow ... introduced compulsory dissection for determination of reasons for death; forbade corporal punishments in medical schools; developed principles of medical legislation;

and introduced a set of measures regarding epidemiological control over population” (Rodionov, Semenova, Pomarnatskii 2004: 69; my translation). He was not an exception: there were many famous scientists, diplomats, priests, and public figures of Greek origin who served Russia.

As has already been noted, during the reign of Catherine the Great (1762–1796) many Greek communities were formed primarily on the territory of present-day Ukraine. In 1778/79, a group of Crimean Greeks together with some Georgian and Armenian families left the territory of Crimean Khanate and settled in Mariupol and the surrounding area; this group of Greeks became known as *Mariupol'skie*, or the Mariupol Greeks. This migration to Mariupol was assisted by the Russian government, as Catherine the Great issued an edict to the Holy Synod and a charter to the religious leader of the group of migrants; their resettlement was paid for by the Russian treasury, and significant financial support was given to each person. Catherine also stated that all migrants' debts to the Crimean government would be paid by the Russian state (Gavriil 1844: 198–199). The future Mariupol Greeks were granted much beneficence (*milosti*) besides these concessions, such as the best lands around Mariupol in perpetuity and free of tax, the postponement of payment of taxes and any state services for ten years, material help to the poorest families, settlements claimed free of any billet except military in perpetuity, voluntary service in the Russian Army, court and police bodies separate from those of other populations of the region, and rights to free trade (Gavriil 1844: 199–200). Nevertheless, in the literature there are various opinions about whether the migration was voluntary or not. The same kind of discussion has arisen around the issue of land and other benefits (see Aradzhioni 1999: 47–55; Ivanova 2004b: 115–117).

The question of ethnicity was of no less importance for Soviet historians and ethnographers. Ivanova (2004b), for instance, summarized Soviet “ethnogenetic” research into the origin of Mariupol Greeks' as follows:

Many and sometimes rather contradictory hypotheses exist regarding the origin and settlement territory (*rasseleniia*) of the Crimean Greeks ... The problem comes down to a few key questions: first, what the origin of proper Crimean Greeks is; second, what the proportion is between the Greeks who speak one of the Greek languages (or a dialect of New Greek), named Crimean-Rumeinian or Tauro-Rumeinian, and those who use the Crimean-Tatar language; third, what the character of ethnocultural interaction between Greeks and Tatars was. (Ivanova 2004b: 109–110; my translation)

These problematics remain the main (ethnic, or even ethnogenetic) paradigm of the approach to the history of Greek groups in Russia generally (not only in relation to Crimean or Mariupol Greeks), as can be seen, for example, in Aradzhioni's work, which seems to be more independent (of Soviet ethos-theory) in its arguments, although it retains a similar framework in its terminology and logic. She argues that the Ottoman conquest of the Crimea (in 1475) consolidated all Orthodox Christians who were united in common *millet* and received religious autonomy, self-management, their own courts, and their own system of taxation. These Christian populations varied in terms of their ethnic origin, but "two centuries later ... [they] practically lost their memory about their ethnic ancestors and turned into ethnoses of the Crimean Greeks – the Rumei ... During the next centuries, a rather unique process has been happening on the territory of the peninsula. Specialists call it 'ethnogenetic mixation'.¹⁴ A new ethnoses is formed as its result by means of the merger of peoples not connected by kinship" (Aradzhioni 2007: 198–199). As an illustration of this "mixation", Aradzhioni cites records kept by the magistrates of the seventeenth century:

The Muslim Fat'ma from village of Bogatyr', daughter of Gavriil, asked Christians to remove the cross from her house remaining there from her father; and this cross was carried to the house of the Christian Vaniia, daughter of Muhammed and wife of the Christian Balaban. In another case, the Christian Inisha adopted a Tatar child and bequeathed all her property to him ... In the village of Ai-Georgi, the Christian Biigel'di, son of Biiberdi, was at law with his brother's wife, the Muslim Khangel'di, daughter of Trandafil; among the brothers Seit, Magomet, Top, and Bebi, the first two were Muslims and the second two Christians; Dzhantemir, son of Dmitrii, was a Christian, but his sister Saime was a Muslim; the Muslim Mustafa had a wife Desfina and a daughter Feodora who were Christians. (Aradzhioni 2007: 204; my translation)

Aradzhioni also argues that there were four different groups of Greeks in Crimea: Ancient Greeks (circa 6th century BC to 3rd century AD); Medieval Crimean Greeks (circa 3rd to 18th centuries AD); Greeks of the "Russian period" of Crimean history; and contemporary Greeks whose community is still under construction (Aradzhioni 2007: 192). The Mariupol Greeks are descendants of the Medieval Crimean Greeks whose community formed in two stages. The first stage involved descendants of Antique Greeks, Hellenized barbarian populations, the Alan, the Goths, the pre-Bulgars, the Polovtsi, the Turks of Asia Minor, and other Turkish-speaking groups. The Tatars, the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire, and the Slavs participated in the second stage (from around the 15th

¹⁴ This term was introduced by Yu.V. Bromley (1981); see below in this chapter.

to the 18th centuries). The common name used by them was *Rumei*, which was initially the name of the Christians but gradually became the term by which the entire ethnic group was known:

Intensive interethnic contacts and the narrowing of the sphere of usage of the Greek language in southwest Crimea as well as Crimean cities resulted in part of the Crimean Romeis losing their native language. Thus, the Urums are the Greeks who have undergone language assimilation. They are not 'baptized Tatars' as some researchers argue. (Aradzhioni 2007: 207; my translation)

Thus, Aradzhioni, on the one hand, argues that the formation of the Crimean Greek population involved many different ethnic groups that spoke many different languages; on the other, her arguments tend to present the category of ethnicity as one of purification rooted in biological settings.

In the Mariupol region many villages were inhabited by the Greeks from Crimea. Some spoke in a dialect of the Turkish (Tatar) language; others spoke Greek (see Ivanova 2004b, who calls the last language Crimean-Rumeian, or Tauro-Rumeian). The two groups settled in separate areas around Mariupol (Ivanova 1979: 74). In 1795 there were 17 582 persons in the region who had arrived from Crimea. By 1816 the population had increased to 22 470 persons, 3 333 of whom lived in Mariupol city (Ivanova 2004b: 132).

The resettlement of the Crimean Greeks to Mariupol coincided with the resettlement of the so-called Archipelago Greeks from the Aegean Islands to Crimea. This group later became known as the Balaklava Greeks. They were invited to Russia as allies in the Russo-Turkish war (1768–1774) and in the Archipelago Expedition (1769–1774), together with their families, relatives, and other volunteers (Safonov 1844: 210; Arsh 2004: 37). They were ordered to settle in Kerch and Enikale (now the city of Kerch, Ukraine) in Crimea, which were connected to Russia by the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774). Catherine the Great in her prescript of 1775 permitted not only Archipelago Greeks who had served in the Russian Army during the Russo-Turkish war to settle there, but also “agriculturalists not only from Greece, but from Bulgaria, Moldavia and Vlachia” (Safonov 1844: 214; my translation). They moved here in 1775, and in 1783 they moved again from Kerch to Balaklava (just after the full annexation of Crimea by Russia). There were many terms used as official names for this community, which changed during the 1770–1790 reforms: Greek Regiment, Taurida Regiment, Greek Battalion, Greek Host (*voisko*). The latter name was unofficial, although it was frequently used in official documents of the time; the term “*voisko*” was usually used of Cossack communities. Moreover, in 1797 Emperor Pavel I gave the order “to include the settled in Taurida Greek Regiment

into the Military Collegium under the name of the Greek Battalion, place it on the equal status with the Don Cossacks and subordinate it to the civil court” (cit. after: Safonov 1844: 224; my translation).

From 1812, there were fewer Greeks migrating to Russia. According to Arsh (2004), this was conditioned by new rules of settlement for foreign colonists, which were introduced in Russia in 1817. These rules restricted the benefits that had previously been provided by the Russian state: newcomers were still allowed land plots but subsidies were abrogated (2004: 41). As a result of Greek colonization of the territories from Danube to the Azov Sea (now the territories of Moldova and Ukraine), they had participated in building new cities and in the formation of their own communities alongside old ones (for example, in Kishinev, Reni, Akkerman, and Khotin).

In 1795, the Greek population of Odessa made up only around ten percent of the city’s total population (Arsh 2004: 43), yet the Greek community was the strongest group in political and economic terms on the Black Sea coast. The Greek merchant community of Odessa has always been very active, to the extent that it has often been called the Greek city. In 1800, twenty-four of the thirty-nine richest First and Second Guilds’ merchants of Odessa were of Greek origin, and the wealthiest merchant firms belonged to the Greeks. As Arsh has noted, “some Greeks who arrived in Odessa out-of-pocket became owners of significant capital” (2004: 44; my translation). Networks of relatives were often the foundation of successful trade activity among Greek firms. For example, the Rallis brothers had several firms throughout Europe that were connected with each other through commercial contracts: Ioannis had a company in Odessa, Pontios in London, Eustratios in Manchester, August in Marseille, and Foma in Constantinople. The orientation towards such networks contributed to “prompt enrichment of Greek merchants in Odessa” (Arsh 2004: 45; my translation).

Odessa’s businesses were also closely connected to ship owners operating along the archipelago. Before the Greek revolution of 1821, the majority of vessels here sailed under Russian flags. Ship owners sold their vessels on paper only to the Greek merchants of Odessa in order to remove them from the control of the Ottoman administration (Arsh 2004: 45). Thus, the Greek population of the territory that is now Crimea and southern and eastern regions of Ukraine has been formed from various sources and over a long period of time.

According to Akritas (1962: 422), “the history of the present-day Greek population of the Caucasus does not extend earlier than the eighteenth century”; indeed, the first Greek settlers of the Caucasus arrived in 1763 from Gümüşhane. Irakli II, the king of Kartli-Kakheti, invited them as

professional miners to work on ore deposits near Akhtala (now the territory of Armenia); around 800 families of Anatolian Greeks arrived there from the Ottoman Porte. The miners began founding new mines and settlements in Transcaucasia and the North Caucasus region in a migration that continued into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, over which time they arrived mainly from the Ottoman Porte and Iranian Azerbaijan. In the early nineteenth century, some agrarian Greek villages were established around the mines. In 1810 in Tiflis, the Committee on Migration of the Christians from Turkey to the Caucasus was established in order to organize and control the migration of Greeks and Armenians from Turkey to the territories adjacent to the Russian–Turkish borders. This committee operated through the Orthodox clergy of Asia Minor. First, agricultural settlers appeared in the Caucasus in 1813; the so-called Pasen Greeks arrived in Georgia and settled the region of Tsintsikaro (there were around 120 households). The next wave of migration started after the Russo-Turkish war of 1828/29; Greek families of agriculturalists and cattle-breeders arrived from Gümüşhane and other regions and settled the territory later known as Tsalka. Other parts of contemporary Georgia were also settled by migrants from Ottoman lands. In Adzharia and Abkhazia, for example, they founded some Greek settlements in 1854/55. Tobacco growers arrived in Russia from 1863 to 1880; they migrated to Abkhazia and Kuban Oblast (Akritis 1862: 422–424).

Many migration episodes from Turkish territories to the Russian Caucasus were triggered mainly by Russo-Turkish wars in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Russian troops conducting military operations within the territory of the Ottoman Empire often sought the help of local Christian populations or even formed military units from them. When a peace agreement was concluded, Russian troops, when leaving Turkish territories, carried many families of Orthodox Christians who were afraid to stay in the Ottoman Empire (Xanthopoulou-Kyriakou 1991).

In 1878, according to the conditions of Berlin Peace Treaty, Russia annexed the Kars region of the Ottoman Empire (the whole of Kars *sanjak* and part of the Chaldyr *sanjak*) (Andrievskii 1908: 3). This area was at first viewed as a borderland; in the near future it would be an arena for a new war against Turkey. One researcher visited this new Russian region and noted that the Greek population was the most recent settler group:

They came from neighboring provinces of Turkey or from the Black Sea coast after the last Russo-Turkish war ... It is difficult to say something definitive about the Greeks, because that people is newly arrived and has not yet proven itself. But in praise of them one could say that they are industrious. (Massal'skii 1885: 126; my translation)

In the early 1900s, a military official, Lieutenant Colonel Andrievskii, was sent to the Kars region to determine the loyalty of local populations to Russia's rule and to assess the potential military capabilities of the different ethnic groups. Along with the ethnic approach in use, his report presents an ideal sample showing what Foucault (2003) terms "biopolitics". The following extracts from the report will demonstrate my argument here:

The Greeks are mainly undersized and they are not distinguished with physical force; their character is very peaceful – robberies or plunders among them are really a rarity and even the exception. They give only one anxiety for the Administration—their endless complaints against their neighbors; they are not distinguished with hospitality, which almost all the East is famous for. They dress in the same manner as the Turks, but they prefer to wear a fez without a turban.

The Greek population [of Kars], pursuing exclusively their own interests and dreaming about their soonest possible return to Greece, has nothing in common with vital interests in the region; they are parasites: absolutely useless for us in the case of military actions. (Andrievskii 1908: 133–134, my translation)

The rhetoric of Lieutenant Colonel Andrievskii is indicative of the approach taken to borderland citizens by the Russian state at that time. Jean Comaroff notes:

It is hardly surprising ... that, as biological come to represent sociocultural realities, they signify not merely relations and categories but also contradictions in everyday experience; it is very common, for example, for sociocultural conflicts to be apprehended in terms of archetypical metaphor of contradiction, physical disease ... Thus the signs of physical discord are simultaneously the signifiers of an aberrant world. (Comaroff 1985: 8–9)

Andrievskii's presentation of the biological dimension of an ethnic group's characterization is interwoven with (clichéd) psychological features, which results in an interaction between the state and a population that is expressed in a negative image—"parasitism". At the same time, his analysis above demonstrates an approach to (new) subjects of Russia as "foreigners" who have their own interests (that differ from the interests of the Russian government) and their own aspirations of state attachment ("dreaming about Greece"). Thus, the borderland, according to the biopolitical doctrine that dominated at this time, had to house a population with unquestioned loyalties to the state. The best solution to this issue were the Cossacks – countrywide guardians of the Asiatic borders, whose

loyalty to the Russian Empire had been absolute since at least the late 1860s.¹⁵ We can see here a sort of combination of two different ideas: governmentality as an “art of governing” (according to Foucault), generating populations (or the idea of a population),¹⁶ and ethnic/national attachment expressed by such terms as “the Greeks,” “the Turks,” “the Armenians”, as employed by the military official cited above (Andrievskii 1908). Thus, the homogenizing concept of *a population* is juxtaposed with the differentiating concept of *populations*. In this way, the ethnic dimension of governmentality (in Russia and the USSR as well as in Greece) became the most important discourse that accompanied groups of Greeks along their modern and post-modern history. At the same time, this discourse acted as a device for the self-construction of Greek identities. Below in this chapter, I documented this idea with evidence. Here, however, I would like to demonstrate the enrootedness of Greek identities in the specific biopolitics that were intrinsic to the nineteenth-century Russian state.

Foucault noted that:

the true object of the police becomes, at the end of the eighteenth century, the population; or, in other words, the state has essentially to take care of men as a population. It wields its power over living beings as living beings, and its politics, therefore, has to be a biopolitics. Since the population is nothing more than what the state takes care of for its own sake, of course, the state is entitled to slaughter it, if necessary. So the reverse of biopolitics is thanatopolitics. (Foucault 2002: 416)

Foucault’s juxtaposition of bios and thanatos has been developed by many theorists (see, for example, Lemke 2011: 59, 95). Antonio Negri (2008) explains the “natural” opposition of this pair of concepts, arguing that “Thanatopolitics is neither an internal alternative nor an ambiguity of biopolitics but its exact opposite: an authoritarianism transcendent, a *dispositif* of corruption” (Negri 2008: 16). Using this mutual opposition outlined by Negri, it can also be argued that migrations of Greeks from the Ottoman Empire to Russia can be seen in terms of the opposition of thanatopolitics, associated both with Ottoman governmental practices and the biopolitics associated with a Russian

¹⁵ For information on the historical development of Cossack loyalty to Russia, see Boeck 2009; see also an examination of the Cossack protest movements of the mid 1860s in Manuylov 2007: 25–28.

¹⁶ Cf. “With the emergence of political economy, with the introduction of the restrictive principle in governmental practice itself, an important substitution, or doubling rather, is carried out, since the subjects of right on which political sovereignty is exercised appear as a population that a government must manage” (Foucault 2008: 22, n*).

art of governing.¹⁷ As Diomidis-Petsalis (1972: 224) notes of the Pontine Greeks, “in Russia they faced a slower, more subtle perhaps, but certain extinction by assimilation,^[18] whilst their brothers across the Black Sea suffered the danger of outright extermination by the avowedly hostile Turks.” However, Russia was replaced by the Soviet Union, and Russian biopolitics became the Soviet thanatopolitics of the 1930s to 1950s.

The Greek population of Georgia, as I observed above, on the whole formed initially in two rural districts—Tsalka and Tetrtskaroi. The people were migrants from Erzurum and other *vilayets* of the Ottoman Empire (Zeinalova 2010), who for the most part spoke in dialects of the Turkish language and were known as Urums (Turk. *urumlar*) or according to their local Turkish names, later as the Tsalkeans or the Tsalka Greeks.

During the process of resettlement, the Greeks from Turkey built 28 new villages on territories where Georgian villages had been situated until around the end of the eighteenth century; before Greek migration to this area started, the villages had been destroyed by Ottoman troops. One of most interesting articles on the lives of the Urums in Georgia was written by Khakhanov, who reported:

Settlements of the Tsalka Greeks, fenced around with walls of *kiziak*^[19] that serves as a single fuel for winter period, create a pitiful and downcast impression. The abode of a Greek who huddles in a dirty and wet dugout with not enough light and ventilation is even more grievous. Next to Greek settlements, Armenian villages look more prosperous and comfortable. The Tsalka Greeks live in 28 villages; a few of them have retained their Georgian names (for example, Rekha), others bear, rarely, Greek (Imera), but more often Turkish names. Many of them have old temples with Georgian descriptions (Kiarek, Ediklisa, Beshtashen, and others); the same situation can be observed in Tatar and Armenian villages. Only in four out of twenty-eight villages do they speak the native language, the rest use the Tatar language, which is used only by the Armenians and the Georgians living in Tsalka. Male and female Greeks dress according to Tatar fashion, sing Tatar songs, and

¹⁷ For more information about the terminology used here, see Foucault 1998.

¹⁸ As my materials in the following chapters demonstrate, the rhetoric of assimilation (and its oppositional pair – the rhetoric of surviving) is one of (minor) discourses acting in the field of identity construction.

¹⁹ A Turkish term for bricks constructed from dry dung—used as fuel or for construction in arid wood-less regions.

their scant food is of Tatar cuisine (*pilav, chikhirtma*). (Khakhanov 1907: 50–51, my translation)

In the early 1920s there was a project to move all the Tsalkeans to northern Greece (see below in this chapter), but it was not realized due to the arrival of the Soviet power in Georgia.²⁰

Owing to the collapse of the USSR and the gradual development of a strong nationalistic policy in independent Georgia (see Ivanova 1990), the majority of the Greek population left the Tsalka district (see Table 3.01). Some of them had neither the time nor the opportunity to sell their houses due to the stagnation of the real estate market in Georgia during this period. Over time, the Greek's deserted houses were taken over by the Adjarian and the Svans, who moved from other parts of Georgia to Tsalka (see Wheatley 2006: 6). When the Urums left Tsalka they mostly moved to various Russian cities and to Greece. The only remaining compact Tsalkean settlement in Russia was to be found in the village of Predgornyi, not far from the city of Maikop in the Republic of Adyghea, which was founded as a Cossack khutor in the 1870s. The first Urums arrived in the village after the Second World War; by the 1990s, migration had significantly increased the Urum population there.

The Greek populations of the Krasnodar and Stavropol regions came from various Turkish territories, arriving mainly in the late 1860s. The annexation of the Caucasus territories by Russia was completed in 1864 with the end of the Caucasian War, at which point Russia changed the type of its colonization there from exclusively Cossack (which had been part military) to civic colonization. In connection with this change of policy, many non-Cossack populations had an opportunity to move to the region as migrants. The Russian government made a point of inviting foreign Christian ethnic groups to settle in the Northern Caucasus, and consequently Greek, Armenian, Polish, Czech, Moldavian, Estonian, Bulgarian and other settlements appeared in the area. Voutira translates the writing of P. Triantaphyllides,²¹ who described this process in 1866:

Many co-ethnics (*homogeneis*) were forced to emigrate to the emptied regions of the Caucasus as a result of the Circassian migrations (to the Pontos). And despite the pains, deaths and sufferings such flight involved, these resettlements continued with great intensity particularly in the Chaldean region; (these settlers) have greatly maintained their ethnicity (*ethnismos*), their language (Turkish and Pontic dialects)

²⁰ For details about the sovietisation of Georgia, see Suny (1994).

²¹ Triantaphyllides, P. *Ta Pontika: Logoi Ekfonithentes en Trapezoundi*, Athens: Vilaras, 1866, p. 20, 108, 121.

and their national memories ... There are numerous Greek settlements along the whole Black Sea coast which is under Russian rule. (Voutira 2011: 75)

Government officials tried to control the process of migration and the formation of settlements, but some mountainous territories of the region were beyond the control of the state. One Cossack official of the time, Prokopii Petrovitch Korolenko, who was also the author of a number of interesting historical and ethnographic works, described the challenges that faced the majority of Greeks who migrated from the Ottoman territories to Northern Caucasus and decided to settle in the challenging mountain regions (the *Nagornaia Polosa*, lit. Upland Belt):

In 1882, the Batumian governor came to the Caucasian authorities with a request: whether 137 families consisting of 600 souls of the Turkish Greeks could be settled inside the borders of the Kuban' Region. When consent followed, those Greeks arrived in Caucasus and settled in Nagornaia Polosa in the upper reaches of the river Khatypse.

Those foreigners through their representative, Koz'ma Parma Oglu, applied for their admission to Russian citizenship and for permission to stay living in their place of choice. The former application was kept for further consideration; the latter was promised. However, after a short time, due to the unfavorable climatic conditions, the severity of nature, and the absence of communication lines, the Greeks themselves were not able to survive here and the majority of them moved from Khatypse to the upper reaches of the river Tsitse; only six families stayed on in their place. The emigrants had not lived for a long time in the new place. Those lands appeared to be aimed at the allotment of the *stanitsa*^[22] Lineinaia, and local residents began to oppress the Greeks. Then, 14 families stayed in the place as leaseholders of the Cossack land. Some of the rest moved to government land along the river Kurinka towards the town of Khadyzhenskii; others moved to the *iurt* [settlement land plot] of *stanitsa* Kutaisskaia; some spread out over the Kurinka [basin] in its different places; the others moved to the Greek villages of Gunaiskoe and Merchanskoe; and the rest, who did not die of various diseases and hardship during their stay in the mountains, departed back over the Caucasian ridge for the Turkish realm.

²² *Stanitsa* is the specific name for a Cossack settlement (village) in this and other regions in the Russian Empire that are populated by the Cossacks.

Fifty families, the rest of all this party in Nagornaia Polosa, were granted Russian citizenship in May 1888; but they were not included in the list of residents of Polosa.

The habitation of the foreigners was out of any control from the side of Russian power. There were such places in mountain thickets that were barely accessible and then only in the summer period; moreover, some émigrés settled in Nagornaia Polosa arbitrarily and did not wish for Russian supervision at all.

Those immigrants did not have a social organization [*ustroistva*]; they provided themselves with neither foreman, nor judge, and they did not build prisons. However, there was no information concerning criminal cases from them, at least, it did not reach Russian authorities. It is unknown how they investigated small conflicts. Only one thing can be said that those Asians [*aziattsy*] without communication with the Russians have lived as natural savages [*dikariami*]; all of them were gloomy. There were no family or community amusements or religious rituals noticed; the prayer house was only at the settlement of Gunaika, and probably they also had a priest.

The economic situation of the Turkish émigrés left much to be desired. They not only occupied mostly those places where Russian settlers had lived before and abandoned them due to murderous and difficult climatic and topographic conditions, there were also newcomers who settled in worse places, where the newcomers had been absolutely unfamiliar [to authorities] for a long time. (Korolenko 1905: 37–38; my translation)

As Tsatsanidi (2004) has noted, from the 1860s Russian officials began to pay considerable attention to the colonization of Northern Caucasus by foreign citizens with the aim of taking full control over it. The extract above illuminates one of the results of this changed approach to (particularly) Greek colonization of the territory by subjects of a foreign (Ottoman) state. However, this increased interest in the process did not mean that the state began to take care of the settlers who had been invited to the region. Korolenko demonstrates from archival documents that in certain cases the Russian bureaucracy kept some Greek communities in uncertainty for many years, avoiding solving their problems and encouraging harassment from landowners. Moreover, in 1898, all foreigners who had not been granted the official status of residents were sent away (abroad) by local authorities, in line with a supreme order (Korolenko 1905: 40).

Many late nineteenth-century writers who examined the Northern Caucasus noted the significance of tobacco cultivation in the area's economic development. Indeed, Korolenko notes that tobacco and its methods of cultivation brought the "Turkish Greeks" to the area. Some of them became wealthy and respected planters, renting land belonging to Cossack *stanitsas*. A set of nineteenth-century houses built by Greek planters and industrialists still survive in the city of Krasnodar. They were built as city residencies, but also for public needs (such as the Greek school). The 1917 revolution heightened tensions between the rich and the poor everywhere, however. Lenin's decrees *On Land* (1917) and *On Land Socialization* (1918) annulled existing land and property rights; the further development of "revolutionary ideas" transformed the wealthy entrepreneurs of the tsarist era into "enemies of the people." This was also the case for those who had been economically successful during the period of the NEP,²³ which had created successful farms and businesses. The initial stage of Stalin's repressions in the 1930s embodied an attempt to liquidate the remnants of the bourgeoisie and so-called "*kulaks*" as "classes". Many Greeks suffered during the ensuing early wave of repressions. Later repressions acquired an ethnic character and many ethnic groups, including the Greeks (see below), were deported to Asian regions of the USSR.

Greeks and the Soviet State

During the period of the 1917 October Revolution and subsequent Civil War (1917–1921) Greek families and communities had a particularly turbulent time for a number of reasons, which are explained in more detail as follows: i) Turkish-Soviet agreements; ii) international intervention against the Bolsheviks; iii) the war between Russian White and Red armies, complicated by various local, nationalist, and anarchist movements that were militarily organized; iv) Soviet social and economic reforms.

i) After the revolution, as a result of the Soviet–Turkish rapprochement based on Bolshevik renunciation of territorial claims against Turkey, the two governments divided the contested territories in 1921: Turkey received Kars and Ardahan; Adzharia remained part of the Soviet state (Tamkin 2009: 8–9, 22–23). After this, "a massive and dramatic exodus of Greek Karsians began.

²³ NEP – New Economic Policy in the USSR of the 1920s (see Fitzpatrick, Rabinowitch, and Stites 1991, for example).

Fleeing their homes with as much money and other possessions as they could carry, they took to the mountain tracks towards Tiflis, only to be robbed and decimated by local bandits" (Diomidis-Petsalis 1972: 226). Some 50,000 reached Tiflis, from where they were deported to Ekaterinodar (now Krasnodar), around 30,000 were mobilized as Russian citizens under General Denikin and the White Army, around 10,000 went to various Greek communities in Georgia, and, the rest, according to Diomidis-Petsalis, "perished from cold, hunger, exhaustion and epidemics" (Diomidis-Petsalis 1972: 226). Soon, Russian Black Sea ports were crowded with refugees from Turkey who were escaping repressions against Christians in that country. Those repressions were finished by the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 and subsequent "population exchange" (Freely 2010; Kontogiorgi 2006; Hirschon 1989). A considerable number of refugees from Turkey had to remain in the USSR as "foreign subjects," that is, those who suffered badly from Stalinist repressions in the 1930s).

ii) International intervention against the Bolshevik state involved many countries including Greece. One of the reasons for the participation of Greek troops in the post-revolutionary war was to protect Greek populations in Ukraine (see Diomidis-Petsalis 1972; Zapantis 1982). Some historians argue that Stalinist repressions of the 1930s to 1950s can be explained in terms of being a form of revenge (see, for instance, Dzhukha 2009).

iii) The Civil War influenced the Greek populations in many ways. Some people preferred to move to Greece in order to escape with their families from the war. Others participated in war operations either voluntarily or involuntarily in the case of those migrants from Kars who were mobilized by White Army officers. European negotiations on the independent Pontic state, together with the separatist movement in the territory of the ex-Russian Empire, increased Greek nationalist aspirations. Zapantis describes some of the political events of this kind:

In the summer of 1917, following the separatist movements which ensued the change of regime in Russia, the Greek communities of southern Russia held the First Panhellenic Congress in Taganrog and discussed plans for local autonomy. At the same time, the Greeks in Transcaucasia held a Congress, in Tiflis, for the purpose of attaining the independence of the Pontus region. A second Panhellenic Congress was held in October 1919 in Ekaterinodar. And in December 1919, the Greeks in Transcaucasia, most of whom were from the Pontus area, formed a National Assembly which began negotiations with the republic of Georgia for the independence of the Pontus. (Zapantis 1982: 13)

Voutira reports that the congresses in Tiflis and Taganrog requested the autonomy of the Greek Orthodox Church, Hellenization of the school system, establishment of a Greek press and library, formation of a Greek bank, a Greek Trust, and a Russian-language newspaper, as well as the establishment of “a Greek Democratic Party, giving women the vote, redistributing land and dissolving the class system in Russia” (Voutira 2011: 91–92). However, as Zapantis notes (1982: 13), “by 1920, with the extension of Soviet power in southern Russia, all these efforts ceased.”

iv) As outlined above, internal Soviet reforms were aimed at the nationalization of private property. In the circumstances of the war, private owners suffered from repeated confiscations when their settlement or city changed hands. In Sevastopol', for instance, many Greek owners, both wealthy city dwellers and poor peasants, lost their property in 1917–1921. Tereschuk (2004b) explains that this was generally a period of “a significant impoverishment of the population” (Tereschuk 2004b: 337, my translation). For example, he notes that, according to archival documents, when German forces left Crimea in June 1919, a local resident from Sevastopol, Piotr Leonidovitch Kidonis, was among those who suffered significant losses: “The damage of premises that belonged to him—the Grand Hotel—by German soldiers who were quartered therein was estimated at 137,800 rubles; furniture was destroyed and damaged by them—at a cost of around 184,430 rubles” (Tereschuk 2004b: 340, my translation). His complaint to the local administration from which he requested compensation for losses was satisfied, but only in part. At the same time, the Church was separated from the state:²⁴ all church property was subject to a process of stocktaking and the Bolsheviks established control over those who attended church. This Bolshevik reform also had a significant negative influence on the mood of the Greek populations. Indeed, Tereschuk (2004b: 338) claims that the Soviet decree on the separation of the church from the state was one of the reasons for mass Greek migrations from Soviet territories.

These events led to the emigration of a number of Russian populations to different locations; Greek migration was one (albeit significant) part of that out-migration process. Some of those who had arrived from Turkey were evacuated by ferries organized especially for them by the Greek government. In the 1920s, many local Greeks left the territories of the Caucasus and Crimea for Greece, and the young Soviet state did not put obstacles in their way. Moreover, the state assisted Greek migration through, for instance, the State Steamship Company of Black and Azov Seas (SSCBAS), which was responsible for transportation of people by sea. In the 1920s, the SSCBAS and

²⁴ See the Decree of the Soviet of People's Commissars on the Separation of the Church from the State, and of the School from the Church (January 23, 1918) (Yaroslavsky 1934).

Rusflot (the Russian fleet) sold one-way tickets for those wishing to migrate, and also began a discounted ticketing system for departing Greeks. Tereschuk has published an interesting document from the Archive of Sevastopol in which an official of the SSCBAS administration reported on these events:

The emigration of Greek refugees outwards from Crimea and the Caucasus gradually increases. According to information given out by the Administration, the resettlement of some 15,000 persons is coming. The bulk of them should depart from the ports of the Caucasus and some from Crimea. Due to organization by the SSCBAS of regular voyages providing the opportunity to take a direct and non-stop trip from any port to Piraeus, the Administration is highly interested in the question of how to attract emigrating Greeks onto its vessels using the combined discount. (Tereschuk 2004b: 337–338; my translation)

The history of the Alexakis family of Sevastopol has been reconstructed by Tereschuk from archival data. This reconstruction demonstrates the turbulent social processes of the period of the revolution and the Civil War. Orion Alexakis, well known in Sevastopol as a distinguished revolutionary, was born in 1899 to a family of Greek subjects. His mother's father, Afanasii Khristopoulo, was an eminent Balaklavian merchant whose main business was in making lime; the remnants of his lime kilns have been preserved to this day on the outskirts of Sevastopol. His property portfolio was worth 1,650 rubles. Since 1908, he had been a local jury member. He had a large house on the seafront of Balaklava. According to denunciations against him to Bolshevik bodies, he invited workers from abroad and then engaged them in hard, minimum-wage labor. His daughter Nadezhda (Orion's mother's sister), "did not participate in voluntary work, used servants, and walked daily along the seafront with a little dog" (Tereschuk 2004b: 337–338; my translation). Other informers reported that Afanasii Khristopoulo was an enemy of the Bolshevist views of his grandson Orion, and as a result, Orion was driven away from his grandfather's house.

Orion's father, Khristofor Alexakis, owned a coal storehouse in Sevastopol. Orion had been baptized at the St Nikolai Church two months after his birth. His grandfather, Afanasii Khristopoulo, and his aunt, Maria Kristopoulo (Afanasii's daughter), were his godparents. Orion had grown up at his grandfather's house. In 1901, his brother had died when only five months old. After his banishment from his grandfather's house, Orion was educated by his father. In 1917, at the age of eighteen, Orion organized the local department of the Union of Socialist Youth in Sevastopol, after which he was directed by Bolsheviks to attend the University of Kiev as a student. In 1919, while still a student, Orion was directed to work with the Kharkov Union of Socialist Youth. The same year, he returned to

Sevastopol as a member of the City Revolutionary Committee; he then joined the Crimean regional department of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks). Both these organizations were evacuated in 1919 when the Crimea was captured by the White Army and German Forces. Orion worked as a lecturer at the University of Sverdlovsk (in the Urals). In September 1920, he was ordered by the Executive Committee of the Communist International to undertake Party work in Greece. However, he was killed on the ship en route to Greece and “thrown out to the sea at the Bulgarian border.” In 1919, his father was arrested by the Whites and sent to Sevastopol prison as the father of a Bolshevik. The Reds, however, when they later gained power in the Crimea, set him free.

After his son’s death, Kristofor Alexakis filed a lawsuit in 1922 in the People’s Court against the Marine Administration concerning the return of his motorboat and compensation in the amount of 42 million rubles for four horses and the cart confiscated from him in 1919 by Bolsheviks. The lawsuit returned partly in his favor. The Marine Administration returned the motorboat but rejected his request for compensation. In 1922, Orion’s grandfather, Afanasii Khristopoulo, had his house in Balaklava confiscated by a decree of the Regional Executive Committee. His house was “municipalized” and his family granted three rooms in that same house. After this, the District Executive Committee requested his complete removal from the property. Moreover, all the members of Orion’s family, as foreign subjects, had their right to vote removed. When they lost their second son, Orion’s father and mother decided to go to Greece and were able to obtain departure visas. Before departure, the customs service forbade them from exporting their piano, because it had already been registered as the property of the Department of People’s Education. An official of the department argued, “the piano is extremely necessary for the needs of the United Balaklava Party Club, and Balaklava as a provincial town would have no possibility to buy a new piano in next decade.” Orion grandfather’s family decided to stay in Sevastopol. The remaining fate of these people is unknown (see Tereschuk 2004a; 2004b, my translation).

From 1928 to 1932, six “Greek national autonomous districts” were founded in Ukraine (in Sartanskii, Mangushskii, and Veliko-Ianisol’skii²⁵ districts), Georgia (Tsalkskii district), Abkhazia (no data), and the North Caucasus (Grecheskii district) (see Ulunian 2004: 293; Ivanova 2004a: 273, 285). This was a result of a complex, contradictory approach by Bolsheviks (Lenin and Stalin, in the first

²⁵ Animitsa and Antonova (2010: 123) mentioned only two Greek national districts—Sartanskii and Mangushskii; they noted that the third—Maloianisol’skii according to them—national district was only supposed to be founded.

instance) to the so-called “national question,” or to the class/nation opposition (Dönninghaus 2011: 54–58). A number of Greek National Village Soviets were established in various places: in Crimea, for instance, the Bolsheviks established five Greek National Village Soviets (Pohl 1999: 120) and in the Kuban’ Okrug (now the Krasnodar region) there were sixteen (Kotsonis 1997: 81). Thus, the Greek populations of the USSR were granted territorial attachments, in accordance with Stalin’s theory of nations (see below in this chapter), which assumed the necessity of a territory for every nation. The Greek national district of the Chernomorskii *okrug* (now the Krasnodar region) was established in February 1930 (with its center in what is now Krymsk). It included 45 settlements with a population of 15,000 people, 10,000 of whom were Greeks; foreigners, mainly citizens of Greece, made up ninety percent of the population. The district was formed around an experimental tobacco growing farm, which included a cotton-growing area (Khlynina 2008). This *sovkhos* (Soviet economy or farm) was granted a significant state donation of 1,530,000 rubles (Ulunian 2004: 294). Nevertheless, the process of collectivization of private farms did not proceed smoothly. The first elections dragged on for two years. Local residents “scattered” state representatives and burned down the houses where the next meeting of the Soviet had been planned, and preferred to sell tobacco to private entrepreneurs rather than state receiving clerks. This series of circumstances was classified by officials as “a fierce class struggle” (Ulunian 2004: 293). Like other national districts of the region (including Shapsug, German, and Armenian), the Greek district was transformed many times. The last transformation took place in August 1935 when 11 Village Soviets with mainly Russian and Ukrainian populations were joined with 10 other Village Soviets. Khlynina (2008) notes that according to archival documents the Greek district was formed as a result of korenization,²⁶ and the Bolsheviks’ wish to provide everybody, even foreigners, with their own socialist “motherland,” even if they were not interested in such autonomy. The failure of korenization and the disinterestedness of the local population in the separate district of Khlynina are perceptible in the dissatisfaction expressed by regional authorities over the economic development of the district, as well as in the continued use of the Russian language (instead of normative Greek, according to the rules of korenization) in official business correspondence. The district was closed down in February 1938, having created what was widely regarded as an “[artificial] and nonviable” administrative unit (Khlynina 2008).

It is possible that the creation of these Greek districts and Village Soviets was not only connected with the Stalinist doctrine of “dispersed nations”, but also with the establishment of diplomatic relations between Greece and the USSR in 1924. Zapantis (1982) characterizes the situation in Greece in relation to the agreement as follows:

²⁶ On the politics of korenization, see Slezkine 1994a; Martin 2001; Hirsch 2005.

The USSR was recognized by the government of Premier A. Papanastassiou, leader of the Republican Union Party, after King George II had been obliged to leave Greece in December 1923, and on the eve of the proclamation of the Republic of Greece on March 25, 1924, which was ratified by a plebiscite in the following month.

Suggestions for the recognition of the Soviets had been made by leaders of the Greek refugees from Russia and by various Greek political figures.

Upon his return to Greece in December 1923, Eleftherios Venizelos, the Liberal leader, stated that Greece ought to have established relations with the Soviets much earlier not only for the sake of the country's own general interests but also due to the existence of a big Greek community in the USSR.

In fact, recognition was motivated by trade considerations; the general trend, at the time, to establish relations with Moscow (initiated by Mussolini and Britain); and reports concerning the plight of the Greeks in Russia whose situation had considerably deteriorated after the departure of the Greek troops from southern Russia in 1919.

In Athens, however, leaders of the Greek refugees from Russia claimed that "the Soviets were recognized and diplomatic relations were established very hastily, without preparation, and the interests of the Greeks in the USSR were not taken into account at all." (Zapantis 1982: 144–145)

Thus, the issue of Soviet Greeks was among those discussed before and after the agreement of 1924 was concluded. As many authors argue, including publications in the *New Greek Library* (see Dzhukha 2009), international relations, especially relations between Greece and the Soviet Union, played a significant role in Stalin's attitude to the Greek populations of the USSR. In the 1920s/30s, the issue of the Greek language was politicized. This came about because the national question and its relation to "European minorities" provoked discussions not only in relation to the territorial attachments of those minorities but also in relation to their vernaculars and alphabets. Ar. Ulunian (1991), for instance, considers that a specific set of factors stimulated that politicization, as well as public discussions about teaching the Greek language both in Russian and in Greek mass media in the USSR. These factors included the following: 1) the government initiated an education campaign to eliminate illiteracy, which included the creation of alphabets for peoples who did not have writing systems; 2) the dominant "Marr's theory" examined various languages in terms of stages—Marxist social and economic formations—and developed such concepts as a "language of the bourgeoisie" or

a “language of the proletariat”; 3) multiple connections of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with the Communist Party of Greece in the discussion around language issues—“*demotika/katharevousa*”—as in a political discussion; 4) the introduction of a bureaucratic concept of the unity of the Greek language in relation to the Soviet Greeks.

Some of the points raised by this discussion are important to the argument of this chapter as well as to the thesis as a whole. In the 1920s/30s, the construction of a new Greek ethnicity in the USSR was ongoing. This ethnicity differed from the ethnicity of Hellenes, mainland Greeks. Ulunian (1991, 2004) explores documents and newspaper extracts from the time and finds formulations of new ethnonyms such as “Romeian labor masses” or “Pontians”. These ethnonyms were sometimes joined in contemporary polemical debates, generating such pairs as Pontian Romeian (*pontiets romei*) (Ulunian 1991: 17), composed from two different and mutually exclusive names. Towards the end of 1928 this discursive formulation of a new ethnicity formed on the basis of self-designation by the Greek populations of the USSR and accompanied the establishment of autonomous Greek districts on territories in what are now Ukraine, Georgia, and Russia imposed local self-government. Thus, in line with Stalin’s doctrine of nation, the new ethnos/nation of “Romeikos” or “Pontian Romeikos” was granted the right to have its own territories, separate from the Greek (Hellenes) ethnos/nation/state. However, the plurality of these territories also demonstrated the “difference” between Greek populations and served as a foundation (and justification) for separatism, on the one hand, and struggle for domination, on the other.

As outlined above, Greek populations in the USSR had various vernaculars/dialects. Not all groups were able to politically represent their interests in terms of maintenance of their native language, but Ulunian identifies three groups who were able to demonstrate and maintain their respective identities in this way: Mariupol, Rostov, and Abkhazian Greeks. The dialects of these groups are Greek, while Turkish-speaking Greeks did not participate at all in the debates that took place on these matters in the 1920/30s. It remains unclear from Ulunian’s data to what extent the discussion of reforms in language policy touched upon the Turkophone Greeks.²⁷ Each of the three groups had its own print media outlet (the newspapers *Kolektivistis* in Mariupol, *Komunistis* in Rostov-on-Don, and *Kokinis Kapnas* in Sukhumi), as well as formal institutions for discussions (the

²⁷ Ulunian (1991: 12) characterizes the Tsalka Turkish-speaking Greek population as follows: “In the Tsalka district of Georgia ... as a result of a mixture of the Greeks, the Georgians, the Armenians, the Kurds, the Tats, the Assyrians, and the Jews a new ethnic community appeared with a surviving Greek national consciousness and called itself the Urums (οιουρούμου)” (my translation).

Mariupol Greeks, for example, discussed language policy at the 1st Conference of Laboring Romeans of Mariupol in 1929). Each newspaper argued that their local dialect was more appropriate as an instrument of Greek (Romean or Pontian) homogenization in the Soviet Union. Those involved in the debates tried to take into account class theory, the aspiration of the Alphabet Commission to elaborate a “new and simplified alphabet,” and the general language debates taking place in Greece.

The journal *Enlightenment of Nationalities* (*Prosvetschenie natsional'nostei*) also published some materials of the disputants; communists from Greece published articles about the situation in the USSR in a variety of newspapers and magazines. Ulunian notes that these discussions did not reach the point of adopting an official variant of state language policy; they were interrupted by repressive measures taken against Soviet Greek languages by which newspapers, theatres, and schools were closed.

This discussion of the situation in the 1920s/30s has explored the following four areas: 1) the heterogeneity of Greek groups in the USSR; 2) the attempts to construct an alternative (Soviet) Greek nation—Pontian or Romean; 3) the principal differences in the national policy²⁸ of the USSR both before the end of the 1930s and afterwards; 4) the fact that the ethnonym “Pontians” at that time was as familiar as the ethnonym “Romeans”—the latter operating as a kind of opposition to the former. It is difficult to say from where the ethnonym “Pontians” was borrowed. Most probably (as Ulunian argues) it came from discussions on the Greek language in the Soviet press and discussions on political processes in contemporary Greece, where refugees from Turkey, including the Pontians, played an important role in this political contest (Ulunian 1991: 21).

Stalin’s ethnic policy soon changed to one of repression. The historical record of Stalinist repressions against the Greeks, as well as that of repressions in the USSR in general, remains incomplete: many of the archives have yet to be studied; publications are often fragmented; interest in the topic has decreased since perestroika; the number of new publications has declined. Writers have tried to explain the repressions from many perspectives, but it is still only possible to provide preliminary evaluations of the events that occurred from the 1930s to the 1950s.

The closure of all Greek national institutions and the liquidation of Greek districts and Village Soviets can be seen as preparation for the mass deportations that followed. As Kotsonis notes, according to Stalinist logic, “if a national group does not have its historical territory, it means it could be moved easily” (Kotsonis 1997: 82, my translation). Terry Martin (2001) proposes that nation

²⁸ More precisely, state practices in relation to ethnic minorities.

building, the korenization of the 1920s and the “ethnic cleansings” of the 1930s were the result of the same national policy, which he calls the Piedmont Principle (Martin 2001: 8-12, 345-347, 419). The Soviets used their national minorities to influence their foreign co-ethnics. At the same time, the Bolsheviks had always been afraid of the influence from abroad on those groups in particular and the situation in the USSR in general.²⁹ On the one hand, they spent a considerable amount of money to create and support national autonomies; on the other, they also used terror and “ethnic cleansing” in cases of potential danger.

As I have noted, general Bolshevik repressions against the bourgeoisie and the kulaks also affected the Greeks – especially those who had taken the most initiative and risen to become the wealthiest members of the Greek society of Imperial Russia. However, according to Goniadis-Keshanidis (2011), in Abkhazia, for instance, NKVD³⁰ bodies had intentionally created conditions that led to a mass change of citizenship for Greek peasants—from Soviet to Greek. In this way they attracted Greek subjects who were not subjected to dekulakization;³¹ they saved their right to land and property, and were not forced onto collective farms.

Unlike the repressions of the 1920s, the repressions of the 1930s to 1950s were organized according to ethnic principles. The NKVD’s “Greek Operation” was carried out in 1937/38; more than 20,000 Greeks were arrested during this time. Ivan Dzhukha has published data on the Donetsk (Ukraine) and Krasnodar (Russia) regions, where about 10,000 “persons of Greek nationality” were arrested over the period from 15 December 1937 to 7 January 1938. Around 96 percent of those arrested in Donetsk were shot; in the Krasnodar region around 90 percent were shot (Dzhukha 2009).

At this time, many of the Greeks in these regions were still citizens of Greece, and the 1942 deportation was initially directed against them (Pohl 1999: 121). According to Dzhukha, “the deportation of 1942 was not a punishment for a crime committed, because of the absence of the body of crime” (Dzhukha 2009, my translation). The main drive consisted in a “clearance” of a set of regions from “anti-Soviet, alien and uncertain elements”; according to documents, the populations being dispossessed were marked as “foreigners, non-Russian peoples, persons dangerous to the state” (Kotsonis 1997: 83–84, my translation).

²⁹ Martin notes: “As cross-border ethnic ties were increasingly seen as an important conduit for the penetration of foreign capitalist influence, Soviet xenophobia became ethnicized” (Martin 2001: 325).

³⁰ NKVD – Russian abbreviation for the Peoples Commissariat of Inner Affairs.

³¹ Dekulakization – the process of liquidation of the kulaks (richer peasants) “as a class.”

The largest number of Greek deportations took place after the end of the Second World War. Over a few days, from 13 to 16 June 1949, 37,500 persons were taken to Kazakhstan. Dzhukha believes that the main reason for this particular deportation was “vengeance by J. Stalin on the Greeks [of the USSR] for failed sovietization of the Greeks [of Greece]” (2009; my translation). Dzhukha sees a second reason in the attractiveness of the Greek territories in Georgia. After the 1949 deportation, all Greek property, including real estate, was sold at around 10 to 50 times less than its previous value to representatives of the Abkhazian and Adzharian political and artistic elite (Dzhukha 2009). Sources vary in their estimation of numbers of repressed people at this time. Dzhukha calculates that during the period from 1937 to 1949, 80,000 to 85,000 people of Greek origin were repressed; Kotsonis argues that this figure might be nearer to 100,000; representatives of Greek associations believe the total to be nearer 300,000 (Kotsonis 1997: 85).

In March 1956, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR annulled a decree concerning restrictions on the legal status of the Greeks, the Bulgarians, and the Armenians; however, many had no opportunity to return to the places in which they had lived before the deportations (Kotsonis 1997: 85). In published data about the location of exiled Greeks (on 1 January 1953), there were 52,112 persons of Greek origin exiled to various territories (Pohl 1999: 126; Zemskov 1991). The majority of Greeks were moved to Kazakhstan (38,354); however, 4,097 were moved to Uzbekistan, 3,414 to the Sverdlovsk region, 2,268 to Molotov (Perm), 1,977 to the Bashkir Autonomous Socialist Republic, and 1,334 to the Kemerovo region. The rest were spread in small numbers over the territories of Siberia, the Urals, the Far East, and Central Asia. Goniadis-Keshanidis (2011) reports on how the exile happened in Abkhazia:

A few months before the day of mass exile ... people had known that they would evict Greek citizens. But there were rumors that they would be sent to Greece. Most people did not believe in it, but anyway, they supposed something like that, because before that, since the 1930s, NKVD officers had claimed it publicly at peasants' meetings.

So, actually, on the 13th of June 1949, NKVD troops had taken out all Greek citizens without exception. By the end of that day they had reached, in AMO and Ford lorries, the station at Gulripsh; they were put onto trains in boxcars, locked from the outside.

Next day, the 14th of June, as far as I remember, functionaries of the Village Soviet, and a secretary of the Greeks among them, spread among the rest of the

Greeks, Soviet citizens, information that 'those who wish to go together with their relatives of Greek citizenship will be sent as well, according to their application.'

How many applications they received and who applied remains unknown. However, on the morning of the 16th of June they drove the lorries to our houses, one lorry for every three houses; the officers had side holsters and papers in their hands; everybody was accompanied by three soldiers armed with submachine guns, and the exile was declared. According to all available data, the decision about the exile of the Greeks who were Soviet citizens was an internal republican one. Because numerous complaints followed, the special commission from Moscow later confirmed that it was a criminal local autocracy and condemned it.

Thus on the 16th of June, Greeks, Soviet citizens, followed their relatives, Greece's citizens. There were members of the Communist Party, veterans of the Great Patriotic War, soviet and party workers, and so on. (Goniadis-Keshanidis 2011; my translation)

The Second World War

After the 1917 revolution, some Greeks, as well as some among other ethnic groups in the USSR, supported the Soviet power and participated actively in its establishment in their regions and beyond; others did not accept the new power and even struggled against it as members of the White movement; finally, there were those who, remaining "beyond politics", made a decision to urgently depart for Greece, while others stayed on, hoping for better times. During the Second World War, the majority of the male Greek population of the USSR was recruited to the Red Army and sent to the front as defenders of the USSR.³² However, those who for various reasons were not mobilized

³² As Kotsonis notes, in 1943, many Greek army personnel (generals, officers, sergeants, and soldiers) among representatives of other "disloyal nationalities" (the Koreans, the Bulgarians, the Kalmyk, the Bal-

responded in different ways to the occupying German forces. Some decided to collaborate with the occupying army and were engaged with the German administration. Among these, some participated in actions against the civilian population; others used their positions to covertly help Soviet citizens (and not only Greeks), who were thus able to escape death or deportation. Some of the Greeks participated in the partisan movement and the Resistance, donating property or money to the struggle against fascism. Chitlov, Chitlov and Gurieli (1992) describe such instances in Tsalka:

The Tsalkians demonstrated a high level of patriotism when they gave their concrete support to the front. They organized a collection of money, food products, warm clothes, and valuables for the Red Army Foundation. From their private savings workers of the district contributed over two million rubles in cash, about six hundred thousand in bonds, and donated fifty-one kilograms of silver and gold to the Defense Foundation. Moreover, the Tsalkian people contributed about three million three hundred thousand rubles to the production of the tank column of the "collective farmers of Georgia" and over one million six hundred thousand rubles to the air squadron "Soviet Georgia". (Chitlov, Chitlov and Gurieli 1992: 45; my translation)

An interesting document in the context of the present discussion is exhibited at the School Museum in the village of Bogatyrskoe (see chapter 2 for more on this museum). The document is a transcript of an interview between the director of the museum and a local resident, Anastasia Kh.

Interview with Anastasia Panaiotovna

Anastasia Panaiotovna was born in 1919 to the family of Panaiot Georgievitch S. (her mother was Maria Ivanovna K.). She is the fifth child in the family. In 1926, her father was a chair of the Village Soviet.

She studied at the Bogatyrskoe (Greek) school. After finishing five grades in Bogatyrskoe she studied in Anapa and finished the sixth grade there, because the Greek school of Bogatyrskoe was closed in 1938. Then she moved to the city of Kerch where she has been studying from the seventh to the tenth grades. And back to Bogatyrskoe, but she already works as a young pioneer leader ...

Just before the Germans came, the chair of the kolkhoz and chair of the Village Soviet left Bogatyrskoye in the official car. After that, the secretary of the

karians, the Chechens, the Ingush) were demobilized and sent to inner regions of the USSR as workers. Not all Greeks were involved in that demobilization however (Kotsonis 1997: 84–85).

Communist Party loffe came, together with two men. They said she had to burn all the documents.

I burned part of them but the main documents (stamp, seals, book of registration, economic books, and church documents) I buried in safes in our garden with my father's help. By chance, some Romanians' horses³³ were in our yard and, in search of feed, they unearthed those safes. The Romanian groom noted this; but he did not betray us. He just told my father about it. My father had to take them in the house and hid them inside.

During that time I was sitting in confinement for two months and could not go out anywhere; I gave birth to a child who soon died. Elena Sergeevna G., a schoolteacher, a school director's ex-wife who married the policeman, betrayed all the activists of Bogatyrskoe. They arrested 25 persons including me. Our *politsai*^[34]—Andrei F., Nikolai D. and seven others—did not want to arrest me. They had escaped service in the Soviet Army ... the Germans treated me roughly when I was arrested.

In Gostagaevskaia we lived in the school (there were about 5,000 doomed persons living in *stanitsa* Gostagaevskaia). After two days in Gostagaevskaia an order came through from Hitler, changing the death sentence to eternal settlement in Germany. They accompanied us [divided] in groups of eight persons from *stanitsa* Gostagaevskaia to *stanitsa* Fontalovskaia. There we were waiting for a ferry for departure, but it was December and the ferry did not sail. The local policeman was Ivan Alexandrovitch K.,^[35] and we said to him that we might be ransomed. Next day A. Georgii Antonovitch, F. Ivan Spiridonovitch and the policeman K. Ivan Alexandrovitch came from Bogatyrskoe. They had already prepared all the documents necessary for our release. They gave jewelry to the commandant of the city of Anapa. And we were released. All of us, twenty-five persons, came back to Bogatyrskoe. Next day the senior man K. Semen summoned me to his office. Before the Great Patriotic War, he was a member of the Komsomol organization of Bogatyrskoe. He asked me why I was telling everybody that he was a Komsomol member. And he punished me: every day I went to dig trenches ... The Germans already knew that their troops were retreating. They were

³³ Germany's occupying forces in the south of Russia included some Romanian military units.

³⁴ The Russian word *politsai* was used to designate those who served as policemen for occupying forces during the Second World War (from Germ. *Polizei*).

³⁵ In the original, K. was a family name of Greek origin.

tyrannical and often beat us up. They drove almost all the villagers into cellars. I was in the cellar where the house of Piotr Ill'itch is placed now. There were 150 persons there.

On 26 September 1946 the chief of the army's political department, Brezhnev, visited Bogatyrskoe. I was summoned to him. I said that I hid the documents of the Village Soviet of Bogatyrskoe. Then I took out my own documents; they have been with me all through the period of occupation. I had had a long skirt and my documents were sewn into it (Komsomol card, passport, work record book). Brezhnev signed his signature in my Komsomol card (about payment of member's fees).

There was a Komsomol meeting in which the secretary Ioffe participated; I was elected there as a chair of the Village Soviet. Documents—stamp, seals, and a flag—I stayed at the Village Soviet. I handled church and other documents for Anapa's archive in 1943. (my translation)

Thus, political interests and opinions have always been varied among the Greek populations of the USSR, and Greekness has never been a marker of political identity (this was also the case in Greece during the Civil war, for example). Therefore, analyses that explain ethnic repressions as political actions directed against disloyal populations according to ethnic origin cannot be justified, despite the fact that this was an official explanation for Stalinist deportations. At the same time, the Second World War era was marked by severe actions and tragic deportations of Greek populations from the Ukraine, Southern Russia, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.

Reforms and Liberalization in the USSR: The Rise of Greek Associations

In the Introduction, I touched on liberalization in the USSR after Gorbachev's introduction of perestroika. However, political changes and democratic reforms created many challenges that appeared after the collapse of the Soviet Union in every newly independent state. I have argued elsewhere (Manuylov 2012) that the circumstances of post-perestroika social development could be characterized as a "legal vacuum". In Russia, this legal vacuum appeared after the adoption of the

Constitution (in 1993) because the State Duma for a long time could not pass laws required to guarantee the rights provided by the Constitution. Thus, the Constitution proclaimed that property could be privately owned, for instance, but the Land Code regulating private property was only adopted in 2000. As a result of such delays, issues concerning local rural labor markets, the structure of local authorities, a crediting system and social support for the rural population all remained without regulation throughout this period. The legal vacuum was accompanied by an ideological vacuum, which Alexandra Kasyanova characterizes as follows:

[In 1991–92,] the signified ‘village’ becomes a signifier; the paradigm of social dispositions changes, i.e., the signified ‘village’ (in the status of settlement) turns into a definition of a place of residence, formally attached by the state, and it intrinsically becomes an ‘empty’ concept. The ideological vacuum that appears infills with multiple senses, which are unstable and fragmented. However, the communicative code of ‘local solidarity’ is elaborated ‘from below’ [by the community itself]; and this code is based on social networks, because in the setting of the continued absence of salaries in the kolkhoz, one of the ways of villagers’ existence was a network distribution of all the necessary resources, such as clothes, food products, information on vacancies outside the village. In general, that time was an unusual situation with a deficit of state discourses. Those who lived in the village were henceforward not named, not marked by the state power; they were just ‘villagers’. The state does not recognize them in the field of power, which means the risk of losing bonuses (like state social support, for instance) appears. Remembering that time, most informants use negative connotations, which can be referred to the discourse on ‘catastrophe’: *‘We have been forgotten! We are not interesting to anybody!’* The mosaic of contemporary rural life during the period of ideological vacuum is made up of a few sources: 1) soviet discourse on the ‘collective’; 2) academic discourse on the ‘commune,’ which has been widespread in legion versions and copies with political ends from soviet times; 3) surviving practices. And in this mosaic the inter-discourse on ‘communality’ was born. The ‘empty’ concept ‘villagers’ was filled with it. (Kasyanova 2008: 70–71; my translation)

The discursive “emptiness” led to the self-organization, self-designation, and self-representation of many groups and “categories” of the population in search of certainty and a particular discourse. The same could be said about post-Soviet Greek settlements, where the Greek population took advantage of the above-mentioned emptiness in order to construct their own identity (as the Pontians did, for example) and organize their own ethnic “civil society”.

In the 1960s, according to Dmitriev (2000), the Greek student movement began in the USSR, during a time known as “Khrushchev’s Thaw”.³⁶ This movement remained the “single active appearance of Greek social life in Russia” (Dmitriev 2000: 58; my translation) over the next twenty years. Many large university centers were involved, such as Moscow, Leningrad, Krasnodar, Rostov on Don, and Stavropol. “Under the likeness of family events, Greek students organized celebrations of state holidays of Greece, such as Independence Day on March 25th and *Ohi Day*^[37] on October 28th” (Dmitriev 2000: 58; my translation). Together with students, representatives of various intellectual fields attended these events. In the 1970s, Greek amateur pop-groups formed, and included Greek music in their repertoires. In 1981, the teaching of the Greek language recommenced in Georgian schools. Perestroika enabled the creation and registration of NGOs. National and cultural centers began to open in places where Greeks lived. The first registered Greek organization in the USSR was the Club Prometei in Ordzhonikidze (now Vladikavkaz), which was established on 28th May 1988. In 1989, over 100 delegates assembled at the Moscow Congress of Greeks from various regions of the USSR. Dmitriev notes the following as being the most important resolutions of the congress: 1) the organization of the All-Union Society of the Soviet Greeks—the society planned to run departments throughout the Soviet Union; 2) a formal request to create a Greek Soviet Socialist Republic was made in which the Anapa–Gelendzhik–Tuapse region (in Krasnodar, Russia) or the Crimea (Ukraine) were the potential territories discussed; and 3) the Modern Greek language (*dimotika*) was acknowledged as the official Greek language of the USSR. After the congress, the opponents of Greek national autonomy registered their own organization, the Moscow Pontian Cultural Centre “Argo,” which sought only cultural autonomy. In 1989, two new Greek Societies (in Moscow and Gelendzhik) were registered, signaling a political split in the Greek movement in its initial phase. Dmitriev does not directly discuss the movement’s split, although a few years later in 1993 he was elected as Chair of the Association of Greek Societies in Russia by its unifying Congress (Dmitriev 2000: 61).

In 1990, Greek NGOs began operating in cities such as Krasnodar, Novorossiysk, Anapa, Krymsk, Sochi, Essentuki, Pyatigorsk, and Krasnoyarsk. Dmitriev notes that in the late 1980s and early 1990s potential “development of the Greeks of the USSR [was] actively discussed in the Greek social movement” (Dmitriev 2000: 59; my translation). A leader of that movement, Gavriil Popov, stated that it was not possible to achieve Greek autonomy in a single territory and that it had to be founded

³⁶ For more on this, see Tompson 1997: 132–133.

³⁷ Ohi Day, or Anniversary of the “No” is celebrated throughout Greece, Cyprus and the Greek communities around the world on October 28th each year to commemorate the rejection by Greek Prime Minister Ioannis Metaxas of the ultimatum made by Italian dictator Benito Mussolini on October 28, 1940.

upon autonomous regions and separate village administrations (*sel'sovetakh*) incorporated in a unified national council. The national council, Popov argued, had to have the rights of an autonomous republic in such fields as education and culture in order to open its own research institutions, publishing houses, and theatres, and, moreover, it had to have control of its own budget and its own people's deputies. Popov considered that all "peoples of the USSR settled in a dispersed manner (*dispersno*)" should have such autonomous republics (Dmitriev 2000: 59; my translation). Dmitriev observes that this program was established in accordance with the national doctrine of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Thus, Greek national aspirations in the USSR were placed in the framework of the Stalinist doctrine that connected ethnicity to territory and territory to nation building.

According to Dmitriev, the All-Union Association of the Soviet Greeks (AUASG) was created by a resolution of the Moscow Congress of Greeks in 1989; its main function was a project to build up the Greek Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, which was "a single correct way," as Dmitriev put it, of the development of Greek movement in the circumstances of Soviet administrative system (Dmitriev 2000: 59). However, the AUASG was not registered officially. Therefore, they decided to organize another founding congress of the Greeks of the USSR, which would create its own resolution to form an official NGO representing the interests of all Soviet Greeks.

At the same time, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, as well as various Soviet supreme bodies, appeared to show an interest in the issue. As a result, in 1990, the Institute of Marxism and Leninism organized a conference: *The Greeks in the USSR: History and Modernity*. According to Dmitriev, the Communist Party in this way demonstrated its acknowledgement of the Greeks as a "people not having its own statehood" (Dmitriev 2000: 59; my translation). The conference also passed some resolutions: 1) to conduct the 1990 All-Union Congress of the Soviet Greeks in Moscow; 2) to create in Moscow and in other cities some Centers of Greek Culture; 3) to hold the 1990 All-Union Festival of Greek National Culture in Moscow; 4) to organize intensive courses in the Greek language at a local level. As far as I can judge, all these resolutions were realized in the early 1990s.

In 1991, the Constitutive Congress of the Greeks of the USSR was held in Gelendzhik. Prior to this, two preliminary conferences were organized in Sochi and Gelendzhik in order to provide the congress with the necessary documents and a draft of the structure of future Greek national organization. Fifty-six Greek communities sent 247 representatives to the congress, which decreed the creation of an organization of the Greeks of the USSR and then elected its steering bodies—the

National Council and the Chamber. Gavriil Popov was elected Chair of the Representative Body of the National Council. In other words, Popov was appointed to three important positions: as a people's deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, as Chair of the Moscow Soviet, and now to this new position in the Greek organization.

The main resolution of the Constitutive Congress was to request that the Supreme Soviet and the government of the USSR should establish national and territorial autonomy for the Greeks; period and territory were not detailed. The AUASG was officially registered in 1991 as the All-Union Association of the Greeks "Pontos". The same year, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR passed a law on the Rehabilitation of Victims of Political Repressions. They also planned to enact separate legislation on rehabilitation of the Soviet Greeks, which to date has still not been passed. By the end of 1991, there were twenty-one officially registered Greek NGOs in Russia. Outside Russia, more Greek organizations had also been registered: the Union of the Greeks of the Ukraine, and NGOs in Crimea, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Armenia, and Uzbekistan. The All-Union Association of the Greeks "Pontos" had not survived for very long—only until May 1992. The main reason for its collapse according to Dmitriev was the collapse of the USSR, although he does not give reasons for this conclusion. He does, however, suggest a reason for the failure of the Greek movement to consolidate: the leaders were unable to agree. There was a resulting interpersonal discord among them, stemming from the contradictory stances of particular key figures in the movement (Dmitriev 2000: 60).

In further developments, two Greek organizations were created, in 1992, which had ambitions to gain all-Russian status: the Federation of Greek Communes of Russia and the Association of Greek Societies of Russia. They represented the interests of their grassroots organizations; for instance, some Greek NGOs of the Krasnodar Region were affiliated with the Federation, some with the Association. In 1992/93 in Stavropol, the Association of Greek Teachers was founded; its main purpose was propaganda to support the teaching and wider use of the Greek language (Dmitriev 2000: 61). In 1993, the Congress of Greeks of Russia, after many consultations, negotiations, and discussions, decided to merge the two previously opposing Greek organizations mentioned above under the umbrella of the Association of Greek Societies of Russia. Since 1994, this association, with Dmitriev as its elected Chair, has had extensive contact with Pontian organizations throughout the world, with representatives of Greek and Pontic business as well as with Russian authorities (the State Duma), regarding laws on national and cultural autonomy.

Over time, the Greek movement continued to build its own hierarchy. Regional Greek societies were created between the Association of Greek Societies of Russia and its grassroots

organizations (the first of which were established in Krasnodar and Stavropol). Dmitriev was thus able to rebuild the All-Union Association of the Soviet Greeks. It was renamed the International Association of the Greeks “Pontos” in June 1996, and had its headquarters in Moscow. In 1997 it moved its headquarters to Novorossiysk.

Dmitriev argues that representatives of the Greek student youth movement “became a core element of the Greek national social movement in the late 1980s” (Dmitriev 2000: 62, my translation). He states that social movements have always been a characteristic feature of Greek life and that “social life has been accompanying the Greeks during dozens of centuries” (Dmitriev 2000: 62, my translation). He explains the rupture of this tradition in relation to the repressions of Stalinist period, “when nearly all Greek intellectuals were annihilated” (Dmitriev 2000: 62, my translation). Thus, according to Dmitriev, the Greek student movement from the 1960s to 1980s was able to rebuild the Greek social movement that had been interrupted by Stalinism. At the same time, he explains in his article that the Greek social movement in this region did not act from below, but from above, using the personal resources of officials of Greek origin. He further argues that the system of Greek nongovernmental structures was also gradually built from above, according to the principles of the Soviet administrative and command system. Anton Popov, for example, argues that Greek NGOs repeated the structure and functions of local Communist Party organizations (Popov 2008: 195). My argument (which will be discussed in detail in chapter 2) is that these organizations also fulfilled the functions of the Soviet Institute of Amateur Theatricals. If we take into account that Greek organizations’ claims can be placed in the field of the Soviet administrative system (I mean claims for a national autonomous republic as a part of the USSR), as Dmitriev argues, we may conclude that at least structurally and functionally the Greek movement in first Russia and then the USSR has been a form of Soviet activity, developed under Soviet state discourses.

During the period of the legal vacuum outlined above, the identity “*the Greeks*” came to be used by the Greeks as an instrument in the field of entrepreneurship, which can be explained in terms of the structural homology of different social fields claimed by Pierre Bourdieu.³⁸ The *ethnic field* and the field of ethnic nominalizations were used as symbolic capital that could be readily converted into political, economic, or even financial capital. It became possible to form different sorts of Greek associations/societies/clubs in the *political field*, where Greeks were able to enter into

³⁸ As David Swartz (1997) resumes Bourdieu’s ideas regarding structural homology, “Fields are homologous to the extent that they develop isomorphic properties, such as positions of dominance and subordination, strategies of exclusion and usurpation, and mechanisms of reproduction and change” (Swartz 1997: 29).

the political discussion that was widely developed in Russia with perestroika. In other words, hierarchical Greek societies can (and do) operate in the field of Russian politics as representatives of ethnic groups. In the *economic field*, Greek societies as well as the individuals involved in them were able to operate as economic actors that supported each other and increased their economic capital through these interactions. In this regard, I have also encountered a failed project initiated by one of the leaders of the Greek Society of Predgornyi. The project intended to direct all the society's resources to the preparation of fifty Greek entrepreneurs who would lead the future economic situation in the region. In the *financial field*, the symbolic capital of ethnicity is converted by the government of the Greek state into funds directed to the support of Greek societies, in order to create special conditions for ex-Soviet Greek migrants.

These diaspora-based associations and societies looked like a simulacrum of the state because they undertook some state functions in conditions of a legal and ideological vacuum. At the same time, this social structure can be seen as a civil society institution (see chapter 2). The paradox is clear: the same organization looks like civil society from the state's point of view, and looks like the state from the point of view of a local community member. Thus, any society (as well as the "Greek national movement" as a whole), having no possibility to fulfill contradictory functions, must make a choice among the functions of these institutions in terms which it can fulfill. When I participated in meetings of various Greek Societies in the south of Russia in 2006-2007, I witnessed some fierce debates around these contradictory functions which usually dealt with particular issues as, for example, the social status of the elected head of Greek Society. So long as the choice between quasi-state and civil society institution has not been made, Greek Associations/Societies will remain in stagnation.

Greek Ethnicity under the Attention of Soviet and Post-Soviet Anthropology

Greek research in Russian and Soviet anthropology has been conducted under the aegis of two discursive processes: the development of ethnos theory and the ideology of repressions of Greeks during the 1930–1950s. Ethnos theory, according to director of the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR academician Yulian Bromley (1921–1990) (see, for example, Bromley 1974: 17, 1979: 48, 1980: 153, 1986: 7), is rooted in the pre-Soviet period of

anthropological knowledge development. Ethnos as the main subject-matter of ethnographic studies was suggested by Nikolai Mogilianskii in 1909, who wrote:

An ethnographer does not have to ignore the notion of *έθνος* and has to show us, besides the history of human development at large, the grouping of the phenomena of progressive development in those ethnic and racial groups of humankind which are determined by ethnology or anthropology. (Mogilianskii 1909: 104–105, my translation)

However, Soviet ethnos theory stems from Stalin’s theory of nation beginning with his first publication on this matter in 1912 (Stalin 1954a). After the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, various academic disciplines and methods were put under the control of the Communist Party of the USSR. Some disciplines were forbidden, others suffered total reconstruction: institutional, personnel, theoretic and methodological. Many academics left the USSR and formed significant schools abroad, others were repressed (shot or exiled to camps). But some of them accepted the new rules of the game in their academic field (see Slezkine 1991, 1994a: 246–263, 1996; Plotkin and Howe 1985; Bertrand 2002, 2003).

When they encountered the “national question”, Bolsheviks initially proposed the principle of korenization (see below in this chapter), and many ethnic groups (including Greeks) received their own territories. In the mid-1930s, Stalin turned his focus to other national policies; he liquidated national districts and repressed entire populations by reference to their respective ethnic identities. In concert with this, Soviet anthropologists formulated the notion of “ethnogenesis”, which first appeared in 1932 although various forms this idea had been presented in Soviet anthropology since the early 1920s (Uyama 2002: 171–173; Plotkin and Howe 1985: 274; see also Slezkine 1991: 481, 1994a: 258).³⁹ The establishment of the concept of ethnogenesis emerged during a period of ideological confrontation during the late 1930s between the USSR and Germany. This confrontation involved especially the question of the ethnogenesis of Slavs (Udaltsov 1946: 243; Schlesinger 1950: 9; Laruelle 2008: 173-174). Ethnogenesis was considered a first stage of ethnos life; after that stage it was relevant to discuss “ethnic history” and “ethnic processes” (with respective classifications).

Possibly Stalin’s concept of nation was influenced by ethnos theory as developed by Sergei Shirokogoroff (1923, 1924), a Russian anthropologist who migrated to China. At least the notion of “ethnos” according to Shirokogoroff is close to the definition of nation put forwards by Stalin in 1912

³⁹ See also a historical outline of Western ethnogenetic studies in Voss 2008: 33–37.

(Stalin 1954). Shirokogoroff supposed that he was the first to introduce the “new” term “ethnos”; he certainly proposed the following definition of it:

A group of people speaking the same language, recognizing their common origin, possessing a complex of customs and a social system, which is consciously maintained and explained as tradition, and differentiated from those of other groups.
(Shirokogoroff 1924: 5)

As for Stalin, he developed his understanding and definition of nation in 1912 in Austria. He borrowed three characteristics of nation from Karl Kautsky’s work, and a fourth from Otto Bauer; he compiled these in the article “Marxism and the National Question.”⁴⁰ According to Stalin’s early work, “a nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture” (Stalin 1954: 307). Teodor Shanin argues that Stalin’s (as well as a general Soviet) interpretation of ethnicity originates with theorists and parties of the Second International and that they are based on “the experience and common sense of Eastern and Central Europe, especially within the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires at the turn of the [twentieth] century” (Shanin 1989: 412). He showed that a confrontation between Lenin and Stalin lay at the heart of the issue of *natsional’nost’*, or ethnicity (Shanin 1989: 419). It was a struggle that Stalin would win, of course, because of Lenin’s death in 1924 (Shanin 1989: 417–418). Therefore, “the later canonization of all Stalin’s writings made his formula obligatory in the USSR upon pain of excommunication. From the 1930s to the 1950s debate on these matters accordingly ceased” (Shanin 1989: 413).

The main discursive rupture in Soviet ethnography occurred in the 1930s and can be summarized as follows:

1) The polyphony of pre-revolutionary and early Soviet academia was changed by the way in which the Marxist approach was imposed.⁴¹

⁴⁰ As Shanin observes, “in that article Stalin, with Bukharin’s help, added simplified Kautsky to a narrowed down Bauer, combining territory and economic system, language and culturally constituted collective *mentalité* in a specific definition with an absolute delimitation of ‘yes’s’ and ‘no’s’ to follow” (Shanin 1989: 413).

⁴¹ On the specificity of Soviet Marxism, for example, see Gellner (1988), and Plotkin and Howe (1985).

2) The state's search for administrative categories led to the term "ethnos" becoming the cornerstone of social science and marked the beginning of "the chronic ethnophilia of the Soviet regime" (Slezkine 1994b: 415).

3) Ethnography took its place among "historical disciplines," while anthropology was placed among the natural sciences.

The period of the 1940s and 1950s witnessed the gradual formation and development of "ethnos"-oriented research in Soviet ethnography, as well as the further elaboration of such concepts as "ethnogenesis" and "ethnic history". This period also saw the emphasis of "routine" ethnography shifted to "culture" or "cultural change" and "contemporary life" (*sovremennost'*) (see Vucinich 1960; Alymov 2009). This shift was realized according to an old Stalinist paradigm of "culture" determined as "national in form,⁴² socialist in content."

The impossibility of eliminating one of the most difficult obstacles for Bolsheviks, the "national question", led to the elaboration of ethnic categories and theorization in the ethnic/national domain. Initiated in the 1930s, "ethnophilia" developed in the 1960s into Bromley's detailed and complicated theory of "ethnos". In mainstream Soviet ethnography the emphasis on "ethnic" approaches continued during the 1960s to 1980s. Over this time, Bromley managed to turn Soviet ethnography into the science of "ethnos". Bromley not only repeats a variation of Stalin's definition of nation, he also introduces new terms, which are connected with and built around the central term "ethnos".⁴³ Such novel terms and many related concepts, however, did not open up new perspectives and possibilities for ethnography and ethnographers nor, as further events have shown, add anything to an understanding of the flowering of post-Soviet nationalisms.

Bromley was one of the principal authors of textbooks for university students in which his theory of "ethnos" was presented in its full version (Bromley and Markov 1982); indeed, his ideas have been and continue to be part of both university and school curricula (see, for example, Barazbiev and Gegraev 2003; Averin 2004; Malikova 2009). Various authors have noted that new ethno-

⁴² Shanin prefers the translation "ethnic in form" (Shanin 1989: 418).

⁴³ Such as "ethno-social organism" (Bromley 1981: 37), ethnonym (exoethnonym and endoethnonym) and its forms linguonym, politonym and confessionym (Bromley 1981: 12–14), "potestary social community [*obschnost'*]" (Bromley 1981: 12), "the main core of ethnos" (Bromley 1981: 25), "ethnic self-consciousness", "ethnic consciousness" and "consciousness of ethnos," and "incomplete ethnic parameters" of some "ethnoses", such as the Chukchi (Bromley and Kozlov 1989: 432).

graphic textbooks, published with the support of the Soros Foundation, duplicated the old “ethnos”-theory as a fundamental of anthropological knowledge (Abashin 2008). Thanks to the popularizing activity of Bromley himself, as well as of other professional ethnographers and writers, a huge number of volumes dealing with ethnic issues were published for the wider public.⁴⁴ Thus, the idea of “the totality of ethnic phenomena,” as Bromley and Kozlov (1989: 425–426) put it, was employed to characterize not only various communities of humankind, as Soviet and post-Soviet ethnographers imagined it, but also the broad dissemination of Soviet discourse on ethnicity.

Post-Soviet political elites support ethnos-theories produced during Soviet times because they are familiar with them (as a result of their Soviet educational background); thus, this can and does serve as the basis of the “national/ethnic worldview” of the majority of ex-Soviet citizens, educated or not. Whether we regard Soviet “ethnophilia” as a permanent crisis of a social science under totalitarianism, or whether we see it as a theoretical construction, the end result is the “ethnization” of ex-Soviet populations. This process touched not only the populations of the Soviet Union but all countries of the Soviet bloc, where Marxism in the academic field was sometimes more “orthodox” than in the USSR,⁴⁵ and where “ethnos”-theory in terms of Bromley’s variant was compulsory for study and use (see, for example, Hristov 2006: 79). In Russia, “ethnophilia” as an academic approach could not explain the post-Soviet tide of nationalisms and sovereignties. Therefore, its applied significance and practical validity were of little importance when ex-Soviet anthropologists were faced with the challenge of ethnic conflicts and wars, for example. However, as an educational dogma, ethnophilia introduced ethnic fundamentals of life into people’s everyday practices.

Thus, Soviet anthropology, at least in the mainstream, developed under the control of the political power of the state, and attempted to correspond to every new direction and the general needs of the Soviet governing body, which have often been contradictory and unclear. The choice of ethnos-theory was more or less systematic, but was accompanied by random political events. For many anthropologists working in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, the main bases of ethnos-theory were no more than obligatory formulas to be used in their publications.

⁴⁴ For example, the twenty-volume “popular” edition of *Countries and Peoples* edited by Bromley from 1978 to 1985; see also Bromley and Podol’nyi 1990; Cheboksarov and Cheboksarova 1985.

⁴⁵ Russian ethnographer Boris Putilov (1919–1997) told me in conversation about his problems in preparing a volume of the *Corpus of Ethnographic Notions and Terms*, which he edited together with colleagues from the GDR. His colleagues allegedly tried to rewrite from a Marxist point of view almost every statement contained in numerous articles by various authors. Their insistence on the revision of many articles seriously delayed the publication.

It is not surprising, perhaps, that Soviet ethnographers did not publish anything concerning “Greek ethnicity” in the period of the 1930s to the early 1950s,⁴⁶ because it was stigmatized as dangerous and subversive in terms of Soviet power by Stalinist classificatory frameworks. According to the ethnogenetic conceptions shared by the majority of Soviet ethnographers, every ethnos has its own history, and the task for a researcher was to “discover” the ancestral home territories (*prarodina*, literally, “pre-motherland”; sometimes translated as “homeland”) for a certain ethnos. The researcher’s task is to try to reconstruct an ethnic history using ethnographic, folkloric, linguistic, archaeological and anthropological (in a physical sense) materials, as well as written sources. There were many problems inherent in such reconstructions (some, dealing with Central Asian ethnoses, are discussed in Laruelle 2008). As for the Greeks, on one hand, their ethnic history was well established, and continuity between Ancient Greeks and Modern Greeks seemed obvious. However, it was necessary to use new terminology and key terms from Stalin’s speeches and works. On the other hand, the case of the Greeks was in relation to “ethnic” interpretation simultaneously unclear and dangerous in a political sense. Furthermore, it was uninteresting because Greek Autonomous Districts created in the late 1920s and early 1930s in the south of Russia were abolished in 1938. Consequently, Greeks had no legal foundation for justifying their “ethnic territory”. Ethnographic research of Greeks was politically dangerous because the Greek population of the USSR was repressed, for the most part. Many had been moved to Siberia, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan from the late 1930s to the early 1950s. From the literature I have uncovered on this topic, the first publications discussing Greek “ethnogenesis” appeared in the early 1950s as a result of *Meeting on the Methodology of Ethnogenetic Research in the Light of Stalin’s Teaching on Nation and Language* (1951). For example, academician Tiumentsev, an early Soviet Marxist historian of the Ancient world, in his article “Towards the Question on Ethnogenesis of the Greek People” (Tiumentsev 1953; 1954), discussed various conceptions of the ethnic origin of the Ancient Greeks. Later, Greek “ethnogenesis” and the continuity of the “ethnic history” of the Greeks became more accepted, even an obligatory element in all Soviet Hellenic studies in archaeology, history, linguistics, and ethnography.

In “The Greeks”, a chapter published in *The Peoples of Foreign Europe*, Poulanos and Ivanova used the “ethnogenetic” views of Soviet ethnography to argue that “the modern Greeks are descendants of the Ancient Greeks and those comparatively innumerable foreign-tribal (*inoplemenykh*) groups, who had admixed to them and adopted the Greek language” (1964: 569; my translation). This point of view was common to all Soviet investigations of Greek history, be they of Ancient

⁴⁶ I know of only one article, published in 1936, in the main Soviet ethnographic journal; it dealt with the wedding ritual of Abkhazian Greeks (Akritis 1936).

Greece, the Pontian Empire, Byzantium, Porte, or modern day Greece. In characterizing modern Greek rituals and elements of everyday life, Poulianos and Ivanova repeatedly demonstrate parallels to Ancient Greece. In general, their chapter is not an example of the orthodoxy of Soviet “ethnophilia”; rather, it represents that kind of ethnographic writing labeled by Zil’berman as theoretically apathetic (1976: 145).⁴⁷ They described, according to a uniform scheme, various aspects of the modern life of the Greek people and their history, such as “geographical environment,” “population,” “ethnic history,” “language and ethnic groups of the Greeks,” “economy (*khoziaistvo*),” “food,” “settlements and adobes,” “clothes,” “public and family life,” “beliefs,” “popular art,” and “cultural life”. They also mention the Communist Party of Greece, its role in the modern history of Greece, as well as the repression of communists after the Civil War. They do not mention the evacuation of Greek communists from Greece via Albania and then by boat to the Soviet Union despite the fact that one of the authors (Poulianos, born in Greece in 1924) in 1947/48 supported the struggling communist forces during the Civil War. A communist himself, he left Greece for the USA where he obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology, then joined Greek communists who were settled in Uzbekistan (in the USSR). In about 1958, Poulianos moved from Tashkent to Moscow where he defended his candidate dissertation in Physical Anthropology and published various articles dealing with questions of the physical anthropology of Greek populations. In 1965, immediately after publishing his co-authored work in *The Peoples of Foreign Europe*, he migrated to Greece where he became a specialist in prehistory and palaeoanthropology.

The Khrushchev years softened the political climate in the Soviet Union. It became possible to publish ethnographies concerning repressed peoples, albeit so long as the piece did not mention the fact of repression. In 1962, *The Peoples of Caucasus* was published, which contained Akritas’ chapter on the “The Greeks of Caucasus.” The author was at that time a specialist in Caucasian archaeology and a professor at the university in Nalchik, although he began his career as a specialist in the ethnography of the Caucasian Greeks (see, for example, Akritas 1925, 1936).

Akritas does not tie any ancient Greek settlers to contemporary Greek populations on the northern Black Sea coast, insisting that “the history of modern Greek populations of Caucasus does not extend earlier than the eighteen century” (1962: 422; my translation). Using documents from the

⁴⁷ In characterizing Soviet anthropology of the 1940s and 1950s, Zil’berman notes that “only those ethnographers survived who successfully combined theoretical apathy with automatism in the use of Marxist formulae, and thus were able to do what was required of them by the new social policy” (Zil’berman 1976: 145).

Central State Historical Archive of Georgia, he argues that the first Greek settlers of the region were invited from Turkey by Georgian King Ieraklii II. In 1763 they arrived at the territory of contemporary Armenia, which was part of the Georgian kingdom at the time; the first party of migrants consisted of miners and their families (Akritas 1962: 422). Appealing to the “ethnogenetic” discourse of his own time, Akritas sought to show the impossibility of arguing for a territory inside the USSR that would be the “ethnic territory” for a “Greek ethnos”. In discussing Caucasian Greeks’ “ethnogenesis,” he states that it “is distinct in significant complexity” (1962: 424; my translation). He argues that they are “undoubtedly” descendants of the Ancient Greeks but experienced multiple “ethnic and cultural influences” from the Turks, the Armenians, the Georgians, the Russians, and other peoples. The ties with neighboring peoples resulted in local specificities of “separate groups of the Caucasian Greeks” (1962: 424; my translation). The settlement of Greeks across the Caucasus region is characterized by Akritas as occurring in “ethnographic spots” among other populations (1962: 424; my translation). Thus, in his brief description of Soviet Greeks, Akritas uses the typical contemporary apparatus of ethnogenetic research.

At the same time, Akritas repeats the rhetoric of Soviet propaganda in a demonstration of Party loyalty, as in the following examples:

Urban Greek workers and the rural poor met the Great October Revolution [of 1917] with huge enthusiasm. Working Greeks of Caucasus decisively took the side of the revolution, having been thrown into the common stream of the revolutionary movement of Russian, Georgian and other peoples, and took part together with them and under their supervision in the struggle for the triumph of socialism ...

The Soviet regime [*stroï*] has extruded the old lifestyle [*byt*] and age-old prejudices, restrained social progress and served as an instrument for the exploitation of working people, from the life of the Greeks. Like the other peoples of the USSR, the Greeks lead a new, happy life, which is possible only under the conditions of a socialist society. (Akritas 1962: 424, 432; my translation)

Akritas demonstrates not only his own adherence to the Party line but also ordinary people’s devotion to it. When discussing the “preliterate” condition of the Urum and their folklore, he adds:

After the October Revolution, new literature and oral folk art, national in form and socialist in content, appeared and was gradually developed among the Greeks of the USSR. The folk songs are rather varied: among them, pre-revolutionary and

revolutionary motives—as well as kolkhozes’ building, songs on Lenin, on the Communist Party—found their place. Here is a verse from one of them:

‘Branches’ and ‘boughs’ of you let them grow,
 Lenin, who loves any nation.
 Let them disappear those who don’t like you,
 Lenin, who loves any nation. (Akritis 1962: 430; my translation)

To dismiss Akritis as being just another dedicated Marxist–Leninist is to be unfamiliar with the double thinking of the Soviet epoch. After the collapse of the USSR, there was significant interest among Soviet Greeks in their history, identity, and political life, and this was expressed in numerous publications. In these, some of Akritis’ biographical details are available (see Chitlov, Chitlov, and Gurieli 1992: 201–202; Zmakina 1994; Dzhukha 2006). Panaiot Akritis (1880–1968) was born in a village not far from Tsalka, in Georgia. He graduated as a schoolteacher and taught in schools, publishing articles in Tiflis newspapers from time to time about the Tsalka Greeks. During the 1917 Revolution he was a member of the SR Party (the party of socialist revolutionaries – one of the non-Marxist socialist parties of the Russian Empire) and participated in the revolutionary movement in Nizhny Novgorod. Later, he moved to Penza, where he was appointed a representative of the caretaker government. In 1920 he was elected as chairman of the People’s Assembly of Hellenes-Peasants of Eastern Georgia. The aim of this local organization was the collective migration of all the Tsalka Greek population to Greece. After a six-month visit to Greek Macedonia by a group of representatives from the Assembly headed by Akritis, a Migration Committee was formed which began preparations for the migration to Greece after an agreement with the Greek government. However, at this historical moment, the Bolsheviks captured Georgia, and Akritis was forced to go into hiding. He would appear in Tsalka again only after a year of underground existence. In mid 1937, when the first arrests of Greeks began, he moved to Moscow and became a conductor on the No 1 train from Moscow to Vladivostok. In travelling between these two cities he evaded notice and so survived the most dangerous period of the “Greek operation”. In post-perestroika publications produced by members of Greek communities, Akritis is considered to have had a significant impact on contemporary social science, as well as being regarded as an activist working for the human rights of the Greek population of the USSR (Chitlov, Chitlov, and Gurieli 1992: 202). Consequently, according to his biographical data, Akritis cannot be ranked among consistent proponents of Communist Party ideology. At the same time, he did employ many of the standard tropes of loyalty, and covered such topics as Soviet folklore, which allowed his work to be published.

Iulia Ivanova, mentioned above, co-author of “The Greeks”, was a researcher at the Institute of Ethnography and had been a specialist in Albanian ethnography. Beginning with publication of this chapter, however, she started to study the Greeks. She wrote a series of chapters in monographs, which touch upon calendar and family rituals among European peoples (“ethnoses”); gradually her interests shifted to studying Greek communities inside the USSR. First, Ivanova looked at the Mariupol Greeks; later, she conducted field research among various groups of Greeks in Georgia, Abkhazia and the North Caucasus, and became the main specialist in Greek ethnicity in the Soviet Union. She employs the full arsenal of Soviet “ethnos”-theory, even in her later works. When Tishkov held the post of Director of the Institute of Ethnography, he introduced a new series of publications called *Research in Applied and Urgent Ethnology (Issledovaniia po prikladnoi i neotlozhnoi etnologii)*. One of these included a report by Ivanova (1990) on the “Greek question” in the USSR (and especially in the Georgian regions), in which she presents an analysis of the circumstances regarding migration to Greece. At this time, claims for national or ethnic territories were part of everyday Soviet political discussions. In response, Ivanova tries to separate the notions of “ethnos” and “territory”:

The natural, in terms of historical development, formation of the polyethnic population in a certain concrete territory comes into conflict with the wish of every ethnos to save its separate environment as a condition for the reproduction of its ethnic culture. This contradiction might be removed on the assumption of an absolute equality of all ethnic units in the face of a whole society. But if we consider an ethnic territory as an administrative-economic unit simultaneously, that contradiction takes on a tragic form. Notions like ‘the main people,’ ‘the indigenous people,’ ‘the nationality that provided a republic with its name,’ appear to be foregrounded. The same notion of ‘indigenous’ as well as ‘native’ in regard to a people-ethnos is anti-historical. (Ivanova 1990: 6; my translation)

Here, the territory (as well as claims on it) is taken beyond the notion of “ethnos” and is confronted with the Stalinist connection of nation and territory, so significant in the conceptions highlighted by Bromley and Gumilev. Regardless of the potential for far-reaching consequences in terms of theory, Ivanova’s report is aimed at practical issues—how to defend an “ethnos” without “ethnic territory” and territorial claims arising from the nationalism of other “ethnoses,” as well as subsequent forced migration. It also explores how to improve the existing conditions for migration if indeed it proves impossible to avoid this migration process.

In an article published in 1997, “Cultural community – the Pontians”, Ivanova views “culture” in terms of “ethnic culture”, arguing that the Greeks of North Caucasus and Transcaucasia form a

single community in terms of their language, self-designation, and “main cultural features” (Ivanova 1997: 6). At the same time, she notes, “it is possible to recognize a few local groups” among the Caucasian Greeks and connects their difference with geographical environments in Turkey and in Russia, as well as with their “circumstances of social being” (Ivanova 1997: 6). Discussing the community problem, she also argues that:

Most probably, the Pontians may be defined as an ethnic community unified according to its origin, the same historical destinies, language belonging, the main features of ethnic culture, ethnic character, and ethnic self-consciousness ... It is necessary to discern local ethnographic groups among the Pontians. (Ivanova 1997: 12; my translation)

Here, the rhetoric of “ethnos”-theory familiar to (post-)Soviet readers overshadows the newly declared problems of “community” and “groups”. Ivanova mentions only two groups of Pontians in the region—the Urums of Tsalka and the Kars Greeks. The latter she acknowledges as a “distinguished group of Pontians,” yet at the same time she fails to acknowledge them as “a special ethno-cultural group” (Ivanova 1997: 13). Furthermore, Ivanova introduces to the Soviet model of “ethnic processes” an “ethno-ecological” perspective, which led her to statements such as the following:

The Caucasian Greeks manifested a high level of adaptation—both biological and extra-biological. The economic complex of villagers—the main bearers of the ethnic culture of life necessities,^[48] major agricultural crops, traditional food regimes, instruments of labor, transport, settlements, construction materials for housing and utility structures, and in part their architecture—all of this is a result of an appropriate process of exchange between society and nature, its qualitative and quantitative effects. Thus, means of production, products of consumption (i.e., its results), the matter and energy of nature – all together they acquire a social function, which we can define as the methods, forms and measures of vital activity. (Ivanova 1997: 18; my translation)

In such ways, Soviet “ethnos”-theory undergoes a process of a sort of modernization under the influence of the new anthropological knowledge available to ex-Soviet anthropologists as a result of perestroika. Here, we can see ideas from the field of system theory, ecology and Malinovskian

⁴⁸ The concept of “life necessities” was introduced in Soviet ethnography by Eduard Markarian, Sergei Arutiunov and their co-authors (Markarian, Arutiunov, Barsegian, Engibarjan, Melkonian, Mkrtumian and Saringulian 1983); it more or less corresponds to Malinowski’s (1944) concept of “basic needs”.

functionalism, which Ivanova attempted to coordinate with the theory of ethnos. As a specialist in Greek ethnography, she tried to introduce to her interpretation of economic conditions of Greek villagers some tools barely combined with “ethnos”-theory approaches. At the same time, this search for new tools and for new categories of analysis and interpretation was a sign of a new period in the history of Russian anthropology, one which continued in Russia to the end of the twentieth century.

This brief analysis of some characteristic Soviet ethnographic publications concerning the Greeks shows that Greek studies have ever been on the periphery of Soviet ethnography. At the same time, the “Greek operation”⁴⁹ was among the bloodiest crimes of the Soviet state. The focus on ethnicity over this period created a specifically “ethnic” vision among Soviet ethnographers. Even after perestroika, they continued to view their field (as well as various other) materials through the perspective of ethnicity, classifying the communities and populations that they studied from the perspective of an “ethnographic map of a region;” thus, cartography was also an element of the nation-building project (see Anderson 2006: 170–178). The orders of the Soviet state or, in Bourdieu’s terms (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 239–240), “the imposition of *problématique*” in relation to the production of ethnicity, were fulfilled and even over-fulfilled, using the terminology of the Soviet state controlled economy. This alarmed even Soviet party officials, as Tishkov (1997: 4) notes in his analysis of the activity of the Soviet Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology.⁵⁰ When the new independent Russian Federation encountered the dangers of nationalist movements, responsible politicians confirmed the legitimacy of the ex-Soviet “ethnic” approach in formulating new political tasks both for researchers and administrators.

Conclusion

Greekness as a discourse taken in its historical whole does not so much name something as refer to it. This reference in the present context concerns (post-)Byzantinism both in a territorial and in a political sense. Just as the concept of Modern Greece is a discursive product of Byzantinism,⁵¹ so

⁴⁹ For more information on the repression of Greeks in the USSR, see above in this chapter.

⁵⁰ In 1988, experts from the Institute of Marxism–Leninism and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR accused the Institute of Ethnography and Anthropology of “spreading the metastasis of ethnicity” in Soviet society (Tishkov 1997: 4)

⁵¹ Although, surely, not only it, see, for instance: Herzfeld 1982.

Greekness formed in Russia includes Modern Greece. In the 1980s and 1990s this discourse in practices of Greek societies involved in the campaign of repatriation has been intersected with the Greek discourse on *homogenei*. A new identity appeared at this intersection – Rousso-Ponti – which was later exported to Russia as neo-Pontism.

As has been documented in this chapter, neither discourses on Greekness in Russia, nor populations formed as an outcome of those discourses, produced whole (or even fragments of once-whole) discourses or populations. The process of unification (through the system of legislation, for instance) has been repeatedly broken up with new migrations, which challenged anew the generalizing or homogenizing aspirations of powers. There were two serious attempts in the twentieth century to organize the various Greek populations into a specific ethnic enclave: the first—korenization—from above, in the 1930s; and the second—the Greek movement—from below, from the late 1980s onwards. Throughout both these periods, discussions of Greek identity were connected to the status of the nation and, correspondingly, to the issue of land. The contemporary Greek movement, which has striven to achieve coherent hierarchical structures since the late 1980s, has witnessed an ongoing process of repatriation. Therefore, the main purpose of the discourse of a common ex-Soviet Greek identity shifted from a future life in Russia to a future life in Greece, guaranteed by the program of repatriation.

The program of repatriation (from ex-Soviet countries to Greece) is in part a device of Greek identity production, which appeared, as outlined here, at the crossroads of Russian and Greek discourses on identity. At the same time, the openness of Greek communities to marriages with representatives of other ethnic groups is well known (see above in this chapter). Therefore, the discourse on identity is a chosen discourse: it is a choice and acceptance of identity by the varied post-Soviet Greek populations that is recognizable by the state, as well as being a choice that results from the social position of that identity.

This chapter has also sought to demonstrate what kind of discourse is currently active regarding personal or group ethnic/national identity in Russia and in other post-Soviet countries. I have argued that ethnic categories remain popular to the present day and serve as an important element of identity for the ex-Soviet population (including in relation to Greek identity). This has occurred as a result of the education system of the USSR, which was, like the academic field, closed to external influences and under full control of Communist Party ideologists. The long-standing expansion of ethnos-theory led to the formation of an ethnicized worldview and of an ethnicized

identity in relation to all the populations of the ex-Soviet Union—a situation that turned ethnic origin into a significant category for people and groups.

Chapter 2

Representations of Pontianness in a Greek Village in Russia

In this chapter I argue that the identity "Pontians", equally characteristic of Tsalkean Urums (Turkish-speaking group) and local Romaikos (Greek-speaking group), can be manifested via private business activity as well as via activity of a local Greek society. This identity is enrooted in the remoteness of the settlement of Greeks in the region and their contribution to the liberation of the region from fascist occupation during the Second World War.

The First Meeting

I arrived in the city of Krasnodar, Russia, in the hot summer of 2010. First of all, I had to solve some issues connected with my long absence from Russia. Simultaneously I decided to run up to two field sites I planned to visit before. I had had old friends in one of them and I was interested to see how their lives had changed since my last visit to their village in 2006. The other settlement—the village of Bogatyrskoe—I visited only once, in 2007, when I had a meeting with the head of the local administration and the chair of the Greek Society. Both those cases were interesting to me, because they were populated by different groups of Greeks: the Urums from Tsalka in one case and the Romaikos in the other case.

I set off for Bogatyrskoe to make acquaintances among the local people and to find out where I could stay for an extended period. When I drove into the village, I was amazed by the changes that had happened there during the last few years. I realized that the place of my fieldwork would be limited to that village.

The range of commercial construction was grandiose. An ordinary single stage village had been transformed into a tourist center with a multitude of high-rise hotels in the western part of it, adjacent to sandy beaches of the Black Sea, and with a big retail and entertainment complex called by locals *Paralia* (from Greek παραλία "beach"). After spending a few hours in the village, I was convinced that the only available status for my family and I in the circumstances of high season was to act as tourists. Moreover, there were many forest fires in Central Russia then, consequently a lot of people fled from the haze-covered towns to the South, and the village experienced an influx of tourists. It was impossible even to dream about settling the family because it seemed to me that all the families were trying to earn "big money" thanks to the influx. Along with hotels, the "private sector" also offers beds, rooms, flats and houses for tourists. This sort of commercial activity is situated as a rule in the sphere of informal economy (but I had to get receipts for my financial report!).

On returning to Krasnodar, I began to ask among my acquaintances whether they had connections with a circle of Bogatyrskoe private hotels owners. I was already familiar with the situation there and knew that the majority of hotel owners represented the Greek population of the village. My acquaintances recommended the guesthouse of Pontos. However, I could not get through to the reception, so we decided to drive there all together (I mean my family: wife and two children) without making any advance booking. The journey from Krasnodar was not too long – about three hours by car – but the temperature was very high, reaching 45 degrees Celsius.

When we had arrived at the hotel we discovered that prices there were higher than we had expected, and that our budget would not allow us to stay in such "field conditions" for a long period. After discussing the options, we decided to stay there.

The owner cordially greeted us at the reception desk and after discussing things with his guests soon offered us all a generous discount adding "especially for you" and smiling. When we had resided in the hotel for a while, I started to get to know the owner and his family, as well as other locals and the renovated village itself.

When speaking about the owner of the hotel—his name is Vladimir T.—I found it difficult to construct a consistent image or draw a general "picture" of him. Different and contrasting qualities are combined in his conduct: cunning and sincerity, greed and generosity, reticence and a wish to "show himself," aspiration for communication and fear of having a loose tongue. On the one hand, Vladimir is, of course, a product of the Soviet epoch; he still believes in "ideals of communism," on the other hand, he is an experienced businessman, having lived through all the phases of a formation of private entrepreneurship in Russia. Moreover, he had grown up in a large Tsalka family in a rural

district with few resources and his aspiration “to be rich” is enrooted in coping with his earlier experience. We did not make friends with him immediately. Since he found out that I was writing a dissertation about the Russian Greeks, he treated me with some distrust and seemed to avoid us. Nevertheless, we reached an agreement concerning our meeting in the hotel’s café. Vladimir appeared there together with his personal lawyer—a fairly rich man (judging by his car and clothes) who had come from Novorossiysk (about 60 km away) especially for our meeting.

I am certainly not a supporter of a formalization of my field contacts and meetings. The initiative to organize such a meeting belonged to Vladimir. When he found out that I was interested in his personality, family, and business, he, feeling an inconvenience thanks to my interest, as it seemed, decided to formalize our contacts. Again, it was obvious that he wanted to check whether we were the same people we pretended to be (I mean, anthropologists). As I have noted, during the first two-three days of our stay in the hotel, Vladimir had been avoiding contact and trying not to run into us in the hotel where he usually spent all his time. On the morning of our third day he came to us during breakfast and offered to meet in the café at 9 pm. We readily accepted his invitation. However, we were late for the meeting since we were busy in another (single storied) part of the village looking into the internal problems of a big Greek family, members of which could not come to any agreement concerning how to divide the real estate they had inherited from their deceased father.

We were about thirty minutes late. However, Vladimir, his son Ilia, and his lawyer Ivan, were waiting for us on a dark balcony of the café. We put our children to bed and then came back down to the café. Vladimir introduced Ivan as his cousin (we were already acquainted with his son) and added: “This is my advocate.” Lights were switched on in the café and a waitress brought candles. Vladimir offered drinks and various refreshments (we discovered later that the kitchen was usually closed after 4 p.m., however, that day Vladimir kept it open and a cook was ready to prepare any dish, just in case we wanted to have dinner; but we were content with just some tea and coffee). The conversation dragged at the beginning. He answered my questions reluctantly or merely dismissed the matter with a joke. He did not even name his native village in Tsalka that night—“In which village were you born?”; “I was born in a village in Tsalka, Georgia.” Only about two weeks later, when talking with Vladimir I mentioned several names of Tsalka villages, he was so happy to hear them and surprised that I was familiar with those names that he revealed that he was born in the village of Avranlo.

The more informal our meeting became, the more Ivan, the lawyer, demonstrated his boredom. He tried to leave a few times but Vladimir did not let him go and Ivan left us after about an

hour and a half. I tried to get Ivan talking, but he was not in the mood for communication. The only thing he told me was that he was also from Tsalka. Thus, during the conversation Vladimir tried to find out more about us than talk about himself. So, for example, since he understood that I was writing my dissertation in English, not in Norwegian, he sent his son off somewhere and explained to us: “Now, my niece is coming. She is from Greece. Speak English to her. She has very good English.” The niece (about 25) arrived together with Vladimir’s daughter and another niece from Rostov-on-Don. During our conversation with the Greek niece, Vladimir had been briefly questioning her about using their mother tongue—the language of the Urums of Tsalka (a dialect of Turkish). Apparently, her answers had completely satisfied him. He apologized to us for speaking Turkish and explained that the niece did not understand Russian and could only speak Turkish, Greek and English. At the same time, he, Vladimir, was not so fluent in Greek and could not speak English; therefore, he had to communicate with her in Urumian. At once, I found out that parents of the niece had migrated from Tsalka before her birth. She was born in Greece. Her parents could speak Russian and Georgian, but as their home language was Turkish she understood only that language.

Vladimir asked a lot about Norway. When we began discussing the Norwegian economic system he was surprised that an ordinary bank debit card was also a proof of identity and asked me to see it. After I showed the card to him, he appeared to calm down completely, apparently convinced that we had some connections both to Norway and to anthropology.

Our talk gradually came to questions of entrepreneurship and property in Russia. Vladimir said that the best sort of enterprise is one founded on family and kindred relationships:

All the key positions in an enterprise have to belong to the family. Even sustainable, strong corporations do disintegrate if they are not family ones. Everything is built on trust. How can you trust a stranger (*chuzhomu cheloveku*)? Even if he is a friend? Money will set everyone at odds. (my translation)

As an example he suggested his own hotel. As it turned out, a real, legally-recognized owner of the hotel was Ilia, Vladimir’s son. Vladimir’s wife was a head of the internal management unit of the hotel. His daughter and numerous nieces also had formal positions (including the niece from Greece who could not speak Russian and who worked as a waitress—as we discovered—in the hotel’s café). Vladimir himself had no official position at all. However, he fulfilled the functions of manager, auditor, and quality controller of food and services, as well as duties that could include recep-

tionist, security guard or maintenance worker. Everybody in the hotel knew and supported his executive position respecting his customary-law status.

When the lawyer Ivan had left, Vladimir talked a bit about himself and about his entrepreneurial activity. I asked him why he, a well-to-do man, did not try to start his business in Greece.

I've been there. I have visited Greece many times. I have stayed there for a long time. Once I spent about one year there. I have got my Greek passport. But... In Greece it is necessary to have a rest, and it is necessary to work here [in Russia]. I can leave for Greece at any moment. I have been learning the Greek language and can speak a bit. But I have everything here. Especially now, when I have opened the hotel, how can I abandon it all and leave? And for what reason? (my translation).

During that semi-official meeting I understood that Vladimir and his family represent another example of those transformations initiated by the Law on Enterprises and Entrepreneurial Activity (1990, N 445-1).⁵² There was also another matter important to me: a person who says about himself "I am Greek," adds "but my motherland is Russia (*sic*); and I'll never leave her for anywhere. Only if the situation here becomes worse... But it becomes better and better." That is, Vladimir identifies "the situation in Russia" with the situation in his own business, in his own career:

What's Greece? In Greece I am a second-class person, and, whatever I do, I shall be the second-class type forever. And even my children, too. Although they are already grown up. But here I can allow myself to do everything I want, be engaged in any business. Yes, the rules [determined for private business by the state] are changing hourly; yes, we have to adapt ourselves every time and to search for new connections. But I'm at home here, I have no problems coping with all this stuff; I have many connections and I can solve any issues whatever. As for Greece... I'll never be a Greek there, although I am a Greek here. (my translation)

Our meeting finished long after midnight. However, Vladimir was cheerful and talkative and, it seemed, ready to prolong our conversation. But his son reminded him about his appointment for

⁵² This law became inoperative from 01.01.1995. Now there are many laws regulating entrepreneurial activity in Russia; the most important are the Tax and Civil Codes.

early morning the next day. Vladimir made excuses and added: “Well, I could tell and show you a lot if you wanted.”

He kept his word. He acquainted us with many of his relatives who came to stay in the hotel for a few days and helped us to enter friendly relations with them in every possible way. He introduced us to his friends, commented on our impressions. He arranged a kind of excursion for me around all his enterprises in the local cities. He insisted I had to record an interview with his uncle, the eldest member of his family, who lived in Novorossiysk. And so on.

Thanks to that meeting Vladimir could venture to open his private world to us and transferred us to a category of “personal guests” as later became clear. Not all my contacts in Russia, incidentally, coped with their suspicions and even hostility of locals. This is quite typical for fieldwork, though.

The Hotel

The hotel of Pontos is interesting in many respects.

1. *The name.* Pontos, certainly, refers to the Black Sea and also to the Pontian Greeks. Inasmuch as there is no such word in the Russian language (Greek πόντος “sea”), and nobody in Russia, except perhaps for a part of the south-Russian population, is familiar with the term “Pontians”,⁵³ this word was associated with a slang word *pont* of the Russian language for the majority of guests of the hotel. One meaning of the word is difficult to render in other languages. It can be translated loosely as “boasting,” “demonstration of one’s superiority” in status, richness or connections, sometimes as “snobbism.” Spread of this word, as far as I can judge, is connected with the emergence of private entrepreneurship and relates to a criminal world. Thereby it is possible to recall an old anecdote:

⁵³ As Popov noted, “before the beginning of the 1990s, the majority of my [Greek] informants [in Russia] had never heard of the name *Pontians*” (Popov 2004: 86). His questions about Pontianness evoked discussions among his Urum informants: “They agreed with each other that they were *Pontians*, although this term became known to them after the start of their visits to Greece (about 1996, before they preferred to go to Turkey for commercial purposes)” (ibid: 87).

Two businessmen meet. Both of them have the same crimson neckties. One asks:

- Where did you buy your tie?

- Here, in a shop around the corner, for five bucks.

- You are a fool, Vasia! I bought mine in a designer brand boutique, for one hundred bucks!

- Super... (my translation)

This anecdote illustrates a certain notion of what a *pont* is (see also MacFadyen 2009). So, the name of the hotel is associated just with that concept and discourse related to it for the majority of the hotel's guests. I could understand from our talks that even when they became familiar with what *pontos* was in Greek and who the Pontians were, they could not ignore Russian connotations. The majority of the guests did like the name Pontos, as it, apparently, corresponds with their own everyday customs.

Vladimir's wish to name the hotel in such a way can be, certainly, explained with his awareness of his Greekness, his Pontianess. As I have already noted, the Turkish-speaking Greeks often feel a certain discomfort when admitting that their mother tongue is Turkish. As Popov put it in this connection, "the Turkish word *Musulmanka* (Muslim language) which is the Urum's name for their mother tongue, shows that language is a sensitive trait of their identity" (Popov 2004: 87). According to Ivanova's fieldwork materials, the Tsalka Greeks preferred to speak about their vernacular "our Greek language" (Ivanova 1997: 12) (i.e., ethnicity dominates language!). The logic is that: we are the Greeks, therefore any language we speak is Greek. Roger Just, for example, is prone to characterize that kind of identity (namely the Greek identity) as a demonstration of "the literal continuity of a race, a people, an *ethnos* who are the natural *bearers* of that [classical Greek] culture" (Just 1989: 84). Along with stressing the naturalness of bearers, Just also argues that, according to Greek laographia, the *elleniko pnevma* (Greek spirit) is also an important component of justification of Greekness (ibid) as a certain constant, while a language (Greek or any other) is just a variable. So, Greekness is a natural characteristic of people, but the language is variable, temporary and depends on social conditions.

The use of a Greek word by Vladimir refers to ancestral home territories (*prarodina*) and to the name "Pontians", which was practically unfamiliar to the ex-Soviet Greeks before their mass mi-

gration to Greece.⁵⁴ The name Pontos is, further, a pretension for identity, a manifestation of a discourse on identity for “initiates,” for “those who know.” These “initiates” are the referent group which that name is mainly directed to—the Greeks-Romaikos—who are the dominant majority of the village Greek population. (See more about relationships of the Tsalkeans and the local Greeks below.)

Vladimir borrowed the name of his hotel from his own firm, Pontos. The firm started up in 2007 for the trading of doors and building materials produced in various Russian regions, as well as in China and Spain. Apparently, the revenue Vladimir had from his firm allowed him to build the hotel. Now, the Trading House of Pontos has branches (storages and “salons”) in Anapa, Novorossiysk (two), Gelendzhik and Krasnodar. Thus, his first public attempt to manifest his Pontian identity can be traced back to 2007.

2. *Interior.* There are five floors in the hotel, each with rooms for guests or staff. Rooms in the basement were allocated to the staff. These rooms were smaller than those for guests, had insufficient lighting, and noisy thanks to the adjacent washroom full of washing machines running continually during the high season. Sometimes Vladimir might suggest these rooms for those guests who decided to stay in the hotel longer and had to wait for a room for two or three days. These rooms were much cheaper. The first floor rooms (standard guest rooms) were allocated for visitors, but during our stay at the hotel they had been used as rooms for Vladimir’s family and relatives. The second, third and fourth floors were reserved solely for guests. Mainly there were double rooms with one extra place on a sofa. We stayed in such a room with a large balcony (then we moved to a room with a small balcony). On the first day, Vladimir provided a child’s bed in our room (it was necessary for my daughter who was two and a half years old at the time, my ten-year-old son made himself comfortable on the sofa). Studios and suites (one per floor) were also available on these “guest” floors.

The first floor attracted my special attention, certainly, where such public places as reception and café were situated. There Vladimir placed some signs of his identity which, together with the name of the hotel, form a sort of semiotic text.

⁵⁴ Read about discussions on ‘Pontianness’ in the USSR of the 1930s in chapter 1.



Plate 2.01. Contour map of the Black Sea on the wall in the hotel cafe.

A map hung on a wall in the café. The map was rendered using a technique of bas-relief and depicted the Black Sea with adjacent territories. The Black Sea is marked in Russian capital letters in the antiquated style: **ГОСТЕПРИИМНОЕ МОРЕ ЭВКСИНОС ПОНТОС** (that is “hospitable sea” in Russian and Greek, Plate 2.01). A cluster of cities surrounds the sea (Byzantium, Nicomedia, Sinope, Trapezunt, Gorgippia, Theodosia, Chersonese and others). This relief map is actually not hanging on the wall, but is a part of the wall, it projects from the wall as a three-dimensional relief of Caucasian and Anatolian mountains. It is undoubtedly a “prolongation” of the hotel’s name, comments on it, and informs what kind of *pont*, Greek or Russian, is implied. The map and the hotel’s name are linked inseparably. Thus, Vladimir’s identity manifestation did not come to a halt on an invention of the name. He moves on and shows his identity attached to a territory, joining the Krasnodar region of Russia, the Tsalka district of Georgia, and the Trebizond Vilayet of the Ottoman Empire, whence his ancestors came to Tsalka, in a single map. He excludes Greece. It is interesting that the surrounding areas that belong to both Tsalkeans by origin, and local Greeks, are speckled with Greek names such as Patra, Ellada, Saloniki, Afina, Pellopones, Makedoniia (Rus. transcriptions) and many others. The owners of local hotels even try to make architectural references to Greece, antique or modern. The hotel of Vladimir is a unique one as far as it manifests “Pontianness” exactly. That is not to say that the “theme of Greece” is not represented in the hotel’s interior. A bar in the same café, for example, is decorated with a Parthenon bas-relief and “Greek” ornament as well as statues of Ancient Greek

gods, with a huge bottle of Metaxa towering over the rest of the drinks typical for a bar. Yet, it is impossible to order Ouzo or Greek wine of any kind. Since the brandy Metaxa is the most famous Greek drink in Russia, Vladimir has chosen the most recognizable sign of Greece in the field of alcohol production. Another reference to Greece is a series of wall clocks behind the reception desk. There are names of cities under each clock, Athens among them (along with Tokyo, Moscow, London and New York). It is supposed that guests might want to know the time in their home country (although I am not sure that Tokyoites, for example, would be satisfied with such a difference in minutes (see Plate 2.02).



Plate 2.02. Reception desk and wall clocks with Athenian time in the middle.

Thus, Greece is presented in the hotel's interior in the form of understandable signs for a non-Greek guest. Indeed, the signs are also proof of identity of a creator of that interior, but, say, of the second order. As Vladimir is considered second class in Greece, so Greekness is represented in his "exposition of signs" in second place only. In first place is, of course, his Pontianness.

3. *Hotel's premises.* The area around the hotel is not big. It is enclosed by a yellow brick wall. Vladimir planned to extend the enclosed area and was in negotiations with the owners of a plot behind the hotel. He wanted to buy the plot that stretched down to a little river. In 2010 this river was polluted and full of sludge. Vladimir was going to clean it and stock it with fish, so that guests could enjoy fishing straight from the hotel's premises. It would not be just an extension of the premises. When the hotel was opened, there was only one small swimming pool situated at the front of the

hotel. One year later Vladimir opened new premises behind the hotel for guests. He built a big swimming pool there in the shape of sun glasses, and also pavilions, playground, a little fountain, a barbeque facility, and a place for dancing or open-air cinema.

Thus, Vladimir develops his business intensively, investing his earnings in new projects. He commented on this in such a way:

Probably, I'll never stop. I need to move on all the while. Somebody opens a café and then remains sitting there, living off the café. I cannot do that. For me the point of life is development. Thank God, space to develop still exists (my translation).

A patio for dancing near the swimming pool was occupied almost every evening by Vladimir's children and nieces (Plate 2.03). They would put on Greek or Caucasian music and dance for a few hours. The elder members of the family never participated in the dancing.



Plate 2.03. Dancing near the pool

Every day Vladimir walked the hotel grounds, paying special attention to the big swimming pool. Usually he went over to the guests spending their time at the swimming pool, asked them about their mood, found out their complaints and wishes, or just talked to them about various topics. From time to time, he played backgammon with his friends—hotel owners from Tsalka—often he spent some time at the swimming pool together with his relatives. Although he had never swum in the hotel's swimming pools, once, he had to swim in the big pool, when he had lost at cards and the winners—his relatives—decided to penalize him in such a way. Thus, despite Vladimir's own rules concerning maintaining a demarcation line between staff and guests, he could easily break his business rule in the interest of gamesmanship. By the way, many of our new acquaintances stayed at the hotel, and we noted regular crossings of that borderline by Vladimir, his "certain importunities," as they said. Some of the guests were even apt to interpret his notes concerning rules of conduct in the hotel as an attempt upon their privacy. Indeed, Vladimir considered it his duty as a host taking in guests to keep them under attentive observation in order to guard against any possible damage to his property. He carefully investigated every case involving children spoiling the rubber rings purchased by him for the swimming pool. Only when he was convinced that the person responsible for the damage was one of his nephews, who could conduct themselves much more freely than any of guests' children, did he stop his investigations.

Once, at dinner, Vladimir came to my wife and said: "Your boy tore off a piece of Venetian stucco on a pillar at the public room." My wife replied that we would find out how it had happened and would come to Vladimir after dinner. As it turned out, when the children together were going from the room to the café (I was still in the room and my wife was already in the café), my daughter decided to glue a sticker she found in a candy wrapper on a pillar. She succeeded, and my son, trying to remove evidence of his sister's activity, tore off the sticker... together with a big piece of plaster. When I learned the facts, I decided that perhaps our short friendship with Vladimir was over since the events were potentially becoming scandalous. However, as it seems, Vladimir also understood and did not reject promises he had already made. He forgave us generously and did not demand any compensation.

4. *Vladimir's biography.* According to our conversations on various topics, I could compile a version of his biography, which could serve together with my observations as an additional dimension to the story of this interesting person. The reluctance of Vladimir to talk about himself can be easily explained with his engagement in business and in a network of relationships with powerful people of his region (any business is in practice impossible in Russia without such relationships). Therefore, while Vladimir is interested in promoting his commercial projects, he is not so interested

in revealing personal details. Indeed, a biographical draft is created not so much from “facts” of life, as from “imaginaries.” But the difference between Vladimir and my Greek acquaintances who migrated from the USSR/post-Soviet countries is that he had to construct his biography with caution. He had to take into account that we, as past local residents (my wife, for example, was born in a nearby city, to which she returned with her Master's degree in Anthropology and went to work as a police officer), could know or find out something about him, something he did not want to disclose. A certain suspiciousness and caution when talking about himself and his family have never left Vladimir.

He was born in 1963 in the village of Avranlo of Tsalka rural district, Georgia, into a large Greek family. His mother tongues are the Tsalka Urum's dialect of Turkish, and also the Russian language. He finished school in his native village and then entered the Astrakhan' Technical Institute of Fishing Industry. After graduating in 1985 as a ship's engineer, he came to Vladivostok (Russian Far East), found a job in the *Rybprom*,⁵⁵ and, as a result, practiced his skills on fishing vessels for three years (1986-1989). During this period, he joined the Communist Party of the USSR. Vladimir insists even now that communist ideals are close to him and his joining the Party was not related to any career opportunities. At the same time, as it is well known, it was barely possible to be an employee in the Soviet fishing fleet unless you were a member of the Communist Party. Fishing boats made many voyages to foreign ports. As it seems, Soviet security bodies supposed that it was easier for them to keep ideological control over Party members than over unaffiliated persons. In 1988, Vladimir moved to Novorossiysk (Black Sea port) and continued working at the *Rybprom*. But in 1989 the Novorossiysk *Rybprom* went bankrupt and Vladimir found himself without a job. Knudsen and Toje (2008) described the situation in the fisheries sector as a “collapse of the Union, collapse in the fisheries.” They characterize the state of affairs in ocean-going fleet in the following way:

The ocean-going fleet with bases in Black Sea ports declined rapidly after the collapse of the Soviet Union and was abandoned on the Russian shores of the Black Sea. These units were largely dependent on both logistical and political aid from the state in order to deliver their catch in the international waters in which they were operating far from home. This fleet was extremely resource-intensive, demanding large inputs of capital to attend to the costs of repair, equipment and bunkers. These factors made it difficult for emerging private investors to take the place of the Soviet state. The sharp decline in delivery from the oceanic fleet threw the large fish factories along the Black Sea shores into crisis. This had effects far beyond the industry itself. (Knudsen, Toje 2008: 20)

⁵⁵ The State Fishing Industry Company.

In that situation, Greece attracted his attention. Although he was not familiar with the Modern Greek language, he had a right to seek repatriation. He became a member of the Novorossiysk Greek Society and, with its help, received his first visa to Greece where he could realize his right to repatriation and be granted Greek citizenship. Thanks to several trips to Greece where he had relatives who helped him, Vladimir managed to collect start capital for his future business. (He preferred to keep silent regarding the nature of his job(s) in Greece.) But he rejected a “Greek perspective” of his career.

His knowledge of Turkish allowed him to begin his private business as a shuttle trader from Russia to Turkey and back. From time to time he could find a job in Turkey and once was even appointed as a guide in Trabzon, where he organized excursions for tourists from Russia. His Turkish business resulted in the formation (initially informal) of a commercial network. From 1994-98 he had been supplying various shops and supermarkets with Coca-Cola, juices, pastry etc. Vladimir developed this network and registered it as his first official enterprise in 1998. It was a wholesale and retail network, which he named *Pontos*. Thus, the first time the term *Pontos* appeared as a manifestation of Vladimir's ethnicity in 1998. And it really was a network connecting, through the Black Sea (*Pontos*), the motherland of Vladimir's ancestors (Turkey) with his subsequent motherland, Russia. The network *Pontos* also engaged in the cultivation of transplants for vineyards. Vladimir rented land in Krasnodar and Rostov Regions and was enjoying some success in the business of transplant cultivation. One contributor to his success was the effort, during the Perestroika, of the Soviet Government to solve the problem of “persistent misuse of alcohol” in the country. One of the measures in their struggle was the destruction of vineyards in the South of Russia. Egor Ligachev, the progenitor (although, disputable) of that idea, supposed that he could reduce alcohol consumption in the USSR by such an extraordinary measure. Eventually the process of regeneration of valuable types of vines started. Vladimir participated exactly in that process because he understood at the right time that that agricultural business would reap a great profit for him. From 2002, he expanded his business again and got involved in construction materials trade and delivery. In 2005, he acquired a plot for his future hotel and started its construction. In 2007, he registered a new enterprise involved in trading construction materials and doors and called it *Pontos*.

The period from 1989 to 2007 was a time of freelancing for Vladimir because he had been trying to live in Greece and Turkey and to find his own way into the realm of private entrepreneurship. The timing was also connected with responsibilities for his family (he had gotten married in 1990 when his son was born; his daughter was born in 1993). Thus, Vladimir appeared to be a fairly

proficient person who could mobilize his experience and organize his own business. His enrootment in Russia and unwillingness to migrate to Greece look like a wise strategy of exploitation of his own identity against the background of those members of Greek populations who are, due to the crisis in Greece, surviving return migration, sometimes more disastrous than their initial migration to Greece.

Vladimir's stake in Russia as a certain judicial and economic space, his wager on his own Greekness, have provided him with a great result—a developing and promising business. By “wager on Greekness” I mean the following. After his rootlessness through various Russian regions and foreign countries he did not choose his native Tsalka as a dwelling place, because the majority of the Urums had left Tsalka for Russia and Greece as a result of Georgian nationalistic policy. He did not choose the village near the city of Maikop where a large number of the migrants to Russia Urums are living compactly. He chose instead a coastal city with a large Greek population and a very active Greek Society.⁵⁶ Vladimir became a member of the Society and tried to begin his new life in Greece with its help. However, when he had earned his first financial capital and estimated quickly his perspectives, he brought this project to a close and determined the place of Greece in his life as a “place to have a rest.” Vladimir also received a plot of land for his hotel from the Greek Society by means of a barter deal between them: he delivered a building in downtown Novorossiysk to the Greek Society and received in exchange a plot of land in the rapidly developing village of Bogatyrskoe.

Thus, the Greek Society plays not only the role of symbolic partner to Vladimir, but also the role of economic partner. Here symbolic capital in the form of ethnicity is not solely, or even mainly, a kind of merchandise; it is a basis for economic capital. Vladimir's progress from a freelancer to a wealthy entrepreneur has been accomplished through the actualization of his own ethnicity as a sort of symbolic capital opening a road to economic capital and free entrepreneurship.

The Village and the Greek Society

As I have already noted, the village of Bogatyrskoe has changed in recent years. The outskirts, adjacent to the sea, turned into a tourist town with hotels, cafes, restaurants, shops, and a big enter-

⁵⁶ The activity of the Novorossiysk Greek Society may be evaluated by the fact that in Novorossiysk the second Greek Consulate in Russia was opened, especially to serve those who are living in the Southern Russian regions and for Caucasian states.

tainment center. The majority of new hotels belong to local Greeks, but there are also some buildings whose owners are Tsalkeans or outsiders. Since 1989, the Greek Society (which has a rural district status) has operated in the village.

Data obtained from the local Greek Society of Fanagoria shows that the Greek population of the village numbers about 4 600. At the same time, according to material from the Russian Population Census of 2002, the total population of the village (6 026) consisted of 53% Russians (3 194) and 33.3% Greeks (2 006). Other populations include: Armenians (6%), Ukrainians (2.9%), Germans (1.6%), Tatars (1%), and Byelorussians (0.6%) (<http://www.ethno-kavkaz.narod.ru/anapagor02.html>, last visited 13.02.2012). This difference is also a matter of representation or aspiration to represent the village by the Society as a sort of Greek enclave. According to the local old-timers, the village was exclusively Greek in the past. Correspondingly, Russian and Armenian immigration took place after the Second World War.

During my two-month fieldwork in the village, I had become acquainted with many individuals and families. But here I would like to discuss only one case: my acquaintance with the chair of the local Fanagoria Greek Society Elefter Kh., his employees and collaborators, as well as with the activity of that society.

I had the honor to be acquainted with Elefter, chair of the Fanagoria Greek Society, in 2006. But when I visited him in 2010, he did not, at first, remember me. Our first meeting of 2010 took place in his office and was rather strained. It should be noted here that a person elected chair of the Society acts on the border between rural private and public spheres (see in details about “privacy” and “publicness” in village in: Manuylov 2010). On one hand, he is the same villager as all others, but marked with delegation: he was delegated by the local community with symbolic capital of Greekness as a manager who can use it in the best way. Thus, Elefter demonstrates horizontal (non-hierarchical) relationships with local villagers, especially the Greeks, and those who in any way are connected to the Society (representatives of Russian, Armenian and other populations of the village). On the other hand, those relationships at any moment can be formalized and transferred to the public sphere, given an outer (public) observer, for example, an anthropologist.

Indeed, the chair of a Society represents the Greeks of the district in all public matters, as the “main Greek” vested with power by all other Greeks of the district (including power to administrate a modest budget of the organization).

Such a twofold position of the chair is multiplied by the twofold position of the Society as a judicial body. The legal status of the Society is “public organization” (*obschestvennaia organizatsiia*). According to the Russian Law on Public Associations (14.04.1995):

The right of citizens to association involves the right to create on a voluntary basis a public association for defending their common interests and achieving common aims, the right to be induce into already existing public associations or desist from joining them, as well as the right to leave public association free (Federal Law on Public Associations 1995: §3, my translation)

This Law was enacted during the campaign of liberalization and democratization in the USSR. It, together with another set of laws, became the basis for the creation and legal regimentation of Civil Society in Russia. The spirit of that law is in the freedom of creation of associations and joining them.

At the same time the Greek Societies created or reregistered according to that law adopted and registered Bylaws that are in obvious contradiction with “the spirit of freedom,” since they restrict the right to entry to a personal association with Greek ethnicity. For example, the Bylaw of the Public Association—Community of Greeks of the City of Pyatigorsk contains the following paragraph:

Members of the COMMUNITY [sic] have to be Greeks, members of their families (citizens of Russian Federation, foreign citizens, and persons without citizenship), over the age of 18 and living in the city of Pyatigorsk. (Bylaw 1996: §4.1, my translation)

Thus, the ethnic marker “Greeks” supersedes a marker of citizenship: all possible citizenship positions and only one ethnicity are described in the Bylaw. It is telling that the previous name of the Pyatigorsk Greek Society was *ETNOS* (Greki Pyatigorska 2011).

The outlined situation is characteristic of all Greek Societies in Russia. At the same time, I am not familiar with any public debates concerning this matter. Consequently, such a state of affairs is perceived as quite appropriate both by the general public and by state officials responsible for registration of organizations. I am inclined to view the situation as a result of the work of discourse on the ethnicity of Soviet times (see chapter 1).

One of the first persons Elefter introduced to me was a leader of a *Fanagoria* dance group, Ekaterina L., who was unrelated to Greekness (she had arrived in the village from the city of Krasnodar 25 years before my visit). But she was an employee and not a member of the Society.

Paradoxes of “open closeness” and “private publicness” appear in full in the person of the chairman of the Fanagoria Society. Towards the end of our first meeting he could formulate his task (in relation to my dissertation) in such a way: “We’ll do all we can. You’ll get the necessary material for your dissertation.”

It is impossible even to list all those topics that arose in talks and conversations with Elefter and other members of the Society. I would like to dwell on two cases of representation only: representation of the Society and representation of local history. I understand under representation a formation of meanings (see Hall 1997). In this particular case, it is interesting to me to discover that in the frameworks of discourses active in Russia the Society manifests Greek/Pontian identity via self-presentation as well as presentation of local Greek history.

Representation of a Greek Society’s Activity

The main discourse allowed consolidating to such an organization as the Fanagoria Society is the discourse on ethnicity. It follows from materials mentioned above. The website of the Fanagoria gives many examples of representation of its activity as an ethnic organization (see about ethnic organizations Comaroff & Comaroff 2009). All Greek Societies are characterized by a certain set of markers declaring their “ethnic” activity. The official internet site of the Fanagoria contains a list of main directions of its activity:

Maintenance of ancestral traditions;

Sponsorship of worthy youth;

Maintenance of the Greek language;

Maintenance of cultural traditions;

Development of sporting traditions and traditions of healthy lifestyle (my translation).

According to my own experience gained from observations and conversations, I would identify language, art, sport, religion, and museum curation as the main fields where the activity of the Greek Society of Bogatyrskoe is represented.

Language Courses

The first of those markers is a project for learning the Modern Greek language (*ellinskii iazyk*, the Hellenic language, as they prefer to call it). Teachers of Greek were usually sent from Greece, though many of them, as far as I know, did not speak Russian. Over the course of time, that program of the Greek Government started to fail and Societies (at least those of the Krasnodar Region and Adygheia) began to appoint teachers who had graduated from the Kuban State University (there is the Department of the Modern Greek Language there). If we take into account the fact that the Modern Greek Language taught in Societies is not the native language, either for those who speak so-called Pontian Dialects or for Turkish-speaking Greeks, the Greek courses in the Societies look like preparation for migration, although the scheme is represented as a “return” of the Greek language to those who lost it as a result of a (Russian? Turkish?) policy of assimilation. There is some justification for that point of view, such as a prohibition of Greek schools and closure of Greek newspapers and theatres in the 1930s USSR. But another point of view is also appropriate. Greek courses in the Societies were subsidized (initially, at least) by the Government of Greece. If we juxtapose two pairs:

Language policy:

Mother tongue → the Modern Greek language

Repatriation:

Notion of motherland → Greece as (pre-)motherland

then the situation may be read as a continuation of Greek homogenization. Moreover, in this case it may be possible to treat the homogenization as a preventive one. Neither the Greek state nor the post-Soviet Greek Societies are interested in saving the dialectical vernaculars of potential migrants. The policy of homogenization inside Greece (cf., for example, Karakasidou 1997: 162-189) is thereby supported through the activity of the Societies operating in environments of potential migrants to

Greece. A restoration of historical justice by “returning” to the Greeks their motherland and mother tongue seems like such a noble aim that questions of homogenization hardly appear among Greek populations of Russia (the majority of them are barely familiar with Greek migration policy). A semantic blurring of the term “Greek” allows manipulating its various meanings. And still, in my view, the central concern in language-teaching activity of the Societies is the question of representation of Greekness namely as an extralinguistic “reality” (owing to the fact that the language *for* Greekness is just an instrument in the work of/with already approved ethnicity).

Art Activity

The second important element supported by the Greek Societies is artistic activity. To be more precise, the Fanagoria supports two dance groups—*Fanagoria* and *Elefteria* (lit. “freedom”)—the *Pontian Theatre* and an amateur singer. Dance and theatre have always been associated with local Greek’s “specificity,” and undoubtedly they are parts of their contemporary “Pontianness” (cf. Popov 2003: 339-340). At the same time, the Pontic Theatre looks like ordinary Soviet amateur theatricals (Rus. *khudozhestvennaya samodeyatel’nost’*) representing a copying of professional artistic activity. Russian anthropologist Boris Putilov noted that the main specificity of that form of art is that

masses of people professionally engaged in various spheres of production and service, keeping their professional ties, at the same time systematically and permanently devote a part of their time to art activity and sort of receive an additional—art—specialty. . . .

The repertoire of collectives and participants of amateur theatricals consists of folk songs, dances, folk instrumental music which were adopted in the same way as classics (i.e. through professional art and ordinary forms of its dissemination—published music, radio, cinema, television, plays etc.). A large number of folklore compositions (or compositions which were claimed or considered from time immemorial as from folklore) comes into public use today through professional collectives and artists popular in the country (Putilov 1968: 5, 8, my translation).

Thus, amateur theatricals are neither folklore nor professional activity but something in between. The Pontic Theatre of Bogatyrskoe is led by stage director Anastasia M., who puts plays of Russian, Armenian and Greek authors on the local stage using the building of the Bogatyrskoe’s Arts Centre. She is the widow of a prominent local stage director and cultural activist from whom she

inherited her position. All the plays staged at the Arts Centre are the result of decisions of the late theatre manager. During my visit the theatre was not active due to a dispute between the Greek Society and the director of the Arts Centre, as participants of the troupe explained (one can also take into account the period of high season in the tourist business); but actors continued with their rehearsals on various premises. I could see some recorded fragments of plays because they have taped all their performances on video cassettes.

Given the foregoing situations and discussions concerning the theatre I can assess the orientation of this amateur theatre in professional (not folkloric) examples. First of all, the former director had a theatrical education; he finished his education in the Director's Department of the Moscow People's University of Culture⁵⁷. He participated in every performance not only as director but also as an actor; and, according to his widow and colleague, Anastasia, he ever aspired to resemble Nikolai Gritsenko (a famous Soviet theatre and film actor). Second, all the repertoire of the Theatre consists of plays written by authors and playwrights (i.e., if they connected with any folkloric sources it is only second-hand folklore, or folklorism, referring to Russian, Armenian, Greek as well as Pontian folklore motifs).

The work of artists and others in the Pontian Theatre is voluntary. The local administration, as well as private entrepreneurs, helps the theatre in organizing travels, buying or building costumes, decorations, and other needs. There are representatives of many professions among the members of the troupe. All of them are locals. As Elefter said, now people are so busy that they cannot participate in rehearsals and performances: "Everybody is caught up in commerce! People forget the most essential things!" The theatre "appeared from the very day when our ancestors resettled in here." It was and continues to be, as Elefter supposes, a vital part of village life. He recollected a situation when the late director asked the elders of Elefter's family to allow him to play on stage during a period of family mourning (the wife of Elefter's uncle died). The elders discussed the situation and told the director: "He'll go and play!" In 1937, the theatre and also local Greek school were closed. At the same time, many people were arrested and some were executed in Krasnodar, among them Elefter's grandfather, a local cultural activist and theatrical artist. In the 1950s, the Theatre was open again.

⁵⁷ I could not identify the university. It is possible that he finished at the Extramural People's University of Arts (Moscow) and aimed for education of amateur cadres, where in 1960 the Faculty of Theatrical Art started to operate.

The troupe uses two languages in its performances – Russian and Pontian. The members of the troupe suppose that all plays in Pontian are the result of translations rendered personally by the former director. The repertoire of the theatre includes:

Alexis Parnis *Aphrodite's Island (Ostrov Afrodity)* (Rus.);

N.V.Gogol' *Marriage (Zhenit'ba)* (Rus.);

A.A.Araksmanian *Aristotle's Prolonged Minutes (Dolgie minuty Aristotelia)* (Rus.);

G.K.Fotiadis *Marriage Proposal (Svatovstvo/Proksen'io/Η προξενεία)* (Pont.);

G.K.Fotiadis *Tu Lazar-aga (Τα σκοτάδια ή ο Λαζαράγκας)* (Pont.); and other plays.

Alexis Parnis was born in Piraeus (Greece) in 1924. He participated from the age of nineteen in so-called partisan (guerrilla) liberation forces in the Second World War and after that in the Civil War as a regiment commissar of ELAS (Ελληνικός Λαϊκός Απελευθερωτικός Στρατός, the Greek People's Liberation Army). He was decommissioned in 1944 and migrated to Albania and then to Serbian Vojvodina where he wrote some plays for communist refugees and participated in performances as an artist (Kravchenko 1956: 22; Parnis 2010). From 1948 he worked as a journalist in pro-communist newspapers. In 1950, together with other Greek communists, he was evacuated to the Soviet Union (Tashkent) after the Liberation Front was defeated in the Civil War. In 1951, Parnis moved from Tashkent to Moscow and entered the Literary Institute (Parnis 2006). In Moscow he carved out a career as a poet, playwright, and novelist. His play *Aphrodite's Island* was written in 1960. It covers the struggle of the Cypriotes against British forces. Parnis tried to offer it to various theatre directors in the Soviet Union, but the play was rejected. The main cause of the rejection was his support of ex-leader of the Communist Party of Greece, Nikolaos Zahariadis, who was dismissed, accused of political crimes, and repressed in the Soviet Union. Parnis, as a "Zahariadianist", was also accused and excluded from the KPG. Only thanks to the help of his friend, the author Boris Polevoi, and after the intervention of a very influential Soviet actress, was his play accepted by the *Maly Theatre* and then published in the journal of *Novyi Mir* (New World). Towards the end of 1961, more than 180 theatres around the Soviet Union had staged *Aphrodite's Island*. In 1962, Parnis came back to Greece, where in 1963 the same play was staged in Thessalonica's theatre (ibid). All writings by Parnis were produced in Greek in the original and translated into Russian before publication. The Pontian Theatre uses a Russian translation of the play *Aphrodite's Island*.

G.K.Fotiadis was the author of many plays for Russian Greek theatre published in Pontian/Greek in Georgia; after the revolution of 1917 he also acted as a translator of “revolutionary literature” from Russian to the Pontian dialect (for example, Serafimovitch’s *Zheleznyi potok*; see Ulunian 1991: 20). His play, a historical comedy in three parts, *Tu Lazar-aga* was published in Akhaltsykh in 1907 under the title *Τα σκοτάδια ή ο Λαζαράγκας* in Pontian. His play *Marriage Proposal* was published in Akhaltsykh twice in 1908. First, as a two-act comedy *Ι προξενία* and, second, as a three-act comedy *Η προξενεία*, both in Pontic (Mouratidi 1991). The play *Τα σκοτάδια ή ο Λαζαράγκας* was staged in Batumi in 1906 (before publication?) by a local amateur club (Fotiadis 2007: 67). As Mouratidi supposes (1991) both of the aforementioned plays by Fotiadis were very popular among Greek village theatres in Russia and later in the USSR. The former director of the Pontic Theatre of Bogatyrskoe “translated—as his wife Anastasia affirmed—from Hellenic into Pontic” two of the aforementioned plays. What Anastasia means by “translation”—in fact, both plays were written and staged in the Pontic dialect—the description of a typical scenario of Pontic theatre by Patricia Fann Bouteneff helps to understand:

[Pontian] playwrights compose the section of the plays that are verbally performed—the dialogs and songs—in the dialect, but write the stage directions, prologues, and notes (if any) in standard Greek. (Fann 1991: 118)

She also notes that the Pontian theatre served as a device for a gradual unification of the different Pontic “subdialects” into a “panpontic” (ibid: 114). These two arguments allow the understanding that plays by Fotiadis are required in a certain translation so as to be intelligible for local actors and spectators.

If you compare dialogs presented by artists on stage in their spectacle *Wedding* with published text by Gogol (see English translation in Gogol 1994), you could discover many “simplifications” avoiding old chunks of (Russian) language and unclear words. In a certain perspective such an approach to the original text may be recognized as “translation.”

Thus, the Pontian Theatre, taking into account both its repertoire and the character of its activity (voluntary work of the troupe and dependence on financial and material support) functions as ordinary Soviet amateur theatricals, but with a pair of distinctive features (thanks to the work of the discourse on ethnic—Pontian—identity): two plays are performed in the Pontic Dialect and the name

of the theatre is a manifestation of local residents' identity, defining themselves as the Pontians after first post-Perestroika contacts with Greece and so-called "Pontian Hellenism."

I suppose the name "Pontian Theatre" was borrowed from Greece together with their Pontian identity. Pontian theatre in Greece is a phenomenon representing "Pontian Hellenism" dating from the 1920s. Fann Bouteneff noted in 1991 that

Modern Pontic theatre is that which developed in Greece after 1922 written in the Pontic dialect, on Pontic themes, and performed in dialect in front of a Pontic(-speaking) audience.
(Fann 1991: 107)

That is, Pontian theatre appeared in Greece together with Greek refugees from Turkey.⁵⁸ Later on, in 1996, Fann Bouteneff defined more exactly that the Pontian theatre in Greece was formed after twenty-year development (i.e., to the 1940s?⁵⁹). It derived from "organized community events to celebrate holidays and included amateur theatrical entertainments" (Fann Bouteneff 1996: 48). In the late 1930s, Pontian performances started to involve elements of rituals, especially weddings, in the form of "revues" and "recreations" (ibid). During the same period, those Greeks who arrived from the USSR (Yorgos Tsoulfas and Polykarpos Haitas, for instance) "imported" an experience of Russian Greek amateur theatricals. Haitas was famous not only for its playwrights, but also for the translation (adaptation) of Alexander Ostrovsky's play *The Dowerless Bride* (1879) (ibid.). Gradually, Pontian theatre formed as "ethnic realist" theatre and did not change its realistic approach until recently (ibid.: 48-49). Towards the end of the Civil War in Greece (1944-49), Pontian theatre excluded from its repertoire all the plays translated from other languages and its performances became merely of "Pontic" character. Pontic theatre critics played a certain role in this process. As Fann Bouteneff put it:

Theatre critics . . . insist that works translated from other cultures should not be recognized as Pontic theatre since they promote the cultures and values of other people, not the Pontians' own (Fann 1991: 113).

⁵⁸ Mouratidi (1991) mentioned a comedy *Οι ερωτόληπτοι* by Konstantinos G. Konstantinidis staged in Athens in 1876 in the Pontian dialect (εν διαλέκτω ποντικής).

⁵⁹ At the same time she noted that the period of WWII was a time when "plays were produced only sporadically" (Fann Bouteneff 1996: 47).

In recent times, the question of how to include the local troupe of the Pontian theatre in the body of the city of Thessaloniki's National Theatre (*Ethniko Theatre*) has been discussed (MRA 2005).

As for the history of Greek theatre in the Russian Empire and the USSR, the first "Greek" theatre appeared in Odessa in 1814; it was closely connected with the most prominent Greek Society in Russia—the Φιλική Εταιρεία (the Society of Friends)⁶⁰ (Fotiadis 2007: 64). After that, Greek theatres started to appear in various cities and villages with a Greek population. From 1870–80, the most significant Greek theatres seemed to exist in Odessa and Sukhum, where special playhouses were built⁶¹ (Ibid: 65). Greek theatre in Russia/USSR existed up to 1937 when it was forbidden. After the Russian revolutions of 1905 and especially that of 1917, one can discover more and more influence of socialist and Marxist ideas on Greek theatre in Russia represented by plays of authors such as Fotiadis, Kanonidis and others (Mouratidi 1991; Fotiadis 2007: 66). In the 1950s Greek theatre in the USSR came back from exile together with a Greek population, but became a rather unusual occurrence. Anastasia, current director of the Theatre, told me that their theatre remained unique for a long time after its revival in the 1950s. She added that she found out that a year ago the Greek Community of Omsk (Western Siberia) had also launched a project called "the Pontian Theatre," but she was not familiar with their activity.

The history of Pontian theatre in Greece and Greek theatre in Russia provides us with data which shed some light on the nature of the Pontian Theatre of Bogatyrskoe. First, the Greek Pontian theatre provided the name for the *Pontian Theatre* of Bogatyrskoe. As a participant in Pontian festivals in Greece (in 2001, for example) and the movement of Pontian Hellenism, which supporters organized annual visits to Turkey's sacral place for the Pontians, the monastery Panaghia Soumela⁶² near Trabzon. And their theatre from Russia appropriates the name *Pontian* in order to be recognized as "the same," to be a participant in actions directed towards formation of a new discourse on ethnic identity—Pontianness. Secondly, the repertoire of the Theatre is closely connected to the history of Greekness in Russia and the USSR. One can conclude that regardless of the "international"

⁶⁰ See about the Society of Friends of Odessa in (Dakin 1973: 41-57; Arsh 1970; 1976).

⁶¹ The Sukhumian Greek Theatre with 650 seats was built by local resident Ioannis Aloizis using his own means (Fotiadis 2007: 65). It is also interesting that the repertoire of that theatre included the comedy *Marriage* by N.V. Gogol (Mouratidi 1991) which is one of most popular plays of the *Pontian Theatre* of Bogatyrskoe.

⁶² Μονή Παναγίας Σουμελά – monastery of All Holy (Virgin Mary) at Mela (the name of the mountain) in Turkey.

repertoire of the Pontian Theatre its choice of plays is nevertheless oriented for the Greek theatre of Russia (and the USSR); at least *Marriage* by Gogol was staged by the Sukhumi Greek Theatre in the 1930s; *Aphrodite's Island* by Parnis was very popular in the USSR (and then in Greece), and Alexis Parnis himself, as a poet, playwright, and novelist, represents a voice of Russian Greekness as a member of so-called "Guerrilla" Greek community.

Sports Activity

According to my observations, the main sport activities supported by the Society are Greco-Roman wrestling and judo as well as football. The section of Greco-Roman wrestling and judo is led by a former world and European champion Alexei V., who also is the owner of a few hotels built by him in the village, co-owner of a local wine-producing company, a leader of a local branch of one of political parties, and one of the main sponsors of the Society.

Football is represented by two non-professional teams currently: *Pontiets* (i.e. a Pontian) and *Spartak*. The sphere of football is marked more boldly in the village. There is a local tale I first heard from Elefter about an event that happened during the Second World War. German occupational forces ordered locals to form a football team to play a match against a team of German soldiers quartered at the village. The condition was that: if the Greek team won the match all its members were to be transported to Germany as workers, if the German team was victorious members of the Greek team stayed home. The Greek team won that match and so was doomed to forced labor in Germany. This tale (resembling in its plot the Soviet film *The Third Time*, 1962) vindicates the importance of football for local residents. However, football is supported not only by the Fanagoria Society. It seems almost every Greek society of the Krasnodar Region (or the Former Soviet Union?) has its own football team. Every year (since 2006) the Association of Greek NGOs of the Krasnodar Region organizes a football championship for "Greek" teams arranged in different cities (according to announcement published in the newspaper of the Association *Evksinos Pontos*, 2011, No 5). Greek identity is supported by means of such an acknowledged instrument of identity construction as football. Apparently in Russia (or FSU) there is a single case of an ethnic football championship.

Church and Religious Activity

The church and its construction is a singularly important theme for villagers of Bogatyrskoe, as well as for the inhabitants of the village of Predgornyi near Maikop, where I was engaged in a local discussion on church matters in 2007.

The Stalinist anti-religious campaign destroyed thousands of churches all over the USSR, a further thousand were transformed into clubs, storehouses, and other enterprises. The destruction and plundering accompanied by anti-religious propaganda were so aggressive that people feared to display icons in sacral places in their houses and hid them in secret places; they feared to confess to their religiosity, to wear baptismal crosses and other things related to Christianity (for example, beads, so popular now among both the Pontians and the mainland Greeks). Building or reconstruction of churches looks like a reconstruction of “historical justice” and “returning to the obedience.”

Before the revolution of 1917, territories with compact Greek populations had, as a rule, their churches. Those churches and their clergy belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church with their center in the Constantinople Patriarchate. Rich traders from Greeks built churches using their own means in cities. For instance, in 1888, in Tiflis the Church dedicated to the Sacred Virgin was built by one of the Greek merchants. In 1865, the Church of Great Dmitrii Solunskii Thaumaturge was built in Saint Petersburg thanks to a donation from a philanthropist, Dmitrii Benardaki, who was from a Taganrog Greek family by birth and became the first Russian millionaire. In 1939 this church was closed and in 1962 destroyed (Kessidi 2009). In many places, the service in Greek churches was conducted in Modern Greek and local dialects (Pontian and Urum). In 1907, A.S. Khakhanov wrote after his visit to Tsalka:

In the church the orthodox priest, who is held in great respect by prayerful Greeks, delivers a sermon in the Tartar⁶³ Language; Gospel, written and printed with Greek letters but in the Tartar language, could be met here and there. (Khakhanov 1907: 51, my translation)

As Kessidi notes:

⁶³ In the 19th and early 20th centuries the term ‘Tartar’ was used for designation of Turkish peoples and languages.

Since the Greeks began to settle actively in Petersburg after the Crimean War (1853–1856), a specially invited guest from Constantinople archimandrite, Grigorii Vigleris, composed public liturgies for them in the Greek language. (Kessidi 2009, my translation)

At the same time, according to details from 1890 dealing with the situation in the Mariupol region, church services there were conducted in Russian; the Russian language supplanted New Greek unfamiliar to local residents during the 1870s; some priests repeated Russian sermons in the local Turkish language especially for women who mainly did not understand Russian (Braun 1890: 91). All the priests were from local Greek families, therefore they could speak local Greek or/and Turkish dialects. It is also interesting that, as Braun noted, sometimes Mariupol priests were members of priest dynasties. Moreover, those dynasties were connected with their own church: “Often the priestal rank is passed on from father to son. . . . In the village of Bogatyr’ . . . a grandson serves at the same place, where his father and grandfather celebrated divine services in the church founded by his great-grandfather” (ibid, my translation).

After the fall of the communist regime in the USSR, Gorbachev proclaimed real religious freedom. This, particularly, resulted in a boom of reconstructions of old temples and buildings of new Christian churches, Muslim mosques, and Buddhist datsans all over the country made possible thanks to the donations of the various congregations. The main portion of those means for (re)construction of Orthodox churches, chapels, monasteries and cemeteries was supplied by new private entrepreneurs. There was a conventional belief at that time that in doing so they “prayed for forgiveness of their sins,” because the early Russian business was connected to the process of property redistribution and, correspondingly, to the criminal. As one of the famous Russian rock-musicians, Boris Grebenshikov, described that time in one of his songs (*Old Russian Yearning*, 1994):

The Turks build moulages of the Holy Rus’ within half an hour...

And the keepers of a shrine have their finger dancing on the cock...

The sign of chervonets⁶⁴ instead of image

Is oozing on the board⁶⁵... (my translation)

⁶⁴ *Chervonets* is the name for a ten-ruble gold coin in pre-Soviet Russia and the unofficial name for a ten-ruble banknote in the USSR.

⁶⁵ ‘Board’ (Rus. *doska*) is a criminal term for ‘icon.’

In the forefront of progress in Russia and other post-Soviet countries a great number of churches were erected in cities and villages. As for the church of Saint George of Bogatyrskoe, the old church built in the late nineteenth century was destroyed in 1934. Stone from the church was used for the construction of *kolkhoz* stables and storehouses.



Plate 2.04. Local church dedicated to Saint George.

In the late 1980s to early 1990s the idea to reconstruct the church in Bogatyrskoe arose in many minds in the village. It had been agreed that the new church of Saint George had to be placed on the premises of a stadium. The villagers collected some money thanks to which they could then dig a pit that stayed partly grouted for a long time because the collected funds were devalued by inflation in the early 1990s. Towards the end of the 1990s, the local community could manage the financing. Some enthusiasts appeared who continued the construction. By 2007 the church was practically finished except for cupolas and crosses. The church was completed externally in November, 2007, and, since that time, core works continue (Plate 2.04). As Elefter put it, “the church isn’t finished yet, but we already have to repair it.” After its cupolas and crosses were mounted in 2007, a

priest was invited to the church and it was officially opened. Now the priest lives near the church in a big house with a church store in the yard. Intending to discuss with him the religious situation in the village, I spent several hours waiting for him near his house, but the priest did not appear. The clergywoman I communicated with did not explain anything and repeated, "Await, he is coming." Together with me was a member of the congregation as he wanted to consecrate a used car he had bought a week ago. At last he said: "That's all. Today the father will not appear,"—and went away. I decided that there was no sense in waiting anymore and left the priest house for Elefter. Elefter promised to organize a meeting with the priest for me but also failed. As a result, I can only make judgments about church issues from the words of congregation members and according to a few web publications.

In Soviet times church rituals such as baptisms, weddings (*venchanie*), or funerals were infrequent, as participation in church ceremonies was prohibited for Communist Party and Komsomol members and unaffiliated people were at risk of losing their jobs and/or reputation, as a rule. After the perestroika many people considered themselves, according to their family tradition, as Orthodox Christians were baptized. Many married couples decided to have a church marriage. Church funerals also returned to the practice of burial, as well as crosses on graves (these had been replaced with monuments with stars during the Soviet times). Moreover, calendar religious festivals also returned to everyday life together with saints' days. Some of the church festivals became official festivals of the state.

The Greek Orthodox Church follows the Revised Julian calendar whereas the Russian Orthodox Church follows the Byzantine calendar reformed by Peter the Great (so-called Old Style). Thanks to that, the same holidays may be celebrated on different days. Citizens of Bogatyrskoe who belong to the Russian Orthodox Church adhere to, consequently, the Russian calendar, but, it seems, all of them are familiar with the Greek one.

My first meeting with the staff and participants of dance groups took place at the Greek Society on 21 July 2010. My new acquaintances brought with them fruit dishes and various pies and cakes; they also picked up two bottles of champagne. During our conversations, it became clear that a few years before, on 21 July, one of their groups, *Helios*, was founded. Since that time, the collective of the *Helios*, together with other dance groups of the Society and the Arts Centre, celebrate the Day of Sun (21 July). When the *Helios* was on tour in Greece in 2001 its members were surprised to know that the same day was celebrated in Greece as a day of Helios, the God of the Sun (at least,

they insisted on it). After that, they celebrate this day as a double holiday—the Day of Helios and the Day of the *Helios* simultaneously.

This curious coincidence bears witness to the intention of the appropriation of Greekness, which is shared in general by all members of the Greek Society. For example, as mentioned earlier, Alexey V., a famous sportsman, in a published interview revealed that the “wins of football and basketball teams of Hellada in the European championships of 2004 and 2005 became, indeed, a common holiday for the Greeks of Russia!”⁶⁶ (my translation).

Returning to the local church theme, it has to be noted that the premises in front of the church serve as a kind of local memorial place. Local authorities together with the Greek Society erected a monument there. The monument was dedicated to all victims of the political repressions of 1937–1938. In the late-Soviet period, a monument dedicated to villagers who were lost during the Second World War was built in the yard of the Arts Centre. Both of them contain lists of lost local people. Such monuments have come to my attention in many villages of the Krasnodar Region. Usually they are a result of the work of local voluntary researchers (*kraevedy*) and various regional non-governmental organizations (like the *Memorial Society*, for instance). I cannot say how the list of names was formed for the WWII monument, but I am familiar with the story of the same list for the Victims of Repressions monument. This work was done by a group of enthusiasts under the supervision of Alexey V., the chief sponsor and “ideologist” of the monument.

According to his words (from the foregoing interview), his and his co-villagers’ interest in the monument could be explained by a desire to know the truth about their local history and to restore justice.

We just want to know our history... the truthful history of our ancestors.

Everybody who belongs to the generation of today’s fifty-years-olds has never known his or her grandfather. I have dreamt of having a grandfather. We have grown up being not familiar with that ‘spiritual academy’ due to certain historical events which astonished all the Soviet Union during the years of the ‘Great Terror’ . . .

On a working day in the early 1990s an employee of the company *Southern Vine* came to me to discuss working concerns. In the course of our conversation his attention shifted to a document on my table. It was my grandfather’s rehabilitation certificate. Questions arose: ‘for what?’ ‘what does it mean?’ ‘how?’

⁶⁶ The interview was recorded by a journalist from one of the Greek-Russian websites. On grounds of confidentiality I cannot give a reference to the site.

And it became clear that my interlocutor was a leader of the city rehabilitation commission. All in all, he took that certificate concerning my grandfather. My phone rang two weeks later: 'Come to the city...' We, two of my compatriots and I, arrived at the Regional Public Prosecutor's Office. They asked us to bring some large carrier bags. I remember the thought flitted through my mind: 'Did my grandfather do so much?' ... Fifty-nine bulky volumes. So, after half a century since the tragic quietus of our grandfathers, we, their grandsons who had never seen them, were granted an opportunity to 'meet' with them, to know the story of their bitter route to the Stalinist scaffold. . . .

One hundred and fifty-six men of Greek nationality were shot. At that time the village was ninety-five per cent Greek. Among the one hundred and fifty-six one was a Russian and one was a Romany. In memory of all of them, our grand- and great grandfathers, the memorial was erected. (my translation)

The above case from 1937–1938 was only one episode of repressions from the 1930–50s. Therefore, not all of the names of those who were repressed during that entire period appeared on the monument. A few names are known only partly (family name, for example), some names are completely unknown and cannot be determined in cases in which there are no descendants of a repressed person and because of the closure of archives in Russia. The majority of names presented on memorial desks are Greek. Locals relate sensitively to their local enrootment, and to representation by these lists of family names. The lists per se are the subject of discussions and conjecture and, sometimes, of grievances. Many locals with whom I had an opportunity to discuss this topic mentioned that their ancestors are immortalized on those desks with pride. Thus, these two topi—one near the church and the other in the Arts Centre yard—are local signs of Greekness providing locals with historical rights to their territory. This representation of a right to be "indigenous" is important to them in its two political aspects: regional and local. Regional claims for "indigeneity"⁶⁷ were provoked by an "ethnic" policy of the regional administration. Discourses transmitted by regional leaders during the last 20 years have been aimed at justifying the indigeneity of the Kuban Cossacks whose descendants constitute the majority of the regional population (cf., the process of the Cossack colonization of the region in: Manuylov 2007: 6-45). In the later stages of settlement in the region by the Cossacks (1860–70), colonization was also open to various foreign groups of Christians: the Armenians, the Greeks, the Moldavians, the Czechs, the Estonians, the Poles, the Aisors and others. German settlements (*kolonki*) had been organized by the Government earlier in 1852 with the aim of

⁶⁷ By "indigenous" I mean here the Russian term *korennoi* used in Soviet/Russian scientific literature as well as in political rhetoric (sf., for example, *korennoi narod* – indigenous people).

giving an example of successful agrarian economy to the Cossacks (ibid: 40, 67). Thus, the Greeks who established their settlements in the 1860s (Bogatyrskoe among them) have on all grounds considered themselves in the framework of the dominating discourse as “indigenous people” (*korennye zhiteli*) along with the Cossacks. However, the dominating discourse is constructed over the rhetoric of the “shedding of the blood for the land;” the Cossacks are represented in and by it as “liberators”, as those who conquered/won (*zavoevali*) this land for Russia. The Greeks in their turn, together with other invited Christian settlers, did not participate in military operations during the Caucasian War (1817–1864). Consequently, to align with that discourse, the “shedding of the blood for the Fatherland” is an important discursive element allowing the Greeks to consider themselves as much indigenous as the Cossacks are. Two of the aforementioned monuments are important justifications of Greek enrootedness in that land. In the frameworks of the Soviet ethnos theory these ethnic markers look like the claims for a territory. Therefore, various organizations representing Greek populations of the USSR / Russia tried to make the claim for territory the most important element of their activity. Nevertheless, until now, they have not had a specific autonomous territory, as were those districts that existed in the 1920-30s. In fact they have rather autonomous institutions closed for any other possible participants within the borders of ethnicity (football, magazine, bylaws of the Societies). Thus, territoriality and ethnicity appeared interrelated again as it was in Stalin’s concept of a nation modernized by Soviet ethnography (cf. Chapter 1).

The local aspect of representation of the right to identity is connected with the triad indigenous/local/newcomer described by Hege Toje (2011) on the material from a Southern Russian village. This triad is both a manifestation of and a condition for symbolic capital of enrootedness. This is the kind of symbolic capital that Bourdieu (1994) connected with matrimonial strategies and which gives access to different local fields, primarily to the field of politics. I have already discussed post-perestroika changes in the field of rural politics in Russia (Manuylov 2008), in particular the process of penetration of “newcomers” onto the local political field via (successful) private entrepreneurship and active financial as well as their in-kind participation in local social and economic life. However, there are two significant differences in the case of Bogatyrskoe. There is a fourth category of village population there: tourists. First, tourists make locals more open vis-à-vis to any outer interest⁶⁸, second, they are a source of prosperity for locals (as mentioned earlier, almost every family and organization in the village is engaged in the tourist business, officially or informally). 2) Among newcomers, the Greeks from Tsalka, the so-called Tsalkeans (*Tsalkintsy*), constitute the majority. Usually their

⁶⁸ As Elefter noted: “Our weddings usually collect more tourists than invited local residents. They come just to gape” (my translation).

migration to Bogatyrskoe was connected to business opportunities. Although newcomers-entrepreneurs are not admitted to the local political field they participate (have to participate?) in the financing of local events, infrastructure, various kinds of activity both municipal and voluntary. Annually, after the tourist season finishes, Elefter (together with his cousin, the head of local administration) gathers private entrepreneurs operating in the village. Together, they try to persuade them to contribute to the development of the village as well as the Greek Society. "We invite everybody," Elefter says, "Locals, Tsalkeans, those who are from Krasnodar. We get them to contribute money for repairs, for the school, for travels." In another case, Elefter joked: "Now when the season finishes it is necessary to put on masks and loot entrepreneurs: 'Let's cough up quickly!'"

The local Greeks have a general attitude of hostility and mistrust towards the Greeks from Tsalka. When Elefter had found out that we had settled in the hotel owned by Vladimir, a Greek from Tsalka, he enquired: "Why did you choose that hotel? There are so many good places in Bogatyrskoe where you could stay!" However, he could not find suitable accommodation for us because there were too many tourists there that summer.

As I have already noted, Vladimir's friends often gathered nearby the hotel of Pontos to play backgammon in the evenings. All of them were Greeks from Tsalka. Vladimir was not a member of the local Greek Society. When we spoke with him about churches and holy sites revered by Greeks he did not even mention the church in Bogatyrskoe and recommended that we visit the chapel of Holy Hand, which he and his family visited regularly at weekends and holy days and was located about 40 kilometers from the village.

Thus in Bogatyrskoe (possibly, thanks to the Greek Society's activity) a certain hierarchy of Greekness is constructed: the highest level belongs to the local Greeks who now prefer to call themselves the Pontians; the second level is occupied by Tsalkeans; the third level is the rest of the (non-Greek) population. The hierarchy of families according to a degree of their local enrootment is an actual factor among the representatives of the first level. Toje marked this difference in terms "indigenous"/"local" (Toje 2011).

In general, the hierarchy of Greekness repeats a characteristic of the southern Russian villages' opposition between locals and newcomers but placed in an ethnic perspective.

Representation of History

Following Elefter's recommendation we visited a school museum situated on the second floor of the local school in a little room. The aged schoolteacher, Ivan Afanas'evitch, met us at the entrance and acted as a guide for us. He had already been a curator of the museum for forty years and had participated in its creation in the past. In Russia, summer holidays for pupils last three months, therefore there were no children in the school. But the corridors did not appear empty to me: everywhere one could meet assistants or technical staff. Passing by the information desk I stopped and began reading some documents far beyond my understanding. Ivan Afanas'evitch came and commented, noting my interest in those documents: "Unfortunately, we also need money and the school is also trying to earn from tourists. . . ." At once I understood that I was reading a price list for tourist services of the school. Ivan Afanas'evitch continued: "We need money for the renovation of the building, for visual aids, various materials, for example, chemicals. The teaching process is very expensive now, therefore additional money won't hurt. . . . Well, due to that we have to let out our classrooms to guests. Unfortunately. But the museum gets a cut [*kopechku*], too." We set off to the second floor and soon entered the little room of the museum. Stands with displays were placed along all the walls. Below them were situated cabinets. Various materials were placed in those cabinets: small fold-out stands, files, folders, manuscripts, placards etc. A table divided the room in two parts providing a wide view. On the upper central part of the right wall, portraits of then President of Russia Medvedev and then Prime Minister Putin were placed (Plate 2.05).

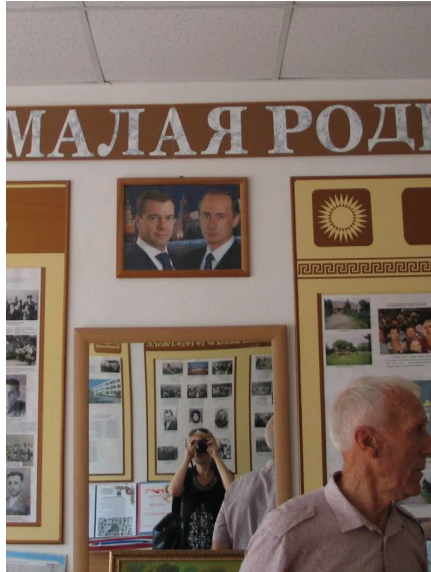


Plate 2.05. Portraits (or How many portraits do you see? Fragment)

The main theme represented by the museum is a history of the village. Since it was a Greek village, the patronage of the Greek Society to the museum was evident, at least to Elefter, who appeared during our tour so that he disturbed the rehearsed speech of the museum curator. The tour suggested to us by Ivan Afanas'evitch was apparently uninteresting to Elefter as he attempted to attract our attention as well as the lens of our camera to certain things he supposed were most important. Since it was a Greek village, the first line of representation is Greekness that appeared in the exhibition as a fact of resettlement of some Greek families from Turkey. This line could be characterized as a set of arguments of local enrootedness. The second line is a representation of Russianness,⁶⁹ a representation of "natural" connections between the village and the state. These two lines were mutually crossed and even became contradictory as, for instance, in the case of a stand dedicated to Stalin's repressions. But, in general, they represent two hypostases of identity, or two parts of the discourse on it: local and state, or ethnic and national.

⁶⁹ There are two different nouns usually translated as "Russian"—*russkii* and *rossiianin*—which can be applied to certain groups of people. If the term *russkii* has (usually) an ethnic sense, the term *rossiianin* means national or state attachment (i.e., a citizen of Russia). I use the English translation 'Russian' here in the second meaning of the term (Russianness = *rossiiskost'*).

School museums in Russia are fairly widespread; they are organized voluntarily and consist of a part of the local history project (*kraevedenie*) as stipulated in framework documents of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation (see Model Regulation 2003; Methodical Recommendations 2007). The uniqueness of the museum in the Bogatyrskoe school is that *local* history is transformed into *ethnic* history. The mentioned lines are represented haphazardly: history of the settlement is intertwined with histories of the school and place. Fragmented representation can focus only on certain discursive points and cannot express any discourse in a sequential order. For instance, the Second World War is represented by 1) the struggle of the Soviet people against external aggression and against fascism; the stand titled “Stern war years, 1941–1945” is accompanied by the popular propagandist placard of that time “Motherland calls!”; 2) repressions against the Greek people; and 3) materials about local resistance during German occupation of the village (containing witnesses not only of pro-Soviet activity but also of collaboration with occupational administration—see Chapter 1). Thus, this period is represented by pro-Soviet discourses: official patriotic and local resistance; and anti-Soviet discourses: Greeks as victims of the Soviet machine and as collaborators with German forces. This contradictory self-representation, adopting the point of view of Greekness, cannot be organized in a certain ordered consequence; and fragmentation, or collage, is the single possibility to express ethnicity while avoiding direct anti-state claims.

As a collaged collection of various elements—artefacts, pictures, photographs, and texts—the museum can be considered as a utopian project representing Greekness for future. Precisely, for future generations of local residents because it is, first of all, a *school* museum, therefore its main function is educational. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, viewing a museum as a “projection of the ideal society,” argues that:

Both literary utopias and museums are engaged in worldmaking. They engage the imagination in the possibility of a complete and perfect universe. . . . When envisioned in terms of its collection, the ideal museum was a Noah’s Ark, with a complete set of specimens providing the entire DNA needed to regenerate the world in its entirety, or a Temple of Solomon, imagined as a miniature world, a complete archive of knowledge, and a treasure house. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004)



Plate 2.06. School museum



Plate 2.07. School museum

She stresses the uniqueness of the museum as a place of communication between people and things “quite unlike anything encountered in the world outside” (ibid). Although I am far from understanding a school museum as a sort of sacred place for post-Soviet pupils (primarily because

they usually attend school museums involuntarily and according to school curricula), the language of a museum is somewhat different from the language of a classroom; moreover, those names, things or images represented by a school museum, and particularly by the Bogatyrskoe museum, are recognizable in the local sense and thus closer to local pupils than any outer historical event or physical law. Therefore, I can say about a significant discursive influence of the museum exposition on children (and not on them only). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett prefers to view the museum as not simply a place for representing utopia, “but rather a site for practicing a way of imaging” (ibid) thanks to its concreteness, materiality, and performance. Greekness as a kind of identity is proposed to be imagined through the lens of the museum exhibition as a specific history (one stand is dedicated to “History of the Village of Bogatyrskoe,” see Plate 2.06), as a specific educational practice (the other stand is titled “The Greek School, 1870-1938,” see Plate 2.07), and as a specific Orthodox religious branch (the little fold-out stand⁷⁰ “Saint George’s Temple”). The mixture of things, images and texts understood as a collage, as a set of discursive elements representing various discourses, may be viewed not only as a certain (and contradictory as I demonstrated above) whole but also from one element to another (i.e., segmentarily and randomly). These elements are undivided parts of the whole exhibition and may be grouped thematically or presented as a separate thing/image/text. Foucault, when discussing the relationships between plastic representation and linguistic reference, insisted that “the two systems can neither merge nor intersect. In one way or another, subordination is required. Either the text is ruled by the image. . . ; or else the image is ruled by the text” (Foucault 1983: 32). Although Foucault in his work *This Is Not a Pipe* analyzed surrealist art, his conclusions relate to a more general level of argument. I use his very general ideas concerning subordination/hierarchization between discourse and word and between word and image. It seems that those museum objects which are not “pure texts” or “silent images” are organized according to the principles of linguistic dominance. In Plate 2.08, a copy of a black and white photograph is presented in which participants of a meeting are depicted. Almost all of them are women of various ages. It is difficult to determine a period when the photograph could have been taken. We can recognize three images of “heroes–pioneers” on the wall⁷¹, consequently the meeting, most probably, took place at school in the 1960s (when the propagandist project dedicated to children’s heroism during the Second World War was launched) or the 1970s. We can, thus, see pupils of the school sitting together with specially invited elderly ladies, perhaps listening to a speech by a school official or a teacher dedicated to a certain

⁷⁰ Fold-out stands can be easily closed and opened during a lecture or transported to any place outside the museum (for instance, to the school conference hall or to the building of the Greek Society).

⁷¹ Two of them are familiar to me—Lionia Golikov (central figure) and Galia Komleva (right figure).

holiday (it could be 9 May, the Day of Victory, but the clothes suggest a winter period so could be 23 February, the Day of the Soviet Army and Navy, or any local date connected with the events of German occupation). So, there are two reasons for viewing this meeting as dedicated to the war: participation of elderly ladies and portraits of young war heroes. Nevertheless, it could be, for instance, the International Women's Day on 8 March. A local observer might recognize some people personally and thanks to that add some information to my "reconstruction." The copy is a part of the thematic stand dedicated to the history of a local collective farm. This is the first "textual" framework organizing understanding of the image (the photo above it contains an image of the first *kolkhoz* tractor of the 1930s; the photo on the right—a portrait of *kolkhoz* staff of the 1950s). The second linguistic guide is the caption carefully placed under the photograph: "They had to work also for their husbands that they lost during the war years of 1941-1945" (my translation). Thus, two textual perspectives remove the picture from a school context and place it in the context of working life of the *kolkhoz* and its members and the hardship suffered, especially by women, during the war years. Foucault continues:

But no matter what the meaning of the subordination or the manner in which it prolongs, multiplies, and reverses itself. What is essential is that verbal signs and visual representations are never given at once. An order always hierarchizes them, running from the figure to discourse or from discourse to the figure. (Foucault 1983: pp.32-33)

So, we could see how the discourse acts in organizing a specific sense of the depicted women's figures and faces, stressing the hardship of local women during the war, and, thus, constructing an "imaginary reality" through imaginary witnesses ruled by additional texts and references. Such references serve as a medium of structurization of collective memory.



Plate 2.08. Copy of a museum photograph illustrating women's hard work during the Second World War.

Another element, also textual but oral and situational, in my experience of acquaintance with the museum exhibition was the comments by the museum's curator and by Elefter. Suddenly Elefter appeared, as it seemed he was interested in the presentation of his relative's images after all. After this brief and muddled presentation (we moved from stand to stand and from photograph to photograph), he drew my attention to the picture (Plate 2.08) and explained: "These are our widows [*vdovushki*]. Look at their faces! Faces of those whose husbands were taken away [by German occupants] when they had just got married. This shows [the generation of] our grandmothers" (my translation). Thus, the discourse translated orally stresses the plight of women, who found themselves without their husbands, expressed on their faces. The main focus shifts from a *kolkhoz* or school theme to tragedy, both personal and for the whole war-generation of villagers.

This photograph is an example of both a segmentary, or collage-like, character of the exhibition and the intersection of discourses of various origins. It is also an example of the ruling role of the textual; therefore, it is not by accident that the museum is organized as an exhibition-story (*vystavka-rasskaz*), a genre rather popular in Soviet school life as well as in local folklore (*kraevedcheskikh*) museums.

But there were some "pure" images as well as some "pure" exhibits in the museum. They may be viewed as elements of nation-state discourses, old and new, like the Soviet flag in the corner or aforementioned portraits of leaders of the state. I can also mention such things as an icon adorn-

ing a towel or soldier's flask. Specific places are displayed by the book *Russia* with portraits of various famous persons of the nation on its cover where Stalin is placed beside the academic Likhachev and writer Nikolai Gogol' (Plate 2.10).



Plate 2.09. Collection of pins

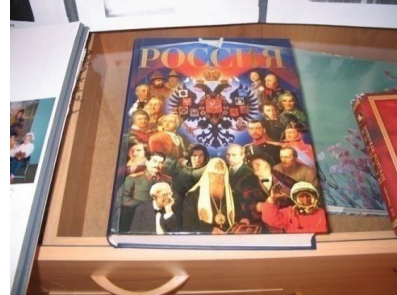


Plate 2.10. *Russia*, the book and the exhibit

Another big volume is a book entitled *The Chuvash*, which, for some reason, turned up in the museum. No less accidental is a collection of badges presenting various Russian cities. This collection was donated to the museum by the mother of a soldier killed in 1973 on his post when he served in the Soviet Army. Badges he had collected were placed together with his portrait in uniform along with his sad story written by the museum's curator.

The whole space of the small museum room contains imaginary spaces of the past, the present, and the future (i.e., imagined spaces of the world of Greekness in the context of Russianness, in utopian fashion ordered in the form of collage, inviting interpretations). The dual identity *the Russian Greeks* (the name *the Soviet Greeks* was changed after the collapse of the USSR) is manifested in many documents and talks.⁷² The case of the museum is notable in that among new post-perestroika themes, such as repressions or religion, the theme of Pontianness is absent. This can be explained by recognizing that the claims for Pontianness are referred first and foremost to Greece as a discursive space. The ex-Soviet Greeks adopted this term for the representation of their involvement in themes of "catastrophe" and "refugees" (i.e., in the themes (or discourses) strongly bound in contemporary Greece with the migration of Pontian and Asia Minor Greeks of 1923). Such a nominative appropriation has, as a consequence, a discursive appropriation, allowing the ex-Soviet Greeks to "normalize"

⁷² The term "Soviet" is used broadly to describe various Soviet minorities who "had" their own mainlands: Germans, Jews, Greeks, etc. Cf., for instance, the title of a very popular work among Greeks, *Encyclopedia of the Soviet Greeks* (Kessidi 1994, see also Popov 2010).

their migration for Greece (i.e., to remove it from the discourse on migration and migrants and to introduce it into a channel of discourses on refugees and repatriates). Nonetheless, the ex-Soviet Greeks are known usually in Greece, not as the Pontians, but as the Rousso-Pontians.

The village is represented as Greek in talks, internet pages for tourists, in the press, as well as through Greek names prevailing in the village (see above) and the school museum. The discourse on Greekness is not something contested in regional mass media. This is probably so because the discourse on Greekness usually manifests Greekness as an equal among other identities (i.e., this discourse is linked to the discourse of internationalism originated from the already discussed Soviet doctrine “national in form, socialist in content”) (see Chapter 1). Moreover, the discourse on Greekness (possibly, thanks to its link to internationalism of the Soviet type) does not oppose the discourse on Russianness (*rossiiskosti*). Such manifestations of Russianness, as the local school museum provides, or Vladimir demonstrates in his discussions of his business and his future, were mentioned earlier. Thus, the discourse on Greekness lacks elements of ethnic separatism, although it is built on elements of ethnic specificity. This could be formulated as follows: “Ethnically (culturally) we are Greeks; politically we are Russians (*rossiiane*) (i.e., citizens of Russia).” Currently the tendency towards strengthening this discourse may be explained by the crisis in Greece that has caused a return migration of many people from Greece to Russia (statistical data are not available, because almost all of them have dual citizenship).

In the early 1990s there was a discussion in the regional mass media concerning connections between contemporary Greek populations of the Northern Caucasus and the Ancient Greeks. The Krasnodar Region along with the Republic of Abkhazia, Georgia, and Ukraine, represented territories where many ancient Greek towns and settlements were situated dating from the sixth century BC. The contemporary geography of Greek settlement is similar to the main features of the ancient Greek colonies of the Northern Black Sea coast. In search of their identity and its attachment to a territory, the Greek Associations and Societies of that time aspired to represent contemporary Greek populations as descendants of Old Greek colonists “returned” to their motherland (from Turkey). Later on, up to the 2000s, the discourse on Pontianness was formed/adopted. As has already been demonstrated, this discourse was based upon Greece’s discourse on Pontianness. But this discourse is also important, although practically not in demand in Russia, in so far as it articulates the right to name on the basis of historical precedent. Historically, this right to name links contemporary Pontianness with the fact that the part of Greek cities of the Northern Black Sea coast was under the power of the Kingdom of Pontus in 4 BC – 1 AD (see for instance: Saprykin 1996). Thus, according to the opinion of Frangulandi (1991), the term Pontians comes from “the scientific name of inhabitants

of that state.” Currently, in the village they speak little about ancient origins of local Greeks. At the same time, the discourse on Pontianness represents Greekness rather intensively now, as I have demonstrated above.

The museum representation of the village is the most historical one. The museum itself has an ineradicable right to history. Accordingly, history represented by the museum is a sort of “last edition” of local history. Antiquity is not represented in the museum. Although museums of this kind usually have on display various archaeological artefacts found by locals on their own land plots or during agricultural works.

Ivan Afanas’evitch began his story with the appearance of the Cossack *stanitsa* on the site of the contemporary village in the 1830s. He showed an extract from the archives that represented the decree concerning the foundation of the Cossack *stanitsa* Bogatyrskaiia in that district. Soon after this foundation, the Cossack population of the *stanitsa* was evacuated to the nearest city because of the approaching Turkish army. The Turkish army destroyed the settlement. In the 1860s, Greek settlers appeared in the region. Ivan Afanas’evitch described picturesquely the appearance of the first Greek bullock carts among the ruins of the *stanitsa*:

Some people are inclined to consider that the Greeks have been living here since ancient times. However, the whole thing is, of course, rubbish. The Greeks arrived here from Turkey on bullock-drawn carts and wagons in 1865. There is some archival evidence about it. All the rest is ill-informed fantasies of those to whom history is unfamiliar. (my translation)

To summarize, the museum history of the Greek village starts with the renewal of the settlement on the site of former *stanitsa*. As I have already noted, the museum is supported and controlled by the local Greek Society. Therefore, museum representation can be considered an official representation of local history approved by the Greek Society. However, during our conversation in the museum, Elefter informed me that one of local entrepreneurs was going to establish a local folklore (*kraevedcheskii*) museum, and he was now engaged in negotiations in order to buy a building for the future museum situated not far from the building of the local administration. Thus, priority will be passed on to this local folklore (public? private?) museum.

For now the School Museum continues to construct Greek identity properly and does not link it with Pontianness or ancient cities along the Black Sea.

According to the story of the museum curator, an ideal (utopian) rural community is presented. This community was able to cope with difficulties connected with the resettlement from Turkey to Russia. "The people worked hard, were cohesive, and soon they were able even to build a church." Part of the curator's story was decorated with rhythmic speech and rhymes. The museum representation of the village, as it was already noted, is one of historically consecutive lines of the museum exhibition. The second line, though, the school history, also refers to the village history, being embedded in it as a separate plot. Because of Elefter's interference, this flow was disturbed and Elefter redirected the narrative: he tried to attract the curator's and our attention to various exhibits, represented by the segmentary nature of the museum exhibition. At the same time, the curator was drawn towards a linear representation.

Generally, the segmentary representation is more characteristic to oral speech, conversation and discussion. The linear representation always has a certain task, scientific, political, biographical, and can be presented as history or, to be more precise, as a historical narrative. The aspiration "to make order" in segmentary, fragmentary, and chaotic knowledge and present it as history or story spreads from institutionalized forms of knowledge to non-institutionalized ones. One of the characteristic features of such spreading is the composition of (written) genealogies or biographies. Some biographies of local residents were exhibited in the museum, which were recorded and edited by the curator. Characters of biographies are represented in them sometimes in the first person, sometimes in the third person, without any grammatical or punctuation devices to provide transfers between codes (if using the terminology of Barthes 1983). However, the written form of biography per se demonstrates the overcoming of oral chaos and the construction of *Logos*.

Thus, the school museum represents the local history of *Greekness*, not Pontianness or any other identity.

Conclusion

Of course, the activity of the Fanagoria Society is not reduced solely to the foregoing fields. Popov (2008: 201-203), for instance, reported on the commercial activity of Greek Societies in local agrarian

markets. He also noted that “they redistribute financial support received in the form of sponsorship from local businessmen to the rest of community via socially-oriented activities, such as occasional aid to elderly people, the sending of local children to summer camps in Greece, the hiring of a teacher for optional Greek classes in the village school, or the organization of a free legal advice service at the society’s office” (ibid: 201). There have been many publications about connections between Greek Societies and Greek Consulates in Post-Soviet countries when the “main purposes were postponed by certain Societies. They were carried away by passport and visa matters. And it was not irreproachable” (Chitlov, Chitlov & Gurieli 1992: 65, note 37). Popov (2007: 34) supposed that “increasingly hostile” relationships between societies and consulates of the early 1990s were initiated by the struggle between them for the control over migration. Almost all people I have met during my fieldwork mentioned that they applied for Greek visas with the assistance of specialists of Greek Societies (see chapter 6, for instance). Thus, it is obvious that those societies fulfilled many functions and worked and continue to work not only as culture clubs. Their multidimensional activity helps us to understand their nature, or their discursive and practical agenda.

As I demonstrated earlier in this chapter, the formation of local identity of the Greek populations could be developed personally (as in the case of Vladimir and other local entrepreneurs) or on the level of organization (the local Greek Society and the School Museum). Private persons who participated in the process of local nominalization prefer Pontianes as a recognizable term for Greek consulates and the Greek state reference point, as well as the Fanagoria Society. The School Museum is oriented on Greekness (i.e., identity recognizable in Russia) because this organization does not have any purpose to be represented to the Greek State. In fact, vice-versa, it is interested in the formulation and representation of Greek Russianness, their enrootedness in Russia.

The Identity of people presented in this chapter connects various fields. An ethnic field is manifested in their Pontianess/Greekness in their relation to other ethnicities. A business field inseparably joins with their ethnic status and develops in the frameworks of ethnic networks controlled by the Greek Societies (at least two of them in the concrete case of Bogatyrskoe). An educational field is connected to both ethnic and business fields, because the educational activity of the Society is concentrated on the Greek language; various educational initiatives are realizing this thanks to the financial support of local entrepreneurs (and Greek consulates, too). Other fields are also tied with the ethnic field, such as sport field, religious field, etc.

Thus, both groups of Greeks now representing the village of Bogatyrskoe use the same term “Pontians” as a marker of their identity. This identity is manifested in various fields and by various

signs as I demonstrated earlier. The specificity of contemporary policy of the region is that the Cossacks who colonized the region for Russia in the period of 1792–1865 are considered an indigenous population along with the Adygs who lived there before Cossack colonization. The Greeks and other ethnic groups like Armenians, Bulgarians, Czechs, Estonians, Poles, etc. have to formulate their historical attachment to this territory using dominating discourse about Cossack indigeneity. They have to demonstrate via museum exhibitions that their own history in the region began no later than when the history of Cossack colonization ended. Moreover, the Greeks, like other local ethnic groups, struggled against fascism during the Second World War and liberated this territory from German forces. They lost many members of their community; the monuments in the village are evidence of their loss. In a similar way the local Greek community demonstrates that its own local history resembles the local history of any Cossack community of the region. Therefore, they may have the same grounds to be attached to the territory of North-Western Caucasus.

Part 2.

GREEK RUSSIANS

Chapter 3

Un-Repatriable Capital and Identity Crisis: An Ex-Soviet Émigré in Greek Society

When I arrived [in Greece], I handed in my diploma to an responsible service for evaluation. After fifteen years, they phone me and ask: “We have considered your application. You have to pass eight exams to confirm your education. Do you want to confirm?”—“What?! Are you crazy! No, thanks!”—and I put down the handset.

(from an interview with Georgios T., Alexandroupolis, Greece, 2009; my translation)

Problematization

This chapter analyses some of the biographical materials derived by me from conversations and interviews with migrants from ex-Soviet countries in various locations in Greece. The main source for the chapter is “an autobiographical narrative” of one person. I have tried to include this material—and my analysis of it—in a wider perspective of social life in Greece, however, using other field materials as well as a number of publications. I also discuss various manifestations of a phenomenon termed (see Erikson 1968) “identity crisis.” This term from social psychology is popular in social science, especially when researchers address changes in particular identities that are connected with “external” challenges.⁷³ In the present case, the term “identity crisis” can be used to describe the conflict between expectation and experience that ex-Soviet citizens underwent after their “repatriation” to Greece. Anton Popov, in his research on ex-Soviet Greek migration (2010: 69–76), draws on the experiences of his informants in Russia who had visited Greece, to demonstrate links

⁷³ For example: “natural resources and state industries [in Mexico] were opened to foreign investment. ... Opening the economy to foreign direct investment required deconstruction of the American capitalist as the ‘other,’ which destabilized the very identity of what it is to be Mexican. Neoliberal reforms have thrown Mexico into an identity crisis” (Harner 2001: 665).

between “identity crises” and the Greek labor market. He emphasizes the economic and political causes of such crises. Unlike Popov’s approach, however, my *first argument* is that the identity of the ex-Soviet citizens has a strong *symbolic* component that is important in their processes of “adaptation” taken together with its economic and/or political effects. Their attempt to claim a “place in the sun” in Greece has had varied results depending on their possession of different sorts of capital. The *second argument* deals with the mutual dependency between the overall volume of accumulated symbolic capital in the USSR/post-Soviet countries and the possibility of adaptation, appropriation, or “repatriation” of those capitals. That is, those who possess stronger symbolic capital expressed mainly in educational background and diplomas met with a more difficult process of appropriation of Greekness—and vice versa: those who possessed weaker symbolic capital were able to find a job rather more quickly and, correspondingly, were able to begin their process of appropriation sooner and more effectively. The aspiration to avoid economic and political instability or to improve living conditions can result in people wishing to begin a new life with a clean slate. However, the inability to transfer certain forms of capital is problematic in such fields as language and education, and in various professional sub-fields.

What kinds of capital can be accumulated by former Soviet Greeks for migration (aside from their ethnicity, which is a key symbolic capital for “repatriation”)? This is difficult to answer unambiguously: as Clogg has noted (2002b: 103) with respect to Pontian Greek refugees from Asia Minor in the 1920s, some “were able to bring some capital, or at least their entrepreneurial spirit, with them and they injected a new element of dynamism into the economy.” The irony was that those ex-Soviet Greeks who started to arrive in Greece already had an entrepreneurial spirit, or the experience of self-management⁷⁴ acquired for the most part during their involuntary migrations to Central Asia/Siberia and by their voluntary move back to European Russia, as well as during the years of perestroika. These lessons learned the hard way from the Soviet “school of survival” were, therefore, used in their migration to Greece. As Panaiotis (my friend from Bogatyrskoe who spent ten years in Greece and then returned to Russia) commented, those who arrived from Russia and other countries were engaged in commercial activity. They brought goods from Russia, sold them at open

⁷⁴ There are at least two semantic fields corresponding to the term “self-management.” One is connected to socialist doctrine directed against the subordination of classes and makes the claim for “workers’ self-management.” The second field is characteristic of descriptions of micro-social relationships that are typical for social sciences. In the present work I use the second meaning of the term when I argue that the self-management of Greek migrants from the ex-USSR is closely connected to family relationships and could be determined as a form of family self-management.

markets in the cities, without paying taxes—under legislation passed by the Greek government; they then bought goods that were in demand in Russia and sold them there. At the same time they built homes in Greece, or participated financially in the construction of apartment blocks. Athina, my acquaintance from Essentuki, recollected her family's first visits to Greece as being times of continuous trade in the street markets in Thessalonica:

We had already known what would happen [in Georgia]; therefore left it prior to 1990. Since that time, I had been living in Essentuki and Greece, by turn. In Greece we were working. We sent containers with goods [from Russia] and met them there [in Greece]. We traded. [It was] somewhat forced; we had to do something ... I have learned the [Greek] language on the market. We traded in Salonika. (my translation).

There are representatives of many social groups among the ex-Soviet Greeks in Greece. A considerable number of the villas in Vouliagmeny (Βουλιαγμένη), the wealthiest district of Athens, belong to people of Russian Pontic origin.⁷⁵ Athina, mentioned above, told me about her friend, the wife of a high-ranking police official from Russia, who participated in Athina's family trading activities in Thessalonica in the early 1990s:

Her name was Xenia and she was a judge. When we lived in Georgia our families were on friendly terms with each other. She had worked as a judge in Tsalka and got married to a prosecutor from Moscow. And when we went to Greece for the first time, she came there, too. And I said to her: "Now then, stay here, behind the counter! Look at her! A judge!" Well, we just mocked her. And she said, "Afina, I couldn't even take money [correctly] when they pay." It was difficult for her. To be a judge and a prosecutor's wife ... You don't understand how difficult it was to change yourself and stand behind the counter. (my translation)

So, deskilling and the loss of a professional career are among the common experiences of highly educated migrants, and while it is impossible to present a portrait of a migrant person or

⁷⁵ Field diary, informant, Antonios F., age 73, Athens, Greece, 2009.

family that would be representative of the entire population of migrants, it is possible to explore examples of concrete life stories and the opinions of those who have succeeded or failed in, or rejected, the processes of repatriation or appropriation.

If, nevertheless, we wish to try to find a generalized solution to the challenges posed by various forms of capital in this context, I would argue that the strongest capital for successful migration is “financial” (that is, money), or any other form of capital that can be converted into money (for example, real estate or a private business). Financial capital seems to be stronger than ethnic capital, because any person from any country who is able to invest significant financial capital into a national economic system gains special access to the citizenship of that country.⁷⁶ Bourdieu views economic capital as “immediately and directly convertible into money,” and as being “institutionalized in the forms of property rights” (Bourdieu 1986: 243). Additionally, property rights may include citizenship rights, as in the case discussed below, if we understand citizenship as a kind of property. Having said this, a repatriation visa is obtainable without a demonstration of financial solvency, as opposed, for example, to a tourist visa. Therefore, symbolic capital in the form of “confirmed” ethnicity plays a significant role in the acquisition of new citizenship, even for wealthy people.

Georgios from Georgia

One of my friends, Georgios S., is not a wealthy person. He was born in 1951 in the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic (in the rural district of Tsalka) where he lived until he finished school. His father and mother were descendants of émigrés from Kars (now part of Turkey) and had always lived in one of the villages in the Tsalka district. After leaving school, Georgios entered the university at Tbilisi and graduated as a mathematician and teacher of mathematics. He married fellow student Olga, who came from an Urum family who were also from the Tsalka district. Georgios can speak Russian, Azerbaijani, Armenian, Georgian, Turkish [the Urum Dialect?] and now New Greek as well. After graduation, Georgios and Olga started work as schoolteachers. They have two children, a boy and a girl. They departed from Tbilisi by car in 1993, crossed Turkey, and reached Greece. They decided to settle in northern Greece, not far from the Turkish border (about 40 km away) in the city of Alexandroupolis. Their children graduated from the local Medical Institute; their son has just finished

⁷⁶ See, for instance, conditions of free migration to the EU.

his education and intends to marry, whilst their daughter has already married and has a son who now attends school. Their family language is Russian.

It is difficult to characterize this family's migration to Greece as "voluntary repatriation."⁷⁷ Georgios explains his decision as having been provoked by an incident involving his son, who was about thirteen at the time. He had become a victim of a gang of youngsters, who attacked him on the street and reportedly "put a sawn-off shotgun to his breast and forced him to take off all his clothes, so he came home naked" (my translation). After that incident, Georgios and his wife started to collect the necessary documents to obtain Greek visas and put their three-room flat up for sale. Georgios also mentioned Georgian nationalism as an important reason for their migration. Today, however, he remembers life in Georgia as being "good times" for him and his family—a period of prosperity and successful careers. He repeatedly said, "I feel nostalgic for Russia," as he called it.

Although a graduate mathematician, Georgios has as yet been unable to confirm his diploma (see epigraph, above); he has changed jobs in Greece many times to work in areas that do not require educational qualifications. Now he is 58 and works as a security guard in a small cheap hotel. Sometimes he takes over from the owner of the hotel, working as a receptionist.

On their departure from Georgia, he had hoped that he and his wife could find work as schoolteachers in Greece; however, this proved to be impossible without official confirmation of their diplomas, and because they had with no command of the Greek language. He did not know this rule before they left because he had never been to Greece and had no relatives there. Additionally, in the economic and political crisis in Georgia, Georgios was only offered US\$15,000 for the sale of his three-room flat in Tbilisi. This money barely covered the expenses involved in reaching the Georgian–Turkish border, he explained, due to the need to pay numerous bribes when they were driving through Georgian territory and at the border. By the time they arrived in Greece, Georgios' family had no financial capital left. This is a typical example of the kinds of circumstances in which highly educated migrants find themselves. They arrived with nothing except the unconfirmed symbolic capital of their education. Georgios' case has been exacerbated by his unfamiliarity with life conditions in Greece, and by his responsibility to his family members. He said:

⁷⁷ The issue of the definition and classification of post-soviet Greek repatriation is periodically raised in the literature. See Voutira 1991, 2004 and Popov 2010, for example.

We lived well in Tbilisi; we had all we needed although our salaries weren't high. But here I am necessary to nobody. I thought to return but the children enjoy it here. They are both physicians. Therefore, we decided not to return. Moreover, what can I do in Russia near pension age? (My translation)

Speculating on his difficult life in Greece, Georgios finds only one argument to stay there—a trouble-free future for his children. Thus, we can see a special kind of investment at work here—investment in the younger generation, which is characterized, according to Bourdieu, by the postponed prospect of a reverse investment.⁷⁸ In other words, Georgios constructs a position of benefactor and occupies it, becoming both benefactor and victim simultaneously.

Georgios summarizes his journey to Greece in the following statement: “I moved into Turkey and crossed myself!”⁷⁹ This phrase encodes the fact that Georgios is an Orthodox Christian of Greek origin, born in Georgia and with the Turkish language as his native tongue. He departs from the country of his birth (which is primarily Christian), having left all his money there, and enters a Muslim country, regarded by various Greek discourses as an opposite of Greece, where he crosses himself. He believes that he has left all his fears behind and that he has managed to save his family, car and accompanying luggage. His concise statement above condenses these views: it describes and demonstrates a complicated discourse, which can be referred to as “identity discourse.”

Georgios began thinking about emigration from Georgia because he could not risk his family's prosperity and, moreover, the lives of his children. Hoping for a better life, he decided to leave Georgia for Greece. However, he did not retain an escape route back, for their possible return, for he sold his real estate and other property, which he converted into money to provide the wherewithal for their migration.

⁷⁸ “Les stratégies éducatives, dont les stratégies scolaires des familles ou des enfants scolarisés sont un cas particulier, sont des stratégies d'investissement à très long terme qui ne sont pas nécessairement perçues comme telles et qui ne se réduisent pas, comme le croit l'économie du «capital humain», à leur seule dimension économique, ou même monétaire: en effet, elles tendent avant tout à produire des agents sociaux dignes et capables de recevoir l'héritage du groupe, c'est-à-dire de le transmettre à leur tour au groupe, C'est le cas notamment des stratégies «éthiques» qui visent à inculquer la soumission de l'individu et de ses intérêts au groupe et à ses intérêts supérieurs et qui, de ce fait, remplissent une fonction fondamentale en assurant la reproduction de la famille qui est elle-même le «sujet» des stratégies de reproduction” (Bourdieu 1994: 5–6).

⁷⁹ Here, this action has significance in terms of a sense of relief and gratitude to God that these dangers have already been left behind.

To begin with, Georgios tried to start a business in Greece, like many other Greeks from the former USSR, using his old connections. Having sold his car, he invested the money in construction materials that he shipped to Greece from a Russian Black Sea port. However, the Greek Customs Service seized the cargo and imposed a higher tax upon it than Georgios had expected from his preliminary agreement with customs officers. Moreover, his business partner, who had ordered the construction materials, then refused to conclude the deal because of the delay, for he had found another supplier. Later, Georgios managed to sell the construction materials but at a very low price. As a result, he lost money and has remained in debt, although not to a great degree. He had to borrow from friends to obtain clearance for his goods from customs. After this incident, Georgios did not try to run a business again, and indeed had no capital with which to do so.

During our conversations Georgios offered two types of slightly contradictory biographic representation, “implying obvious changes of meaning in the process,” as Schneider puts it (2006: 21): in one scenario he positions himself as a “bricoleur” and in the other as an “author of the project” (to use Lévi-Strauss’ terminology⁸⁰) (Lévi-Strauss 1966: 16). The contradiction inherent in this is demonstrated by Georgios’ attempt to win through the dissatisfaction with his own migratory history, representing it retrospectively as a history of sacrifice. Telling his life story, perhaps for the first time ever, Georgios remembers his doubts, thoughts and feelings. He does not try to subordinate them to the general idea of sacrifice. In the process of narration, he discovers his own history to be an unconnected story, and sees the weakness in his own arguments. Gradually, he formulates his main argument—the idea of sacrifice—and tries to use it to justify the main events of his emigration. The idea of sacrifice—and-victim develops gradually: he begins with the themes of the youngsters’ attack on his son and the family’s subsequent “forced” migration, then it turns into a project, a specific life plan. Yes, this “author” understands that he sacrifices himself, and that his wife, Olga, also suffers, but husband and wife share the common discourse of sacrifice and have devoted their lives since their departure from Georgia to the general purpose of rescuing their children in order to give them the best possible future. Undoubtedly, the decision to emigrate, made by Georgios and Olga, resulted in an action that can be described as bricolage.⁸¹ Many migration histories are bricoleur-ian at their core, and are grounded on the aspiration to try something new and other. However, the perspective of the ethnographer introduces a wish to represent their histories as a particular project that is well considered and consciously realized.

⁸⁰ I refer here to Lévi-Strauss’s *terminology* only; I do not share his *interpretations* of these concepts (see also the critique in Derrida 1978: 359–364).

⁸¹ On interest-seeking vs. unconscious behaviour, see Bourdieu 1977: 72–78; Bentley 1987: 27–28.

Georgios' emigration looks, on one hand, like an escape from a "bad" life to a good one. At the same time, he knows hardly anything about how "the good life" in Greece can be arranged; he only knows how "bad" life in Georgia is. He did not anticipate that he would end up as a security guard in a small hotel; he had hoped to organize a business, but as we have seen, this aspiration was unsuccessful. He had calculated how to manage his real estate and car, and what would be the best way to reach Greece (he did not even consider that the route from Tbilisi to Batumi and on to the Turkish border would be so expensive). In other words, Georgios tried to create a new life for himself from "whatever was at hand," as a bricoleur produces his creation. The capital of "confirmed ethnicity," with its material expression of visas for all family members, was, of course, the most essential item among these makeshift plans. Georgios converted economic capital into money, keeping only the car: its economic value lay in being the cheapest means by which four people could travel to Greece, although, as noted, he did not take into account bribes on the roads. In all, Georgios did not thoroughly account for the costs of moving, and did not consider the risks connected with such a long-distance trip by car. He simply wished to depart, and tried to make it as profitable and convenient for himself as he could. He took his symbolic capital with him, in the form of his diploma and work record card, although when he tried to convert it he was referred to a service⁸² on evaluation of foreign diplomas.

Nevertheless, Georgios did not wish to come across as a luckless man, and during our conversation he started to represent his biography as a project. It is likely that the very logic of searching for an argument, the main argument of his life, as it seemed, led him to this. It became obvious to both of us, two hours into our first main conversation, that his life was now being lived for the sake of his children; it has been both a sacrifice and, in some measure, a significant feat in itself. It is clear that his nostalgic feelings for Russia originate with this discourse on sacrifice. Georgios has never lived on the actual territory of Russia; to many, Russia is not only the assignee of the USSR, but also its symbolic successor. It is important to understand that Georgios means the USSR when he says "Russia", but uses its contemporary name. Sacrificial discourses (both religious and economic, for example) are regarded in a positive light in the post-Soviet societies from where ex-Soviet citizens of Greek origin come, as well as in Greece. Many discourses during the Soviet period emphasize this.

In his last variant of motivation for migration, Georgios insists that the main motive was concern for his children's future. Investment in one's children was always considered to be the correct approach to family management in this context. For example, a retired policeman, a native of

⁸² The Center for Recognition of Titles of Foreign Universities.

Tsalka who lived in Maikop,⁸³ told me in 2007 of his idea “to bring up to 50 young businessmen of ours, from Tsalka, and to capture the market of Adyghea, and to have complete control over it in the course of time. But the money was necessary for that, and it was also necessary to put it up for more than a year!” (my translation). He had also suggested this idea at a meeting of the regional Greek Association and offered to collect money for the project. He was supported by the members of the Association, who agreed with him that it was necessary to invest as much as possible in their own children, but nobody actually gave any money, and the project came to nothing. This story suggests that matrimonial strategies may guarantee a more reliable reproduction of symbolic capital, then, than do community strategies, even when the community is founded on ethnic origin.⁸⁴

The Field of Education and the Issue of Ethnicity

In terms of teaching, which is what Georgios intended to do in Greece, access to the field of education is tightly controlled by the state. Moreover, in Greece this field produces and supports strong nationalistic discourses,⁸⁵ which come to light with the regular scandals that arise over the right to carry flags on annual school parades. The highest-achieving students have the right to carry these flags, and the reason for the scandals is the ethnic origin of those who earn this right but are not regarded as being of Greek origin. One of my Athenian friends, Anna (see chapter 4), gave an example of this nationalist rivalry:

⁸³ The city of Maikop is the capital of the Republic of Adyghea, one of the southern Russian regions.

⁸⁴ “Et si les stratégies matrimoniales occupent une place aussi importante dans le système des stratégies de reproduction, c’est que, sans être nécessairement codifiée de manière aussi parfaitement rigoureuse que le laissent croire certaines théories de la parenté, la liaison matrimoniale apparaît comme un des instruments les plus sûrs qui se trouvent proposés, dans la plupart des sociétés (et encore dans les sociétés contemporaines), pour assurer la reproduction du capital social et du capital symbolique tout en sauvegardant le capital économique” (Bourdieu 1994: 9).

⁸⁵ It is difficult to judge what kind of field a producer of nationalism is, especially as regards the education system. In saying that the field of education produces discourses, I mean that the political elite produces them in the sphere of education. Therefore, the source of this discourse may be considered to be a political field.

There is a holiday here [in Greece]—Independence Day. They celebrate it by organizing a parade and everything else ... Pupils also participate in it. Schools come out to the parade. And [to bear] a flag of a school is the honour for the best pupil of the school. This is an ordinary flag, the school flag. And when the demonstration happens, the best pupil goes ahead of the school file with the flag. It is such a tradition. And recently in some schools these best pupils are not Greeks. So it happens. They are either Poles or Russians or somebody else. And every time, every year, these terrible scandals take place thanks to all that, because they say, "What of it, he is the best? But he is not a Greek, he should not bear the flag, it is just wrong!" Although I, for example, guess that ... [w]hen I went to school [in Russia] we hadn't ... there were practically no pure Russians in our class; that is, all of us were of various nationalities. And if you are just the top of the class you have all the honour to run up the flag, for example. Well, nobody listens to me. All the same they say, "O, no! As for you, it's all right, because you are a Greek after all, you have Greek roots, you are ours after all. But they, they are strangers, they cannot. ..." That is, the same fact that this flag would be borne by a non-Greek person incites resentment: there are annual debates and disputes on television and in the press. (my translation)

Irina, as we can see from her account, cannot understand why ethnicity is connected to success in education. She has her Soviet school experience and uses this to argue that blindness to ethnicity in the Soviet classroom is a much better option than an ethnic-oriented approach. She tries to demonstrate the gap between the notions of the civil and the ethnic. However, neither Irina nor Georgios were able to overcome this gap in their experience of an appropriation of Greekness. Dimitrios Zachos discusses the problem of nationalism in education in the context of a right-wing xenophobic discourse, giving as an example a concrete case regarding the carrying of a school flag:

Those on the far right of the political spectrum attributed such social problems as increasing financial problems among members of low socioeconomic strata and the increase in unemployment rates to the influx of immigrants. This resulted in xenophobia and the expression of racist sentiments in the educational sector. Thus, despite the commitment to the enrolment of all immigrant children in public schools occasionally voiced by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, there appear to have been obstacles in several schools. In addition, there are also cases of par-

ents of native students protesting the presence of 'foreign' students and withdrawing their own children, enrolling them in other schools and thus turning certain schools (mostly those in the centers of Athens and Thessaloniki) into immigrant ghettos.⁸⁶ The climate of xenophobia cultivated by the majority of the media incited a series of racist incidents such as the turmoil occurring on national holidays when a foreign pupil (by merit of his or her academic performance) is selected to carry the Greek flag in a parade. This issue first surfaced in October 2000 when the residents of the town of Michaniona objected to the teachers' selection of Odysseus Çenaia as flagbearer for the national holiday parade. Çenaia, a student of Albanian origin, was awarded this honor for his outstanding academic achievement, but many townspeople thought it was inappropriate for a 'non-Greek' to play such a prominent and public role in national festivities at a public school. (Zachos 2009: 144)

Despite local schoolteachers' initiatives to award grades and honor to their school's best students, even if the students are of foreign origin, public discourse⁸⁷ connects the national flag, as a symbol of the state, to ethnicity, which thus turns the flag into a symbol of ethnicity. Given that the flag in question is an attribute of the school, there is a desire to consider the school as an ethnic institution. Karakasidou, in her investigation of group identity and the development of nationalism in northern Greece, constructed a history of the flag as a symbol of identity. She noted that during the late Ottoman era pastoralist groups throughout Macedonia and the wider southern Balkan region used special identification banners, particular to each descent-group, known as *hamblos* or *bairaki* (the latter term is borrowed from Turkish: *bairak* – "flag") in the Assiros region. They usually looked like flags and "consisted of a red and blue cross embroidered in the middle of a white field"; they were also used as symbols of the parties involved in wedding ceremonies (Karakasidou 1997: 193). After 1913, these banners were replaced by the Greek national flag, and Karakasidou notes that this replacement "represented the emergence of popular notions of a national group sharing descent from common ancestors, such as the ancient Hellenes and the Byzantines, sentiments that were reinforced in flag-devotion campaigns of the Metaxas era" (Karakasidou: 194). She also demonstrated strong relationships (on the local level) between the Town Council consisted of "local patrons" (so-called sponsors, or *tsorbadjidhes*), on the one hand, and school and family, on the other,

⁸⁶ Here, the author makes reference to the following website: www.iospress.gr.

⁸⁷ For debates about flag bearers and opposite discourses transmitted by the mass media, see Tzanelli's (2006) article.

in organization of national flag adorations that she considers as celebrations and rituals of Greek nation-state (Karakasidou: 196–197). Thus, a connection arose between school and the state, which was formed by the mediation of the Greek flag as a national (ethnic) symbol during the process of nationalistic homogenization of the populations of Greece. Therefore, there is a very strong ethnic attachment of the Greek flag to Greekness in many peoples' understanding.

This “ethnic” paradigm of access to the educational field can be added to Bourdieu's characteristics of “class” and “social origin”⁸⁸—in terms of both the access itself and the symbolic capital that can be accumulated in the educational field in the case of Greece. However, the question remains: is the “ethnic” (Greek) origin together with its citizenry a necessary and appropriate condition for free access to the educational field and for the occupation of various positions within it (including the position of best pupil or teacher, for example)? On one hand, the Greek state organizes special conditions for post-Soviet repatriates in order to make their adaptation easier (see Voutira 2004; Triandafyllidou and Veikou 2002). But these special conditions may only be used on specific territories, namely in the northern regions of the country, which have considerable numbers of “Muslim” and “Slavic” peoples.⁸⁹ Therefore, this so-called adaptation is necessary not so much for the people but for the state, which requires a larger number of Greeks in the north, according to its discourse of homogenization. Homogenization has been a goal throughout the modern period of Greece's history, and this discourse has been perhaps especially active in the field of education (see, for example, Karakassidou 2002: 198; Zachos 2009: 139). On the other hand, state programs are directed towards finding a solution to questions formulated by the state and for the state, and not towards benefits for migrants.

The next question is why migrants cannot obtain timely confirmation of their certificates in order to be able to develop careers started in the USSR, using their experience from (post-)Soviet homological fields (the field of education, for instance) and professional degrees and diplomas. The *first reason* is the ethnic differences among Greek populations, or, in other words, various sorts of Greekness. As Zachos notes (2009: 134), “[i]t would be too simplistic to define citizenship as a passport which gives the same rights to all its bearers, but it would be equally wrong to claim that citizenship guarantees certain permanent and unchanged features.” In this regard, Triandafyllidou and Veikou have formulated the term “hierarchy of Greekness” (see Triandafyllidou 2000, 2001; Triandafyllidou and Veikou 2002). They have shown that this hierarchy is a kind of discourse that is

⁸⁸ See, for example, Bourdieu 1996: 214, and Bourdieu and Passeron 1990: 155–156, 221–222.

⁸⁹ See outlines of these legislative dynamics in Voutira (2004) and in Triandafyllidou and Vekou (2002).

shared by Greece's populations and produced by the state (or rather, by various key institutions of the state). They discuss three forms of "Greekness": "real/normal Greeks" (*dopii*), Pontian Greeks (including *Rousopontii*) and Greek Albanians (*Vorioepiotes*) (Triandafyllidou 2001: 126; Triandafyllidou and Veikou 2002: 191). As Triandafyllidou (2001: 126) notes:

The hierarchy of Greekness is thus constructed in the political discourse, whereby priority is given to 'real Greeks', i.e., to citizens of the Greek state who are of Greek ethnicity and Orthodox religion. Pontian Greeks are, so to speak, second-class citizens. The third-class Greeks are the *Vorioepiotes*, whose Greekness is contested. At the bottom of the scale lie the Others, the aliens (the immigrants who cannot claim Greek origins). Constructing the Other therefore involves shifting the boundaries of the ingroup and, more importantly, creating multiple levels of inclusion–exclusion.

Although migrants from the former USSR have privileged conditions for their "repatriation" and "naturalization" (see Voutira 2004), their access to their previous occupations demands new certificates of higher education that in turn require advanced language skills in Greek in order to demonstrate relevant knowledge (in the case of Georgios, it was suggested that he needed to pass eight exams). The period between arrival and (possible, but problematic) job placement in a profession that requires a qualification that was obtained abroad is sometimes long, as it is necessary to obtain the right to attend free language courses, in parallel with seeking a job. The latter is also problematic, for what kind of job is likely to be accessible to a middle-aged person who has a language barrier and no skills outside his/her competence? If a job can be obtained, it is then necessary to work while also learning a language,⁹⁰ hoping that some day it will be possible to pass exams in Greek to confirm an already obtained diploma; moreover, many newcomers are married and have a family, and must share whatever family difficulties may arise in new circumstances.

⁹⁰ Georgios supposes that he could have been more successful in learning the new language but because he had to work, which was underpaid but of vital importance to the family, he was unable to pay much attention to Greek courses. My friends from Athens attested that when they arrived from Kazakhstan and found work as builders, they just fell asleep when they attended Greek-language classes after a long working day.

The *second reason* is the current relationship between the field of education and “professional” fields that are regulated by labor market rules—or the game of capitals, in Bourdieu's terms. I refer here to the problem of over-education. This problem first appeared in Greece in the 1970s (Tsoukalas 1976), and by the time Georgios arrived in 1993, the situation had not changed significantly (Patrinos 1997: 218). Patrinos, for example, argues that the problem of over-education is acute for university graduates who belong to a group “with a relatively low socioeconomic background” (1997: 217), in other words, for those who have weak symbolic, social, and economic/financial capitals. Such people are unlikely to win the strong competition for access to the professional fields. Patrinos observes, “Finding themselves in an overcrowded labor market in a stagnant economy, frustrated graduates are forced to take jobs in inappropriate fields” (1997: 217).

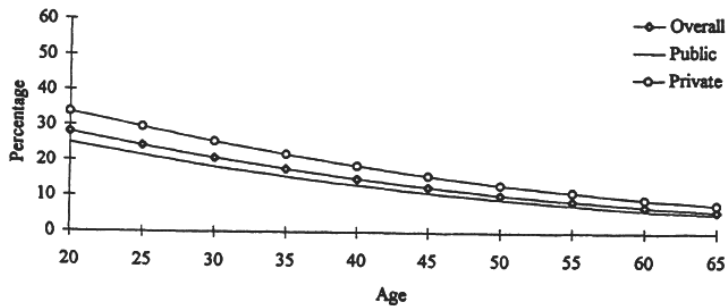


Figure 1. Probability of over-education by age and employment sector (Patrinos 1997: 217). As Patrinos demonstrates here, there is an inverse dependence between the chances of finding an appropriate job and the age of a candidate, which can be observed in both public and private sectors. Thus, even in the case of Georgios managing to confirm his diploma, he would still be engaged in competition (in consideration of his age – 58) for only about 10 percent of the market, if we are to ignore his origin and language skills.

Georgios, as an owner of symbolic capital gained abroad, found the field was virtually closed to him when his competency should have been the relevant factor (that is, it should have been “relevant” because the Greek educational field is isomorphic to educational fields of post-Soviet

countries).⁹¹ However, three other key factors were responsible for Georgios' failure to access his profession: 1) the language problem, which also served as a marker of his foreignness; 2) strict control of the field, which was demonstrated by the 15 years it took to evaluate his and his wife's degrees; and, 3) a restricted number of places in the field, which produced intense competition among over-educated candidates. All this led to Georgios becoming increasingly deskilled as time passed.

Georgios' foreign symbolic capital was dismissed in the public sphere because it could not be converted or confirmed; it retained its significance only among family. That is, it is possible, thanks to family mechanisms of investment, that Olga and Georgios' symbolic capitals played some role in their children's orientation to degrees of higher education,⁹² further development of their careers, and their matrimonial relations.

In marriage strategies, "second-class Greekness" can be a more important factor than, for example, a degree in medicine and a successful career (Lianos, Asteriou and Agiomirgianakis 2004: 162). Georgios' daughter has married an émigré from Georgia, who is also a doctor, and their family life is, in Georgios' words, "very harmonious." His son was also to be married, but his fiancée's parents expressed a certain amount of disagreement over the marriage, bringing up the ethnic background of their future son-in-law, who was born in Tbilisi, as well as the social position of his parents ("we are ordinary people [Rus. *prostyye lyudi*]," Georgios commented). But Georgios himself also disapproved of his son's choice, mainly because of the position of his fiancée's parents. Georgios and his wife Olga, while being deskilled in Greece, have symbolic capitals that are recognizable among the Russian Pontians who are in the same position as émigrés; they were able to invest in their family, and to provide their children with higher education and the intellectual environment necessary to achieve this. They were successful in the case of their daughter's marriage because her husband's family was of the same social background (including migration experience and the common origin of its members). This phenomenon is widespread among émigrés of the former Soviet Union. However, Georgios' story, although typical, is not the only possible narrative here. I have already mentioned Anna P., who managed to confirm her degree in pharmaceuticals in a much

⁹¹ There are some peculiarities described, for example, by Tsoukalas, who explains them in a historical context (1976: 424–427), and in Katsillis and Rubinson (1990), who offer a Bourdieusian analysis of the connections between cultural capital and the educational field in Greece.

⁹² I asked Georgios why both his children decided to become doctors, and he answered that there was only one higher education institution in his city – the Medical Institute. They decided that education in their own city would be cheaper than in Thessalonica, for example.

shorter period, to find a job in her area, and then, after gaining experience, seniority, and authority, she moved to the medical insurance business. However, we must bear in mind that Anna arrived in Greece from Russia at a younger age than Georgios did, and she was not burdened with family responsibilities, as Georgios was. I am also familiar with other cases of successful careers among specialists with diplomas from Soviet and post-Soviet universities, even in the sphere of education.

Each year from 1995 to 1997, the Center for Recognition of Titles of Foreign Universities received about 10,000 applications.⁹³ It remains unclear to me why Georgios and Olga's applications had been under consideration for such a long period of time (the majority of my informants with university diplomas noted that they had serious difficulties, however, and spent a lot of time trying to have their degrees evaluated). I can only assume that university degrees from ex-Soviet countries may be regarded as being a long way down the state's list of priorities. This Center, as an element of the economic field in Greece, expresses and realizes only the inner logic of that field (regarding foreign diplomas), which is that "graduates from EU countries are better placed in the Greek labor market from an employability point of view, compared with graduates from all other countries, and are getting higher salaries compared with those that have been educated in the Balkans" (Lianos, Asteriou and Agiomirgianakis 2004: 160). Therefore, it may be possible to create a hierarchy of foreign degrees, which descends from the EU, to the Balkans, and finally to post-Soviet countries. The effect of these circumstances is to produce a double hierarchy (that is, in terms of both ethnicity and education), where migrants from the former Soviet Union do not and cannot occupy the upper levels of the structure in public and/or private sectors.

Weak Symbolic Capital and Its Migratory Advantages

Above, I have barely touched upon the range of problems and tasks that migrants face. Voutira notes that the process of immigration is generally accompanied by a "declassing and deskilling experience" that is common to migrants from the former USSR to Greece, Germany and Israel (Voutira 2004: 538). I agree with this statement as it applies to people like Georgios, who has essential symbolic capital but it is only recognizable as such in his country of origin and not in Greece, where it is necessary to confirm it. Other migrants whose symbolic capitals were accumulated in less specialized fields than in Georgios' case can usually gain access to comparable fields of employment in Greece.

⁹³ Calculated according to data presented in Lianos, Asteriou and Agiomirgianakis 2004: 152.

This access tends to be characterized by low requirements for language skills in areas that do not demand evaluation and confirmation of qualifications or other documents.

Indeed, those who possess “weaker” symbolic capitals than Georgios or Anna (see below) represent a different kind of situation altogether. For example, I took advantage of the need to service my car and asked acquaintances from Kalithea (a district in Athens) to find a Renault car specialist from among ex-Soviet repatriates. My acquaintances kindly recommended a car repair shop with Russian-speaking staff, where I was able to have my car serviced and also found many informants for my research project.

Nikolaos, a mechanic, was born in Samarkand (in the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic) in 1967 to a Greek family. His father was born in the Crimean city of Evpatoria; his father’s mother was born either in Evpatoria or in Constantinople (“it was a territory of Greece at that time,” Nikolaos added in his interview⁹⁴). His grandmother spoke a language that was “very close to New Greek.” In 1944, the Evpatorian family suffered under the area’s repressions and they were deported to Siberia, except for the grandmother’s elder brother, who had retained his Greek passport and because of this was exiled to Uzbekistan as foreigner. In 1956, a “Siberian” part of the family resettled in Samarkand and so joined with the “Uzbek” part of the family. Nikolaos’ mother’s family originates from Abkhazia. They also suffered under the repressions against the Greeks and left for Kazakhstan, but doctors advised that Nikolaos’ grandfather should move again to a better climate for his health; therefore, the family moved to Samarkand. Nikolaos has a brother (b. 1969), a wife and a son. “School, army, work,” he says, and with these words he summarizes his Soviet biography, showing that his life was ordinary, like that of many other people. Returning to civilian life after army service, Nikolaos started work as a car mechanic in his native Samarkand. In 1988, he visited Greece as a tourist, “And I liked it somewhat, but what exactly?” By 1994 the family had decided to resettle in Greece; they realized this intention in 1996. The repatriating group consisted of Nikolaos, his two grandmothers, his father, mother, brother, wife and son; that is, eight people moved in all. In Athens, they stayed with relatives for a while and then rented a flat for themselves with their relatives’ assistance. Nikolaos began working as an odd-job man; he “assisted a certain old man; if he could find a job I accompanied and assisted him.” After four months of this occasional labor, he got a job working on the Athenian underground; after this, he discovered the car service center and was able to use his particular skill set. His brother Konstantinos joined him soon afterwards.

⁹⁴ Interview with Nikolaos F., age 41, Athens, Greece, 2009.

I had many conversations⁹⁵ with Nikolaos and Konstantinos, and with their boss Stephanos, the owner of the service center; I also spoke with their colleagues (people from Russia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Abkhazia). It became clear that they had all worked as car mechanics in their countries of origin and were thus able to find work at the service center fairly quickly, and usually within about a year (except in the case of Stephanos, owner of the center).

If we compare two cases—Georgios and Nikolaos—the conclusion seems clear: the stronger the symbolic capital, the more problematic its confirmation: thus, the processes of (re)appropriation of Greekness and identity are also more problematic. Despite this, both men were able to use their ethnicity as capital that provided them with access to migration as repatriates.

In my field materials from Patra, Egion, Athens, and Alexandroupolis, as well as in the literature on “sexual fields” and “sexual capital” (see Martin and George 2006; Green 2008), there are many examples of women’s migration “for the purpose of prostitution” (as it is usually stigmatized). As Anna said, “It was a period [the end of the 1990s] when all the bordellos were filled with ladies from Russia” (see Triandafyllidou’s field data 2000: 197–198; and Gropas and Triandafyllidou 2007: 150). Finckenauer and Waring (1998) report that people working as prostitutes, having migrated from Russia and Eastern European countries, had become a serious challenge for Greece by the 1990s. In 1995, for example, a number of Greek policemen were arrested for organizing foreign prostitution and trafficking rings in Greece. Finckenauer and Waring also note, “scores of Russian and Eastern European women were enticed to come to Greece with promises of wealth and a better life. Once they arrived, their passports were confiscated and sold to nightclub owners. The women were turned into virtual prisoners and forced to prostitute themselves” (1998: 140). Usually, these women have nothing but their physical attractiveness to sell and some use it as a kind of symbolic capital (which is the sole means of access to the field of the *sex industry*). At the same time, their intention is usually to find a husband and to have a family. During the period of their activity as prostitutes, they learn the local language and rules, for example, and get to know local people. Thus they work to become socialized into the new world they hope to enter by way of marriage.

If we consider repatriation biopolitically, that is, as a displacement of physical bodies, selected on the basis of ethnicity (sometimes accompanied by additional principles – see Voutira

⁹⁵ Interview with Nikolaos F., age 41, Athens, Greece, 2009; interview with Nikolaos F., age 41, and with Konstantinos F., age 39, Athens, Greece, 2009; interview with Nikolaos F., age 41, Konstantinos F., age 39, and Stephanos K., age 52, Athens, Greece, 2009.

2004: 539–540), an embodied symbolic capital (such as ability, practical knowledge, or attractiveness) is the most useful variant of this kind of capital, and a guarantee of adaptation to any homological conditions. The more the symbolic capital is connected with the physical body, the more chance it has to be repatriated with the body, and vice versa. My particular emphasis on the physical here is not accidental. The National Foundation for the Reception and Resettlement of Repatriated Greeks, for example, in one of its first documents concerning the regulation of the repatriation order, considered repatriates to have no education, and no links to any field but the peasant economy: “repatriates are people with low economic claims, demands, and therefore they can accept without any kind of complaint even the most difficult form of life in the borderline regions” (Voutira 2004: 535). Thus, identity crises occur in relation to possessors of strong and specialized (in terms of the country in which they were accumulated) symbolic capitals. Moreover, such factors as age, family status, and region/place of residence in Greece also influence the levels of intensity at which such crises are experienced.

Conclusion

Thus, concluding the stories of Georgios and some of the other people encountered here, I can state, as I argued at the beginning of the chapter:

1) Weaker symbolic capital accumulated in the migrant’s home country assists more successful (re-)socialization in the host country. A stronger or more specialized symbolic capital is (usually) bad luggage for migration.

2) Even if specialized symbolic capital cannot be transferred completely from country to country, it may play a significant role in matrimonial strategies and in the social evaluation of a possible marriage partner. Thus, this sort of capital is repatriated (as in the case described), but in the form of intra-family investment or intra-group (Tsalkean, for example) recognition.

3) The failure to transfer and confirm specialized symbolic capitals, especially when this occurs in conjunction with specialist market restrictions, leads to both deskilling and identity crisis.

4) Bourdieu’s theory of capitals is both relevant and useful in the description, analysis, and interpretation of cross-border migrations.

Chapter 4

Migration of Women from Russia to Greece as an Appropriation of Discourses and Practices

“We [the ex-Soviet Greeks] move to Greece in whole families, basically. Some [families] send scouts to Greece first, one or two; other families all go together,” said my friend from Athens who arrived in Greece from Abkhazia. The typical form of contemporary migration of ex-Soviet Greeks is family migration, involving either some members of the family or all members at the same time. Individual migration is a rarer phenomenon. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, family ties in the USSR (as well as in post-Soviet countries) have always been an object of construction and enforced support by the state. As for ex-soviet Greeks, they have had first-hand experience of the “family principle” involving accusations and repressions of the Soviet system in the 1930-50s. Moreover, in terms of wealth, the three most common sources of financial capital for those who decide to migrate are: private real estate, (i.e., shared among family members), private entrepreneurial property under family ownership, the sale of which transforms that capital into money that constitutes the third source, namely, family assets.⁹⁶ As a rule these capital assets in Greece are spent on joint family rental expenses or purchase of flats or houses.⁹⁷ Therefore, family ties are a sort of guarantee during the process of migration and socialization/appropriation for ex-Soviet Greeks. The second reason is that Greek families, during their Soviet history having shown a tendency to fragmentation as Voutira put

⁹⁶ In the cases mentioned here—real estate, private business property and money—formal property rights confirmed by the state, are just “symbolic rights” for family members who can view these rights as shared and common considering the family as a “real” owner, not one particular member of the family (see, for instance, the case of Vladimir in Chapter 2). Certainly, in the case of family fragmentation, two scenarios are possible: division according to the customary law and division in accordance with official law (in disputes).

⁹⁷ According to my interviews with Nikolaos F., age 41, Athens, Greece, 2009; Alexandros V., age 56, Athens, Greece, 2009; Philippos S., age 57, Pyrgos, Greece, 2009.

it, “the more you divide, the more you survive” (2006: 387), have kept more sustainable connections among their members and with kindred families, thanks to their living in non-Greek environments; especially rural families or those families whose young members have migrated to nearby cities.

In the framework of post-communist transition, an independent women's migration is being discussed as a “post-wall” phenomenon, and characterized by new opportunities for women who are “trying to face new market conditions or to escape the dominant discourse of nationalist projects in their home countries” (Morokvasic 2004: 8).

As we could see in the case of Georgios (Chapter 3), migration without capital (except for symbolic form) is possible and quite typical for post-Soviet citizens. Two life stories presented in this chapter are evidence of this sort of migration. It is possible that migration without capital is one factor that caused migrated ex-Soviet citizens to prefer to be called “refugees” rather than “repatriates” (i.e. they prefer a term having positive connotations in the political discourse of Greece) (cf. Voutira 2003).

Both these accounts are about women, and both recount independent migration and migration without economic capital and destitution. Although structurally these stories are homologous, they are vastly different. My argument is that the appropriation of Greekness may take place (and be used) in contrasting ways, the causes of which are rooted in pre-emigration experience. In using the concepts I introduced earlier in the thesis, both capital from Bourdieu and appropriation from Schneider, I examine here two biographies and show, each in their own contexts, the various sorts of evaluative judgments made by the people involved. The discussion can provide evidences of ways in which identities can be manifested and change during the process of appropriation.

Anna and Irina: Life in Russia

Anna P. is single; she lives in Athens in her own flat and works for an insurance company. She was born in the Soviet Union in 1971 in the city of Yessentuki (Southern Russia). This is how she describes her life in Russia:

Well, what, basically, [was] in Russia? I grew up in a normal family, well. Daddy was a captain, Mother—a physician. Yes, a deep sea master, a mariner. Then at a cer-

tain stage, I think I was around fifteen, he stopped his travels and started working at a meat processing plant; he was [graduated as] an engineer, therefore, he ... [could find a job]. I studied hard at school, and even finished with a gold medal, as far as I remember. I was born in Yessentuki, [the region of] Caucasian Mineral Waters. There I have been studying, finished musical school. Well, in principle, it was such a family ... classical Soviet family, intelligentsia (*intelligenty*). Well, Daddy earned, of course, more money than Mum did; Mum was a physician, so, in principle, in Soviet times it was a prestigious profession, but [physicians] didn't earn much money. So, it was a pleasant atmosphere [in the family].

I studied well at school, then entered the Pharmacological Institute in Pyatigorsk; studied in Pyatigorsk⁹⁸. Then, basically, the perestroika started, at the end of my education the perestroika started. ... (my translation)

In this fragment of the interview, as well as in her other stories about her family, Anna remembers the life together with her parents with warmth, using such terms as "classical Soviet family," "kind atmosphere" and "intelligence"; and against a background of a successful and intelligent family⁹⁹ she demonstrates her own success in education. In Anna's family the question of ethnicity has never been substantial. They had rather weak contacts with maternal relatives (Greeks), and after the death of Anna's mother from cancer in 1992, those contacts ceased completely. At the same time, the discourse on intelligence still remains an important element of her identity, even now that she lives in Greece.

When Anna trained at the institute, she passed the tests and was invited to work in Moscow for one of the foreign pharmaceutical companies. She was awarded a diploma in 1993 and moved to Moscow where she started to work for this company. She entered postgraduate college to study pharmacy (where, subsequently, she defended her doctoral thesis). Anna worked for the pharmaceutical company almost until her departure to Greece in 1999. Recounting the Moscow period of her life, Anna aspires to stress that she, a provincial girl, was able to find a good job in Moscow and to

⁹⁸ Pyatigorsk lies 16 kilometers from Yessentuki.

⁹⁹ The Russian term *intelligentsiia*, although it has certain semantic connotations with Eng. *intellectuals*, is rather specific and has social implications especially since its Marxist definition as a "social stratum" engaging its position somewhere between classes. In late Soviet and post-Soviet common use, it meant not only the social category of people earning intellectually, but also thinking independently and supporting specific lifestyles.

keep it even during periods of major economic turbulence. Success, independence, and fortune are key categories in the description of her Moscow period.

Anna's decision concerning emigration is not exactly understandable to me. On the one hand, Anna had a good job and earned enough money; on the other hand, she characterizes the situation in the country as unstable, with vague perspectives. I asked her directly: "Why did you leave Russia?"; and she answered: "I wanted something new. I wanted to see if I could live in another country".

It was such a period when I had to make a decision, because in general it was a difficult situation. Moscow is a brutal city. I thought about how and what I had to do ... In principle, I had my Greek roots. And at least I had a possibility—I thought so— [to migrate thanks to] my position, [which] was legitimate. (my translation)

Her father supported Anna's decision, moreover, her younger sister also showed her willingness to migrate and together they processed documents for Greece. Anna's financial conditions are also not quite clear to me: Anna arrived in Athens by coach (the cheapest transport for travel to Greece from Russia) clutching five hundred US dollars given to her by her father. Hence, she did not have any savings and was not fully intent on migration.

When Anna decided to migrate, Maria, a lawyer and local Greek Society employee who processed Anna's documents, rendered her a great service. During our conversations, Anna mentioned Maria time and again with warmth and gratitude. It is interesting to note that Anna's aunt (her mother's sister) worked at that time at the Passport and Visa Service as an officer processing documents for departing repatriates; she did not render any assistance to Anna, and when she learned about Anna's decision, she took it with a pinch of salt. One of Maria's points of advice, which in the future simplified the process of acquisition of Greek citizenship, was to change Anna's birth certificate (contained the record "nationality: Russian") and to go to Greece as a Greek and a repatriate, but not to use a tourist visa for entry into the country. Although this manner of processing the document was more expensive, Anna, being unfamiliar with these matters, accepted Maria's opinion and did everything that she advised.

In Yessentuki and in general in Caucasian Mineral Waters, there was a Greek Society. It is a rather strong diaspora now, one of the biggest. We had a Greek Society there. Well, I came from Moscow and went there to find out how things stood. And a woman there [Maria]... Well, now I understand that at that time the advice she gave me [was very important]. To some degree, she wanted to help me, but, basically, her aim was to earn more money. And she talks to me: 'You have two choices to leave without problems: if you get a tourist visa, for example, come here [to Greece], and then move farther away; you have relevant documents, your birth certificate and all... and you may have a right to stay here [in Greece]; but the alternative is just to arrive as a repatriate. It will be more expensive,'—then it costs five hundred dollars—'but this,' she says, 'you know, will give you more privileges.' And I want to say that I am so grateful to her, on my word of honor! Perhaps at that time it was not a little sum of money, but my dad helped me out. Moreover, we made [documents] for my sister and me. I had to change my Russian passport, because I was Russian in the passport after my father. This was what she advised me to do: 'You have to change [your passport] to arrive not just as a repatriate but as a daughter of a Greek woman, not only as a daughter but as a Greek yourself'. ...

Now I, basically, analyzing all that, consider that it would be so, it is for the better since it has happened so. Apparently... how shall I say it in Russian... destiny does exist, perhaps. If it is destined to happen... I made [new] passports quickly, everything went smoothly. As if, it was [destiny]. ... By the way, the same Maria told me, 'You have to take all your documents with you, [including] the birth certificate of your mother and your own...' I even took the birth certificate of my grandmother! To confirm that all of them were Greeks. She told me: 'When you arrive, translate them straight away.' So, she explained for a few moments to me and I am so grateful to her. ...

Since then, I have recollected Maria so many times... She, basically, has done a huge favor for me. (my translation)

Thus, the processing of documents did not cause any difficulties for Anna. Moreover, thanks to Maria's advice, she simplified the procedure of gaining Greek citizenship. As for the question of passport change, the picture in general is that: people, constituting themselves as Greeks, have a right to acquire Greek citizenship if they manage to prove their "Greekness". Based on Greek law, their ethnicity is determined according to birth certificates. Birth certificates in the USSR/Russia con-

tain a sub-section “nationality” (an equivalent of the Western term “ethnicity”, cf. Shanin 1989, Gellner 1975), while Russian passports, unlike Soviet passports, do not contain this detail; therefore, birth certificates are the sole source of “ethnicity” confirmed by the state. De facto, aspiring citizens also have to demonstrate their blood relationship to those who had Greek citizenship in the past.¹⁰⁰ Anna talks about passport change. She changed her passport in 1998. As far as I remember, at that time it was possible to change a Soviet passport only into a Soviet passport (containing the detail “nationality”). Although the presidential decree (No 232, 13.03.1997) stating that the “[m]ain document proving identity of citizen of Russian Federation on the territory of Russian Federation” was issued earlier, it has been possible to change a Soviet passport into a Russian passport only since 1999. “Nationality” in Soviet passports was determined according to birth certificates, therefore Anna had to change her ethnicity on the birth certificate first.

Ever since the start of mass repatriation, regular coach routes have operated a service connecting some cities in the South of Russia with Thessalonica and Athens. The shortest and cheapest route to take from the South of Russia to Greece runs via the coastal resort of Sochi, then about twelve hours by ferry to Trabzon and finally via Turkish territory to Greece. Turkish visas are very cheap for Russian citizens (15 US dollars)¹⁰¹ and they are put in passports when crossing the border (i.e., it is not necessary to apply to Turkish consulates for them). However, operating coach routes

¹⁰⁰ However, this is not an obligatory requirement because only a part of the Greek population of the former USSR can demonstrate such relationships with their ancestors—Greek citizens (from 1910–1920 the Greek government issued the Greek population of Turkey with Greek passports).

¹⁰¹ I am not familiar with prices for coach travel by ferry from Sochi – Trabzon, but I know that car transport is rather expensive—600 US dollars per one car and 70 US dollars per passenger. I know these routes from my own experience: I once travelled from Krasnodar – Athens – Krasnodar in 2007 via Ukraine, Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria, and from Athens to Krasnodar in 2010 via Turkey by car. The high cost of ferry transport via Turkey is in no way alleviated by the absence of any timetable: ferries depart irregularly since they work mainly as dry cargo carriers. It is entirely possible that the discourse of negative attitude to Turkey—widespread among the Greek population—may be a factor in the preference for the “European” route. At the same time, Tsalka Urums use the territory of Turkey not only for travels to Greece (cf., for example, Georgios’ history), but also to run a business in Turkey. The owner of the hotel Pontos, Vladimir, from Bogatyrscoe, told me that he spent several years in Turkey accompanying tourist groups from Russia and even made himself out as a Turk for the travelling Russians (see Chapter 2). Another informant from Kalithea, Athens, decided that the route via Turkey is cheapest and safest and that “Turkey is a fairly civilized country, far from Moldova or Ukraine, and it isn’t necessary to pay bribes to anybody” (Author’s field notes, conversation with Vasilius B., age 52, from Abkhazian Greeks, 2009, Athens, Greece).

run via the territories of Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, and Bulgaria. Consequently, to get to Greece by coach Russian citizens have to procure additional transit visas to Romania and Bulgaria (Ukraine and Moldova provide visa-free admittance to their territories). These transit visas are issued from consulates situated in Moscow, and the actual process of issuing requires time and money and is possible only after receiving a Greek visa. Moreover, to reach Greece from Russia by these routes requires passing through ten customs checkpoints, often involving long queues and extortion through bribes (at least in Ukraine, Moldova and Russia).

Anna decided to reach Greece by coach from Pyatigorsk. Her account of the trip is highly emotional, containing many exclamatory expressions, notwithstanding the fact that ten years have already passed since this trip took place.

I was going by coach. The coach was full of the rabble; I was just in absolute shock! Some women were going to some job on some islands, some shuttle traders... It was a complete nightmare! They were drinking vodka all those three days. It was real bedlam. At that time the situation in Greece [was different] and in the coach everybody asked me where I was going [to work]. As a matter of fact, at that time... it was a period when all the brothels were full of Russian ladies. ... And everybody asked me [in the bus]... "You are so young, you are so pretty, and you are from Moscow, where are you going then?" I made up a story that I had relatives there [in Greece] so that they wouldn't accost me. (my translation)

Irina B. (born in 1974) is married; she has nine children and is living in the village of North-Western Peloponnesus. She is a housewife, but works part-time as a seamstress in Patra. Irina's recollections about her life in the USSR have another perspective. She was born in Central Asia and spent most of her childhood there in a military town, where her father served as an officer. Her mother was a housewife. Irina also had an elder sister and younger brother. When she was seven years old she started school, like all the children in the USSR, and, according to her story, she was the best student in the class. When she was thirteen her father received a new appointment at a military base located in Maikop in the South of Russia (now it is a capital of this region—the Republic of Adygea). The family bought a small house in the village of Predgornyi near Maikop. Starting from that moment, Irina's recollections become disordered and contradictory. It is unclear what happened with her father but his figure just vanishes from Irina's stories of her youth. Her mother very quickly

turns into a chronic alcoholic, likewise her sister and then her brother. Irina's academic aspirations get worse and worse ("I slid down to low marks (*skatilas' na dvoiki*)") and she hardly completed the ninth grade. After that, she enrolls at a vocational technical college in Maikop and specializes in sewer treatment processing after two years. In the village where Irina lived there were many Greek migrants from Tsalka (a rural district in Georgia) who had close relationships with Greece, giving Irina the possibility to get information about this country.

She married very soon after finishing at vocational-technical college and soon gave birth to her first son (she was seventeen). Her husband, a local resident, committed a crime (theft) before their son's birth and went to prison for several years. When her son was about one year old, she departed to work in Greece by boat and gave custody of her son to her mother. Irina started working at a garment factory in Patra, together with other young women from Russia. She got a job in the biggest Southern Russian port of Novorossiysk (about 250 kilometers from Maikop) thanks to her "Greek connections." However, when she reached Patra, she discovered that she had to work in the nightclubs of Peloponnesus either as a dancer or as a waitress.

When describing her family's life during the Maikop period Irina is very reluctant to go into any detail. She says almost nothing about her brother, sister or (first) husband, and when she does, she describes them rather negatively. The only issue (in Russia) troubling her now is a quarrel with her sister over the real estate remaining after her mother and brother's deaths. Before leaving Russia, she had not worked anywhere and never learnt Greek.

Nevertheless, Irina keeps her positive attitude towards Russia and gave all her children dual citizenship (i.e., they are citizens of Greece and Russia). In answer to my question: "Why did you give them Russian citizenship?", she said, "To go to my motherland."

First Experiences of Life in Greece

Anna remembers her first days in Greece in great detail. She came to Athens by coach in the night; her fellow passengers advised her to find a cheap hotel in Omonia (one of the central Athenian districts). Accordingly, having got off the coach, she took a taxi, paid the driver a considerable amount of money, "for which it would be possible to go around Athens several times," as she says, and

reached Omonia, which was a five minutes' drive from the bus stop, and ventured into an old bar where they were apparently speaking Russian to enquire about staying overnight.

Although Anna says that before arriving in Greece she had already visited some foreign countries and had certain notions about Greece, she notes that she did not know that the Omonia district was one of the roughest parts of the city. Despite having relatives in Greece, Anna has never formed any relationships with them and, because she was on bad terms with the Greek side of her family in Russia, she did not even know their addresses. For all that, Anna had only one lead—the telephone number of a woman living in Athens. She was a cousin of Anna's sister's friend, an emigrant from Russia of Armenian origin. But Anna decided not to disturb her so late at night and searched for accommodation by herself.

I say [to my fellow traveler]: 'Stay here with your luggage and my things, please. I'll have a look around, perhaps find a hotel.' I am walking and walking. Then I see something that looks like a bar and hear them speaking Russian there. Oh, compatriots! I go in and say: 'So and so, can you tell me where I can find a hotel?' And a barmaid says to me: 'Perhaps you have just arrived?' I say: 'Yes.' 'You know, this is a very rough district. It would be better if you drove away from here. What sort of hotels could be here? It's rubbish! But if you want, Zhora can help you.' And then Zhora appears. He was a puny little man dressed in an expensive suit. He asks: 'Oh, where are you from? From Georgia?' I say: 'No, I am not from Georgia.' 'Oh, I'll find everything you need, don't worry.' And asks me: "What did you come here for? What kind of documents do you have?" 'You know, my sister is living here. They are on Crete today. I need to spend one night in a hotel and tomorrow I'll go to them. But I have a woman with me, my fellow traveler, she has no money, therefore we have to find something cheap.' He says: 'I'll organize it all, right now. I'll give you my own flat. There are five rooms there and everything is fine!' (my translation)

Then she told me about Zhora's apartment where she discovered five men asleep. "I was in absolute shock," she resumed. In the morning one of them, who originally hailed from Zheleznovodsk, a city about 25 km from Yessentuki, suggested Anna use his room until she had made contact with her "relatives." "This place isn't for you," he added. Several times during the day Anna tried to phone her only Athenian contact; Zhora and his friend followed her all that time. Anna was wondering: "My God, is this really Greece, is this really the center of a city? Usually city centers are prestig-

ious and flashy but this area here was a complete hell hole!" At last her acquaintance's husband arrived and helped her collect her luggage from Zhora's flat.

Anna's story is represented by her as good luck and good fortune and at the same time she clearly demonstrates her ability to make decisions and her aspiration to change her life for the better. Her single acquaintance in Greece through the Employment Service found her a job as babysitter, and on her third day in Athens Anna landed a job (accommodation and meals included) with a prosperous Athenian family, where she worked as a house cleaner. In recounting this period of her biography, Anna's intelligent identity appears. For example, she talks about how her hosts were surprised by her ability to use cutlery at mealtimes; how they were amazed at her proficiency at playing the piano; and how the host a year later, when saying goodbye to her, said that he understood that Anna required an altogether different sort of work (i.e., work that would stretch her intellectual abilities).

This family, according to Anna's words, rendered significant assistance to Anna. During the one-year period of working as a babysitter she mastered the spoken language, thanks to the intra-family communication. She took the chance to attend Greek courses so that she was able to describe the history of her family (her mother's family) when she filled in documents for gaining citizenship. This family acted as guarantors, when officials were accepting a decision concerning Anna's Greek citizenship, and provided their address for her registration. This family, moreover, found a job for Anna's sister who arrived after Anna (to care for the host's aged mother). Ever since then, Anna still keeps friendly relations with the family and visits them on holidays.

When she had mastered the Greek language and gained citizenship, Anna decided to seek work in her specialty (pharmacist), along with submitting her diploma for confirmation. Despite of not having that confirmation, she managed to find a job in a small private chemist's in the north of Athens. After a year of her working there, thanks to her efforts and experience, the income of the chemist's increased fivefold. Anna stresses the kind relationship provided to her by the owner of the pharmacy and his family. Thanks to familiarity with the local population and clients of the pharmacy, she was able to rent a cheap flat not far from the pharmacy, where she has been living for seven years. Anna notes time and again that, during her work as a babysitter and at the private pharmacy, she did not think about the size of her salary: "Well, there is some salary and it's good!" All her energy was directed towards the Greek language acquisition, formation of social networks, receiving a full status as a citizen of Greece and confirmation of her diploma. When she had her diploma confirmed and received professional experience in Greece, Anna transferred to another pharmacy, and here the question of salary is vital to her. According to Anna's own estimation, that was a point in her biog-

raphy concluding the period of “initial adaptation” to the life in Greece. Before departing from Russia, Anna had a boyfriend, Mark, who migrated to Israel at the same time as Anna had left. They kept in touch with each other and when Anna became a Greek citizen, she decided to go to Israel in order to marry Mark and probably settle down there. They intended to plan their wedding on Cyprus. However, after a month in Israel, she understood that emigration had changed both her and Mark. They parted, although they continue to be on friendly terms. When talking about Mark, Anna compares the differences between hers and his migration. Her opinion is that the state of Israel takes care of its repatriates much more than Greece. Thus, after a year in Israel, Mark worked as one of the co-directors of a large organization. In other words, he did not lose his symbolic capital collected in Russia as well as the time for integration into the new society, whereas what is known migration to Greece leads to “declassing” and “deskilling” (Voutira 2004: 538).

Irina recounts hardly anything about her first two years in Greece. When she had just arrived, she forfeited her passport. Her future second husband, Tanos, decided to marry her and searched for a long time for “those bad people” who had kept her passport. He redeemed the passport for 300 euro, and then spent a lot of time helping to procure a new visa for her because her first visa had expired long before. When she got the new visa thanks to Tanos, Irina went to Russia in order to divorce her first husband. When she arrived at her village, she discovered that her husband was in prison again for a fresh crime, making her divorce proceedings easier. When she was divorced, she took her son away and departed for Greece and her next marriage. Her future husband, Tanos, had met Irina in one of the Patrassian night clubs where she worked. He came from a peasant family; his parents own large plots of land that they use as fields, vegetable gardens, melon fields and livestock farms; the major part of their land consists of old olive groves. All his family (Tanos’ parents and aunt, and Tanos himself as an eldest son) lived together in the village situated on a plain between Patra and Pyrgos. Tanos’ brother and sister had already resided separately up to the time of Tanos and Irina’s marriage. Everybody in Tanos’ family knows that Irina is Russian, and they treat her kindly (this situation is possible because the family shares the common Greek discourse of a benevolent relationship to Russia and Russians). Moreover, this family has a friendly attitude towards Russians because Tanos’ grandfather bought the biggest part of his lands, basically olive groves, from a Russian emigrant who had escaped to Greece after the Russian revolution of 1917. According to a family tale, that emigrant, being familiar with the limited means of grandfather’s family, had sold the land at a very low price.

Irina and Tanos married in 1996, three and a half years after Irina’s first arrival in Greece.

Here it is necessary to mention the circumstances of our acquaintance and the presence of my family for more than a month in Tanos' household. When Irina lived in Russia, she was a friend of my cousin who helped her with various bureaucratic affairs. I got to know Irina having gotten in touch by phone. Irina was ready to put my family up but asked me to introduce myself as her cousin with whom she had had no contact for a long time. I agreed. Hence I became a cousin of Irina not only for her family's sake but also for the informants I met thanks to her. Tanos and his parents knew hardly anything about Irina's relatives in Russia; none of them has ever been there. Therefore, that misrepresentation was not too difficult for her. Thus they took us for remote relatives and allowed us to occupy a small, recently built house on the premises of their dwelling where four of their sons had lived. Irina explained this by saying asking that her family would not receive outsiders as guests, so she would have had difficulties explaining who we were and why we had to stay with them. But another reason for our deception became obvious to us later. By representing us as her relatives she could demonstrate that she is not alone and that her cousin and his wife are "decent people" and, by such, raise her status in the family (especially on the side of the minor daughter-in-law—see more about her below).

To Be or Not to Be a Greek Woman

When Anna had been working for about two years at a large Athenian pharmacy, she met our common friend, Antonios, who recommended her to his acquaintance, Odysseus, the owner of a finance company. Anna gets a senior position there with a high salary and becomes an economist. Moreover, she enters university and is awarded a diploma in economics while continuing to work for that company. The friendship with Antonios and the beginning of work at the financial company mark a new period in Anna's biography. It is possible to say that during this period her identity, which is based on discourses of *intelligentsia*, *independence* and *full rights*, forms completely. Antonios acted as her proposer not only to that company, but also to the Russian Embassy, to various organizations, both state and non-governmental, which were engaged in bilateral international relations between Greece and Russia.¹⁰²

¹⁰² The financial company where Anna worked was connected to Russia and not only commercially. Its owner, Odysseus, millionaire and communist, was from a rural Greek family who supported communists in the time of the Civil War in Greece. Odysseus' father spent fifteen years behind bars (see more about political repressions after the Civil War

Thus, Anna has changed not only her profession but also her “technique of appropriation”: during the first two periods of her migration history she aspired not to make contact with natives of Russia and had built up her social networks on the basis of interactions with locals. However, from the moment of her acquaintance with Antonios her social networks expand significantly with her new contacts in the sphere of Greek-Russian international relations. Using Bourdieu’s terminology, it is possible to say that she invests, on one hand, her bilingualism, and on the other hand, the symbolic capital developed both in Russian and in Greek educational fields to fields novel to her: cultural¹⁰³, economic¹⁰⁴, political¹⁰⁵ and even scientific¹⁰⁶.

After four years of working for the financial company, Anna became a victim of colleagues’ intrigues who were wary of her career development, and the owner of the company had to dismiss her. When Anna became unemployed, she had to leave her rented flat. She decided not to rent in future and bought a flat in one of the Athenian districts. After about half a year, she found a job as a medical insurance agent for a foreign company. She is pleased with her new work inasmuch as this work satisfies her aspiration to independence much more than others. Furthermore, she continues collaborating in various Greek-Russian organizations.

Irina’s marriage to Tanos was registered at the local church in 1996. She gave birth to eight more children (she has got six boys and three girls altogether; the eldest son was 18, the youngest daughter 3 at the moment of our meeting). She can talk a lot about God and the Orthodox Church, although she did not go to church in Russia before her departure. All Irina’s children were baptized. Their names were chosen according to local rules in honor of elder relatives of her husband, excluding two sons: the eldest who was given his name in Russia, and one of Tanos’ sons who was named after the oath taken by Irina to the Blessed Virgin. At the time of our acquaintance, Irina spoke Russian with an accent, remembering some words for a long time. None of her children speaks Russian, not even the eldest son.

in: Voglis 2000) while Odysseus was living in the USSR, where he was awarded a doctoral degree in medicine. His financial company Odysseus was registered in Great Britain.

¹⁰³ As an organizer she participated in various "cultural" events conducted in the Russian embassy and consulates.

¹⁰⁴ I mean her activity at the financial company concerning deals between the company and Russian organizations.

¹⁰⁵ I mean her work in commissions maintaining international agreements.

¹⁰⁶ She is a member of the non-governmental Russian-Greek scientific organization.

Irina tries to behave “as a Greek woman” entirely sharing all the family’s practices and discourses. For example, she reacted negatively, together with all the family, to her brother-in-law’s decision to marry an Albanian woman. Her aspiration “to be a Greek” is expressed in that she fully supports practices connected to the status of daughter-in-law: she dresses herself as a rural married woman preferring dark colors, she prepares both everyday “simple village food” and holiday dishes,¹⁰⁷ and so on.



Plate 4.01. Irina’s mother-in-law baking bread

Mainly Irina speaks about the Greeks as “us”. Her Russo-Pontian friends say that Irina speaks Greek better than they do, as a “natural Greek.” She has never aspired to independence. Her current lifestyle suits her completely. She holds great respect for her husband; at least, I did not hear any disrespectful words from her concerning Tanos. She also speaks respectfully of her husband’s relatives (excluding her brother-in-law’s wife of Albanian origin). She visits Russia once every two-three years but the main aim of her travels to Russia is the question of real estate. During Irina’s years spent in Greece, her mother and brother both died of alcoholism. Their houses are the subject of a

¹⁰⁷ Except for bread, which Irina’s mother-in-law bakes every week (see Plate 4.01).

longstanding dispute between Irina and her sister. Irina tries to travel to Russia without children but sometimes she has to take her little babies with her.

Comparing Variants of Appropriation of Greekness

The biographies described above express two tendencies that, in line with Schneider, may be characterized as two techniques of appropriation. The object of appropriation in my cases is “Greekness” (i.e., the complex of practices and discourses appropriate to certain local communities as well as the Greek language and the discourse on Greek ethnicity¹⁰⁸). Anna and Irina have different social and ethnic origins.

From a social perspective, Anna stresses her *intelligence* stemming from her family and education. From an ethnic perspective, she positions herself as a Greek (although usually she uses this term in the sense of citizenship). She speaks about “Greek Greeks” mainly in the third person and Russo-Pontians or Russian in general as “us”. Anna is disposed critically to Greek nationalism; social parameters of a person are always more important to her than ethnic ones are (cf., for example, her comments concerning school parades in the previous chapter). She rarely touches upon the question of ethnicity and formulates her identity as I have already noted using such “social” concepts as *intelligence* (Rus. *intelligentnost'*), *independence* and *full rights* (Rus. *polnopravie*). That is, “ethnic identity” for her is just an instrument, hence she was allowed full rights in the host country and to realize her identity as an “independent and intelligent (*intelligentnaia*)” woman. Anna keeps a certain distance from mainstream discourses of the population of Greece, thus demonstrating her independence and criticizing those discourses from an intellectual point of view. It is very important to her to stand up for her rights as a full member of the Greek state and society when she is stigmatized negatively as a foreigner, as a non-Greek.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ I distinguish the discourse on ethnicity (characteristics of which can be found in the first chapter) from a set of other discourses according to its special status, due to either Greek identity, or Greek nationalism.

¹⁰⁹ One of the examples: one day, Irina, waiting in a supermarket queue, conversed in Russian with her guest from Russia. When they came up to the cashier, “she began chatting with her colleague and ignored us for a long time.” Anna tried to attract her attention, but heard “her caddish remark in the spirit of ‘nobody called you to Greece’.” Anna demanded to see her manager and the woman who was chatting with the cashier introduced herself as a tour manager and recommended that Anna appeal to the police if she felt abused. Anna paid for her purchases, accompanied her

She votes for candidates of small parties that have never been in power in Greece, but they propose programs corresponding to her identity (for instance, the Green Party); she convinced her colleagues (at the financial company) that all the languages (ethnicities) are equal and compelled them to engage a specialist in the Russian language in order to speak in their office in Russian. Certainly, such a measure could only be realized in cities like Athens or Thessalonica, and I doubt whether it would be implemented in a village Community. Anna is indifferent to religion and the church, although she had been baptized in Russia when she was a baby.



Plate 4.02. Irina's Family. Celebrating her father-in-law

As I have already mentioned, Irina prefers to remain silent about matters concerning her Russian family, and at first glance this non-disclosure may be characterized by the situation of non-identity as one of Schneider's informants put it (Schneider 2006: 168). However, I would note that

friend to a car, then she came back to the cashier, claimed that she was a Greek citizen, and was not going to tolerate such rude, ignorant behavior. She found out the names of both women, participants in the conflict, and informed them that she was going to go to the police and to the court seeking for their dismissals. After that the cashier apologized for her remarks, begged for forgiveness and urged Anna not to go to the police. Eventually, Anna said: "I'll think it over." However, she did not go to the police knowing how difficult it is to find work as of a check-out assistant at a supermarket. During our conversations, I heard numerous stories of this sort from Anna, where she asserts her rights using her status of a citizen.

the non-disclosure plus negativity form a certain discourse on identity, which serves as referent-antithesis in Irina's search for a "happy life." In this sense, the respect and regard which Irina demonstrates towards her parents-in-law are determined not only (and not so much) by a technique of appropriation of Greekness, but also by the direct influence of the discourse on Irina's parental family. For example, in viewing her parental family as a negative model, Irina is an initiator of banning any consumption of alcohol (including beer) in her family (to be exact, anywhere on the household premises) which involved my family as well. She justifies the ban by saying that her children do not have to become alcoholics. All the members of the household support this ban. At the same time, Irina is slightly concerned about drinking outside the house. It was interesting to note that even on her father-in-law's celebration day, where many guests were present, there were no alcoholic drinks on the tables (see Plate 4.02). Another discourse on guarding the morality of Irina's children can be viewed as a result of her successful appropriation. This discourse was evident when my wife sent our eighteen-month-old daughter out walking undressed to the yard (see Plate 4.03). Irina instantly made a remark insisting that my wife put a dress on our daughter. When my wife wondered: "For what? It is too hot now..." Irina answered: "It corrupts my children's morals." According to the experience from our further fieldwork in Greek villages, we know that this discourse is rather widespread in rural areas; consequently, Irina has accepted it during the process of her appropriation of Greekness.



Plate 4.03. Children playing

On the other hand, that fact that Irina was socialized in Russia as a *villager* has played a positive role in the process of her acknowledgement in the Greek family. That is, her identity is formed on the level of discourses, where it is not a non-identity, but anti-identity, and on the level of practices determining it as the identity of a villager.

When examining Anna's biography, it is possible to note that the idea of a career has a significant role for her, and retrospectively her biography may be represented as a career development. In my view, in Anna's identity her independence is caused by career and vice versa. That is independence and career form the same semantic frame in the discourse on Anna's identity.

In comparing two biographies and two techniques of appropriation, it is evident that Irina's technique is expressed in a "complete" or "maximum possible" appropriation of Greekness, while Anna builds a career. In other words, she creates something new, conceiving Greekness both as a context and an instrument but not as a desired pattern of what she has to possess/become. In this sense, her technique may be defined, following Sansi (2008), as re-appropriation. Anna creates her own "world" of her Greekness on the basis of non-ethnic identity, on the basis of *intelligence* together with personal *independence* and Greek *citizenship* as main discourses of her identity.¹¹⁰ It is also important that Irina migrated "from village to village" while Anna migrated "from city to city." This re-confirms my main argument that different techniques of appropriation are due to different pre-emigration experiences.

¹¹⁰ It does not mean that she rejects dominant discourses and practices or communication and ties with people in Greece. But, she could retain her critical "intellectual" position. The process of appropriation of Greekness is not a vital task for her because she "already is a Greek woman" and her "ethnicity" was confirmed by two states—Russia and Greece. Therefore, she had a possibility (or just created it for herself) to adopt an independent position.

EPILOGUE

Chapter 5

Conclusions

Metamorphoses of Greek identity

Khristofor Triandafilov, a Russian Greek cameraman and writer, published a book in 1994 entitled *To Leave or to Stay* (Triandafilov 1994) in which he comments on the future identity among ex-Soviet Greeks.

What is better: to be a stepchild in the ancestors' Motherland or a lodger at kind owners? Every Greek has to find his or her answer to that question personally. (Triandafilov 1994: 111, my translation)

Triandafilov pictures the ex-Soviet Greeks as people without a motherland, equally alien to Russia and Greece. Kessidi (1997: 71-72, my translation) quotes Russian-speaking poet Alexander Pasanidi who states:

I am Greek in Russia
but here, in Hellas, I am "Rosos" [Russian].
I am foreigner there
and a "ksenos" [a stranger] here still...

Taking these quotes to start my summary discussion, it seems that the possibility of repatriation in Greece has led to a doubly negative identity, at least for those repatriates who have come to face serious difficulties during the process of their appropriation of Greekness. However, my thesis also shows that the situation can be a win-win situation: the prime example of this is the case of Vladimir, presented in Chapter Two. But these are only two examples at the extremes of a binary “good or bad” situation. There are many possible combinations and situations in between. The situation is full of complexity. Hence the focus of my thesis: Greek identity is complex and fluid and can be understood at many levels of analysis, from an individual identity linked to individual persons, as I have discussed in Chapters Two, Three and Four, to a collective identity, understood historically, as in Chapter One and contemporarily, as in Chapter Two.

Comparisons of Destinies... Variations in Identities...

Let me start with the individual level which takes me again to Vladimir in Chapter Two and Georgios in Chapter Three. “Two citizenships” to Vladimir means to him that he is Greek and Russian at the same time. Furthermore, being Urum and an ex-Georgian citizen, also adds complexity to his rather complicated identity. But this seems to be no problem for Vladimir himself. Nor is it a problem that his identity now is based on his Pontianess. Again, complexity allows Vladimir a space to operate within. His Pontian identity allows him to remain a Greek (*Grek*) or Pontian Greek (*Pontiiskii Grek*) in Russia; to be recognizable as a Pontian among other Greek communities (now also Pontian); to be an Urum or Tsalkean in his ex-Georgian Turkish-speaking compatriots’ group; and to be clearly identified ethnically in Greece as a Russian Pontian. And it does not stop here. Vladimir even carries some marks of a former Soviet identity, fondly recollecting his Soviet past, thus indicating that even as an ex-Georgian citizen he does not want to be a foreigner in Russia. To Vladimir, there are no contradictions in these various identities and he tries to take advantage of all of them. Rather than contradictory, we can understand this complexity through the metaphor of a nested doll (*matrioshka*) in which the contemporary ex-Soviet Greek identity should be considered as a series of different identities, hierarchically organized in such a manner that every identity is a part of a wider set of identities, operating both on an individual and a collective level. And, as we saw in the case of Vladimir, this allows for the flexibility needed in commercial entrepreneurial activities.

If we compare Vladimir's situation, discussed in the second chapter, with that of Georgios, discussed in third chapter, some problems connected to their Greek identity can be discerned and usefully highlighted. They are both men of approximately the same age. They were both born in villages in Tsalka and educated at university. Their wives are also from Tsalka, and they both have a similar family composition (in terms of number of family members, their sex, age, and sequence of children), which are important factors in terms of both economic concerns and with regard to representation of life strategies and *raison d'être*. However, they live in different countries, and they are situated at some distance from each other on the social ladder, accordingly their moods and attitudes correspond to this positional difference and future prospects. Vladimir is dynamic, optimistic, forward-looking, and knows how life has to be lived. Georgios is tired of his problems, pessimistic, and views his own future in terms of that of his children. It is even possible to say that his life is over; he has done everything he was able to do, and did not know how to cope with his circumstances. To explain this difference in terms of social status and attitude only in relation to migration would be a mistake. Indeed, life circumstances—here, those challenges and obstacles that appeared suddenly and were created by state instability in the post-Soviet countries—may (and do) have a significant influence on people's conduct, because the kinds of instability they have encountered accompany the formation of new discourses and practices, and emigrants must take this into consideration in their choice of migratory strategy. As we see from the biographical data, apart from external factors (it is possible to include in "external factors" a perspective on migration to Greece as a form of capital, which is inaccessible to majority of non-Greeks in post-Soviet countries), there are some personal, internal, and intimate factors that allow some to overcome more complex obstacles, yet discourage others from overcoming even insignificant ones. Of course, such kinds of classification are perhaps of interest mostly to psychologists, whereas to me, here, it is more relevant to retain the framework of analysis of capitals and fields, and the interpretation of discourses in terms of their influence upon groups, families, and individuals.

Thus, my task was to explore in such cases—in a person, or in a "fact" of her/his biography—not only singularities but also more a general exposure to various fields of dynamics. In this context, a comparison of some key moments in the biographies of Vladimir and Georgios is both possible and useful:

a) They each have university diplomas. Georgios attended the university nearest to his native village—Tbilisi State University (in the capital of Georgia), after which he found a job in a Tbilisi secondary school as a teacher, that is, in the same city. Vladimir left Georgia for Astrakhan', a large

Russian city in Lower Volga, where he entered the Astrakhan' Technical Institute; his later work was connected to travelling. Whereas Georgios stayed in Georgia and began a job that presupposed a kind of immobility, Vladimir left for the Russian Federation and obtained work that was connected to mobility.

b) Perestroika did not introduce any essential changes in terms of Georgios' position as a schoolteacher. That is, he kept his job until his migration to Greece. Vladimir needed to search for a new job and became a freelancer, trying to use all his available capitals. The conglomerate of objectivities and subjectivities, of singularities and pluralities lies at the base of the difference in their destinies that I observed during fieldwork.

c) The causes and aims of their trips to Greece also differed for Georgios and Vladimir. Vladimir, as a freelancer and "creator of his own destiny,"¹¹¹ or, in other words, as a bricoleur, viewed the state as a possible but not an obligatory resource for his activities; he decided not to be dependent on the Greek state in his probable new motherland. He travelled to Greece "to investigate" (*na razvedku*), "to look round" (*osmotret'sia*) and, at the same time, as he expressed it, he knew that he "needed a little bit of money to start my own business." He did not bet on Greek state resources being granted to ex-Soviet "repatriates" as a means of support. However, Georgios moved to Greece once and for all; he did not intend to come back. The very circumstances of his departure were connected to a strong discursive pressure from Gamsakhurdia's regime in Georgia,¹¹² and also to the wave of xenophobia and instability that was sweeping through that country. He had always been a servant of the State (as a schoolteacher) and viewed himself as a "refugee". He might want to return but does not possess the necessary capitals, either in Greece or in Russia/Georgia.

d) Being familiar with different countries and estimating Russia as being his best bet, Vladimir eventually succeeded in becoming a private entrepreneur. Georgios arrived in Greece hoping to obtain the same kind of state position that he had had in Georgia. However, he was unable to cope with the complex circumstances of migration and had no experience of any kind of self-supporting

¹¹¹ These were Vladimir's words. The English phrase would probably be *self-made man*.

¹¹² As Ivanova noted in 1990: "The Greeks, as well as the all non-Georgian populations of the Republic [of Georgia], are extremely concerned about the Georgian state's demand for independence. Today, the possibility of that act is close to its realization after the win in the republican Supreme Soviet elections by the party 'Round Table – Free Georgia,' headed by Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who calls peoples of non-Georgian nationality aliens [literally the allogenic—*chuzherodtsy*] and proclaims: 'we'll expel non-Georgians from Georgia'." (Ivanova 1990: 7; my translation)

activity—of an existence independent of the State. He found this kind of experience only after arrival in Greece, but did not meet with success.

To continue with such a comparison on an individual level, we can see that Anna in Chapter Four and Georgios in Chapter Three also represent interesting comparative dimensions. I recognize at least three structural resemblances in their biographies:

a) They both have a strong symbolic capital in the form of diplomas and working experience. Except for this capital they have almost nothing.

b) They both came to Greece in search of better life, using the program of repatriation.

c) The language barrier was their common problem.

At the same time there are many differences in their biographical details as well:

a) Georgios migrated together with his family; Anna was single and care for her sister did not complicate her adaptive situation significantly.

b) Georgios was not able to confirm his diploma; Anna could do that and fairly quickly.

c) Georgios did not have any intention or possibility to live in the family of local people, because he had his own family and they lived together in a separate apartment. Anna, when she arrived in Athens, lived with an Athenian family where she worked as a babysitter. Moreover, this family helped her with some key issues for many migrants: finding a place for her sister and assistance in the procedure of obtaining Greek citizenship, to mention only two.

d) Georgios could not use his symbolic capital to provide his access to the Greek field of education. Anna could use her educational capital and became a pharmacist in Greece. Possibly, the pharmaceutical field is not so difficult to access because it is not so connected to ideologies of ethnicity and nationalism.

e) Anna's success in adaptation provided her with the possibility of further career development. Georgios was not able to change his career as a de-skilled migrant by making use of the symbolic capital represented by his education and the work experience he came with.

Consequently, there is a significant difference in the starting positions of Anna and Georgios

as ex-Soviet repatriates in Greece. One difference is determined by the existence or absence of family in the migration. Family migration without any preparation or without any specific capital in a particular business field, looks the most difficult variant of repatriation. The family imposes many obligations on its adult members and hinders involvement in local micro-social milieus, the family status functioning as a barrier to a successful adaptation/appropriation to relevant fields of activities.

On the individual level, an identity crisis is characteristic for people who feel uprooted, people who left their home in Russia or another post-Soviet country and who maintain no contacts with their native place. At the same time such people may also experience the loss of their career opportunities as well as their skills, knowledge, and competence. Georgios is one such person who suffers an identity crisis and who has no possibility of overcoming the negative effects of his double identity. Anna and Vladimir, on the other hand, feel satisfaction (for now at least) from their social positions in their new lives, experiencing a certain positive development in their careers.

Reasons for Migration

Having looked at the process of individual adaptation itself, we now turn to the individual reasons for migration. Although the ethnic element usually was a part of the Greek repatriation process, we should not exaggerate its significance. In my view, political and social conditions in Russia and other post-Soviet countries in the late 1980s – mid 1990s, characterized by economic decline, instability, criminality, resistance to reforms and so on, are more important as a cause of migration than ethnic problems, such as discrimination or stigmatization. One should also take into account that Greek migrants often departed for Greece from zones of armed conflict in the Caucasus, Transcaucasia, and Transdnistria. From my discussion in the third and fourth chapters of the migrants' experience of repatriation, we see that Georgios' story is evidence for such social and political reasons for migration, as we saw in his recollection of the circumstances of his family's departure from Tbilisi. Anna and Irina also argue that they were not satisfied with the social and political situation in Russia before their migration. Thus, in many cases the character of migration may be marked as migration *from*, rather than migration *to*. Lastly, what we see is that in spite of the situation provided by the opportunity to resettle in Greece as repatriates, many ex-Soviet Greeks were in no hurry to resettle in Greece. Rather, many travelled back and forth between the two countries, assessing their options.

While doing this they also experienced the ways their presence in Greece led to stigmatization as Pontians, Russian Pontians or Russians. By moving back and forth they carried such attitudes back to their home country, contributing, alongside many other social forces, to a new discourse in Russia—a discourse defining a new Greek identity, the Pontian.

Formation of a New Identity Discourse

My discussion in this thesis shows that the identity as Pontian did not only emerge as a consequence of individual adaptations in Russia or the Soviet Union or in the nation states that followed the collapse of the Soviet empire, nor was it a consequence of individual adaptive processes in Greece. The emergence of the Pontian identity has a history, and an important task for me has been to outline this history. As shown in Chapter One, areas around the Black Sea were populated by Greeks in early history. Many ancient Greek authors wrote about Greek colonization of the Black Sea, for instance, Herodotus, Socrates, Xenophon, and many others (Latyshev 1890). This historical perspective has long led people to search for historical continuity in the Greek presence in these areas. As I discussed in the first chapter, Soviet ethnos-theory, used concepts such as “ethnogenesis” and “pre-motherland,” joining historical and contemporary populations by creating ethnic and cultural bridges, thus providing contemporary ethnic groups with rights to territories. While the labels of Gall, Celt, and Goth have changed through the course of Russian historiography, Greeks have always been Greeks. Therefore there has always existed a link between Antiquity, the Byzantium, and the contemporary Greek populations of the former USSR. The common Russian name *Greki* for the populations of Ancient Greek city-states remains in use among contemporary Russians. This discourse also dominated the academic literature in Soviet times. It was also strongly supported by Russian local historical literature. At the same time, a similar discourse was an important principle of *Megali Idea*, the Greek irredentist policy. As I have demonstrated, representatives of different Greek groups may debate purity of their origin or the closeness of their vernacular to the language of the Ancient Greeks, but irrespective of such discussions there has always existed an agreement in that they all are Greeks. In other words, the Russian term *Greki* has as its referent such classical concepts as “the Greek world” or “pan-Hellenism”. I claim, therefore, that the identity connected to the name *Greki*, is an umbrella discourse for various populations which speak different languages and dialects in post-Soviet countries. The historical background, therefore, for the search among certain Greek individu-

als and Greek NGOs (particularly an umbrella organization, “The Association of Greek NGOs”) for a new name that would allow a new unity among all the Greek populations of post-Soviet territories, was the far-reaching task for Greek political mobilization in Russia. Terms such as *Ellintsy* (Hellenes), *Ellinskie Greki* (Hellenic Greeks), and even *Grecheskie Greki* (Greek Greeks) appeared among ex-Soviet Greeks, evidently as a result of the beginning of their mass repatriation, when they became familiar with Greece and its language, but also to this mobilization in Russia. Together with such terms the name *Pontiitsy* (Pontians) or *Pontiiskie Greki* (Pontian Greeks) appeared. Thus, the new name—the Pontians—stems from a complexity of historical factors and processes.

In the second chapter I present an ethnographic example of such processes by discussing how Pontianness is represented in various fields of private business and in the public life of a Greek village of Krasnodar region, Russia. In this village two local Greek populations, designating themselves as Romeikos and Turkish-speaking Urums, use the same term now, making the name “Pontians” common to all of them. Again, we see the importance of history in the way the term is understood. The new identity term has become understandable in Russia through its linkage to Greece through the terms Greek-Pontians and Pontian Greeks. It was understandable to the population of Greece by way of historical parallel, as the Pontian identity was accepted in the 1920s when more than one million refugees—Pontians and others—arrived from the territory of Turkey (Hirschon 1989: 36-39). At last, this term connected a portion of the Greek populations of Russia to the Black Sea area, emphasizing their difference from other Greeks.

Identity *does not* rest solely on historical connections. This is not a historicist argument. Contemporary processes also play important roles. One is the political process of removing ethnic markers from the passports of Russian post-Soviet citizens. This practice, included in the Constitution of Russian Federation, removed a very public and legal issue concerning ethnic/national identity. With this removal it became completely optional and voluntary to signal which ethnic identity a person held. Ideally, every citizen of the Russian Federation is now able to accept a Greek identity and try to confirm it in the Greek Consulate. But the attachment to Russia of ex-Soviet Greeks does not disappear. In Greece arrivals from ex-Soviet countries are marked as Russians or, more often, Russian Pontians (unofficially, of course). This identity places individuals at a lower level in the “hierarchy of Greekness.”

Secondly, the question of identity is not so much one of an ethnic label in itself and historical attachment to Greekness because the question of identity is one of the key factors producing the right to repatriation. Thus, identity connects to broad political issues in the establishment of the

“new Europe.” The ethnic question is not the only factor of importance, nor is the question of identity simply one of the will and ability to integrate in a social milieu in Greece, or of appropriation of Greekness. In Chapters Three and Four we saw that appropriation from below (from the side of migrants) combines with homogenization from above (from the side of the Greek state) because both processes have the same purpose—social integration. It is important here that ethnicity alone is not a criterion of successful appropriation. As the two chapters demonstrate, appropriation may be effective even if the person carries a Russian ethnic identity (like Irina in Chapter Four), and may be ineffective even in the case when the person has Greek identity (Georgios in Chapter Three). So, social ability may be more important than ethnic belonging to the “same” group.

Nonetheless, the Pontian identity prevailed in the process of appropriation of Greekness. This situation is different from the earlier historical case, from the 1920-30s, in which discussions took place aiming to create unified populations based on a Greek ethnic identity, common language, etc. Taking a look at that process might further show how these processes depend on contexts of various sorts, rather than representing ready-made culturalist end points. Disagreements about what kind of group should be the basis for the new socialist nation of the Greeks in the USSR led to the failure of the process in the 1920s and -30s.. At that time, the reason for the creation of a new Greek (Romean-Pontian) ethnos/nation was not the political consolidation of the Greeks but a demand to form a *socialist* nation of Greeks, distinct from the Greek *bourgeois* nation (to follow Marxist rhetoric). Soon after the perestroika the very idea of socialism ceased to be a basis of internal policy and was changed by Gorbachev into the idea of pluralism. As a result of this change, “the ruling elites in Communist countries failed because of their inability to function within political pluralism” (Tismaneanu 2012:152). In the framework of pluralism, the necessity of building of a Greek *socialist* nation lost its purpose together with the Soviet ethnos-theory. In this situation new prospects opened for Greek political consolidation, both within the new policies at home and through the Greek state program of repatriation of Greeks. I have discussed the repatriation process at some length, but can conclude also that the political consolidation among Greeks continues in the post-Soviet territories, particularly in Russia.

One context for this consolidation is that the new Russian social science, still captured within the ethnic schemes of former Soviet times, tried to compose a full list of various ethnic groups inhabiting the country, taking into account the groups’ own preferred names and identities. This intention was not limited to encyclopedias, journal articles and other publications. It also resulted in collaboration with various state services, thus gaining political importance. The Russian Census of 2002, for

instance, tried to document the variety of self-designations in Russia. Many groups were joined under the ethnonym “Greeks”: *Greki-Romei*, *Greki-Elliny*, *Grekos*, *Pontios*, *Romei*, *Romeos*, *Romeyus*, *Rum*, *Rumei*, *Ellinos*; and under the ethnonym “Greek-Urums”—*Orum*, *Urmei*, *Urum*.¹¹³ Both local/regional denominations (*Urum*, *Rum*, *Romei*) and generalizing terms (*Grekos*, *Greki-Elliny*, *Pontios*) were registered by the Census. Thus, the Census provided two things important to my research: 1) some terms including *Pontios* indicated a move towards a generalized identity, also indicating active political mobilization; and 2) many terms touch upon local names of Greeks showing the nested doll (*matrioshka*) structure of their identity.

Seen from the perspective of the Greek we also notice interesting developments. First, the Greeks seem not to favor their own Greek territory. They are living in a majority of Russian regions and do not seem to understand themselves as a disadvantaged group that would need their own territory. Rather than claim their own territory, they present themselves through successful individuals and publish lists of reputable persons of Greek origin who were successful in different fields: political, economic, scientific, art, and even cosmonautic activities. These lists are an important part of contemporary encyclopedic publications of Greeks about themselves (Chitlov, Chitlov, Gurieli 1992; Kessidi 1994). A second point of Greek political mobilization relates to the issue of being acknowledged as a repressed people (or ethnos) or not. It is of concern to the Greek that the Law “On rehabilitation of repressed peoples” of 1991 does not include them as victims of Soviet oppression. This creates, they argue, a wrong notion that repressions against Greeks might be lawful. In 2003 the Association of Greek NGOs of Russia received a rejection to their application to the President Administration to include Greeks in the list of repressed peoples. The rejection was motivated by the fact that many Greeks at the time of oppression did not have Soviet passports and that a majority of those who had Soviet passports were deported from territories outside contemporary Russia.¹¹⁴ In 2005 Ivan Savvidi, State Duma Deputy and Chair of the Association of Greek NGOs, prepared a draft law “On Rehabilitation of Repressed Greeks.” He submitted the law to the State Duma, and the text of law was directed to responsible decision makers. But in the same 2005 Savvidi decided to call back his proposal, thus removing it from the process of consideration.¹¹⁵ So, the question is still open, with a consequence that many Greek intellectuals in Russia continue their efforts in order to include

¹¹³ <http://www.perepis2002.ru/index.html?id=17>

¹¹⁴ <http://www.greekgazeta.ru/archives/nomer10/articles/27.shtml>

¹¹⁵ http://base.consultant.ru/cons/cgi/online.cgi?req=doc;base=PRJ;n=32909;http://asozd2.duma.gov.ru/arhiv/a_dz_4.nsf/ByID/D5BCCC9B74C22E5A432571BB005BE4DB?OpenDocument;http://base.garant.ru/5170166/

Greeks in the list of repressed peoples/ethnoses. Which also indicates that the forming of a Greek identity is not finished. Rather, it is an ongoing process that will continue, reflecting the different contexts and the different types of processes the Greek people in the areas covered by this thesis find themselves in. There will be top-down processes, moving identities in certain directions, and there will be bottom-up processes, in which local people and local communities will show agency and thereby also affecting the various contexts within which their lives evolve. Only new studies will allow us to get a glimpse into such future developments and situations.

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¹¹⁶ I used the original English version of the article published as *The Museum—A Refuge for Utopian Thought* on the personal web page of the author: <http://www.nyu.edu/classes/bkg/web/museutopia.pdf> (last visit 16.01.2012).

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