Aspects of the Hellenization of Greek Macedonia, ca. 1912-ca. 1959

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Introduction

When in autumn 1991 the citizens of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia voted to secede from the Yugoslav Federation and establish the independent Republic of Macedonia, few among the international community could have predicted the wave of nationalist outcry that began to sweep throughout Greece proper and the Diaspora from North America to Australia. Employing a wide array of unambiguous religious and cultural symbols as well as teleological slogans ("Macedonia was, is and always will be Greek!", "Macedonian history is Greek history!", "Real Macedonians are Greek!"), nationally-minded demonstrators sought to assert the Greekness of Macedonia from time "im-memorial", while condemning the so-called "Skopians", itself a derisive appellation, as vile usurpers of "History". Admittedly, such unequivocal public manifestations were partly underpinned by the unspoken assumption that the national character of late twentieth-century Greek Macedonia had only been attained after much toil, hardship, and blood.

An underdeveloped, though potentially profitable, region with a record of ethnonational competition and strife, its variegated Ottoman past, comprising a rich ethnic tapestry of Greeks, Muslims, Sephardic Jews, Southern Slavs, and Vlachs, had been eroded by the late 1950s. This was partly due to significant population movements in the first three decades of the twentieth century, as well as the carnage of the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, two world wars and the Greek Civil War of the 1940s. But it also came about as a result of state-propagated nationalizing strategies

and operations. Indeed, like many a modern centralizing state with newly-acquired lands, in the second decade of the twentieth century Greece embarked in earnest on a course of Hellenization/homogenization.

In what follows, both these terms are understood to refer to a series of interrelated processes designed to reconfigure political authority in all its dimensions along "national lines" by promoting, *inter alia*, the language, culture and demographic position "of the nominally state-bearing nation".[1] Over and above the integration into the host society of ethnic-kin population groups that flocked into the country between 1912 and the aftermath of the 1923 Greco-Turkish compulsory exchange of populations, homogenization also purported to integrate, assimilate and/or neutralize heteroreligious (αλλόθρησκες) and heterolingual (αλλόγλωσσες) groups, predominantly those residing in "sensitive" border areas and claimed by neighbouring states as unredeemed brethren.

Throughout the long nineteenth century, Greek perceptions of and practices vis-à-vis such – relatively – numerically small groups domiciled in the kingdom were grounded on the predominance of nationhood/ethnic descent over citizenship – a trend also manifested in other nascent Balkan state entities. As the state expanded, *jus soli* (territory law) gave way to *jus sanguinis* (blood law) as the basic determinant of national identity – a development that underscored the incompatibility of the "national" with the "alien". Concurrently, the reconfiguration of political authority along "national lines" evidenced the uneasiness, if not inability, of the dominant ethnic group at the local level to accept in its midst and live side by side with the religious "other". The massive Muslim exodus from former Ottoman Thessaly, following the region's cession in 1881, and the Corfu pogrom of 1891 heralded, at an official level, the beginning of a new era in relations with most heteroreligious and heterolingual groups. Both gradually came to be considered as hovering on the very margins of the

[1] Brubaker 1995: 107.

national community, their status as citizens notwithstanding.[2] As "Old Greece" gave way to "Greater Greece" relations were strained further, compounded by the incorporation in the "commonwealth" of more old "others" as well as new ones – only, this time around, unmistakably of the "ethnic variety". And it would not be long before they came to be perceived as constituting distinct components of the "enemy from within".

Admittedly, nowhere else was the process of homogenization more appositely demonstrated than in the lands that came to constitute Greek Macedonia in the post-1912 period. In what follows, I seek to trace the fortunes of the most important, in terms of intrastate and interstate relations, and most numerous heterolingual group of the country, the Slav-speakers of Greek Macedonia, as the backdrop for discussing aspects of the region's Hellenization.

Hellenizing Greek Macedonia

The Hellenization of parts of Ottoman Macedonia had begun in earnest in the 1870s. Defined by the doyen of Greek historiography Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos as the "spreading of the Greek language to foreign [ξενικούς] people and [...] their infusion [εγχάραξη] with the national character of the Greeks",[3] it was precipitated by the establishment of an independent Bulgarian Church in 1870; this was a development that carried the potential of substantially diminishing the allure of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, an instrumental pillar of the "national community", among non-Greek-speakers, and turning the Exarchate into a potent vehicle of Bulgarian nationalism. It was also underscored by the belated inclusion of Macedonia as an important constituent part of the narrative on Hellenism. According to the new official nationalist discourse, the region had always been "Greek" from the days of Philip the Macedon and Alexander the Great down to Late Antiquity, until the "barbaric" invasions of the seventh century, when its Greek-speakers began

[2] See Carabott 2005.

[3] Cited in Sigalas 2001: 7.

to be linguistically "de-Hellenized", though retaining their "Greek national consciousness".[4]

Such a Renanian reasoning was a constant in Greek nationalist thinking and practice – though, significantly, only with regard to as yet unredeemed Christian non-Greek-speaking communities. For example, on the eve of the Paris Peace Conference in late 1918, Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos, laying claim on southern Albania (northern Epirus), with a population of some 120,000 "Greeks" and 80,000 "Albanians" according to his estimates, maintained that:

> One may be tempted to raise the objection that a substantial portion of this Greek population has Albanian as its mother tongue, and is consequently, in all probability, of Albanian origin; but the democratic conceptions of the Allied and Associated Powers cannot admit of any other criterion than that of national consciousness. Only the Teutonic conception could prefer the criterion of race or of language. Notwithstanding that the majority of them speak Albanian, the Greeks in Northern Epirus have formed part of the Greek family for centuries, long before the foundation of the Kingdom of Greece.[5]

A year later, offering its "observations" to Sofia's response on Greek territorial claims, Athens was even more unequivocal when arguing that:

> Le principe que le Gouvernement Hellénique, et avec lui l'Hellénisme tout entier, met à la base de la nationalité n'est autre que celui qui a été dégage par Ernest Renan et adopté depuis lors par la science politique de tous les pays civilisés, à savoir: la *conscience nationale.*
>
> La religion, la race, la langue ne sauraient être considérés comme des indices certains de la nationalité. Le seul facteur infaillible est le conscience nationale, c'est-à-dire la volonté

[4] Exertzoglou 1999: 79-81.
[5] Venizelos 1919: 2-3.

> réfléchie des individus de déterminer leur sort et de décider à quelle famille nationale il leur convient d'appartenir.[6]

Thus, consciousness was elevated to "a primordial quasi-metaphysical sentiment" that could be (and was) shared by non-Greek-speakers.[7] As the president of the aptly-named nationalist association "Hellenism" and dean of the University of Athens, Neoklis Kazazis, put it in 1907:

> National consciousness in Macedonia is pre-eminently Greek [...]. National consciousness [...] cannot be taught, it cannot be imposed by coercion, by material force, it cannot be bought off. It is an inherent, mysterious [...] feeling.[8]

Critics were quick to point out that, in claiming Ottoman Macedonia for themselves, the Greeks:

> are before all else legitimists. The Bulgarian will assert that in point of fact the Macedonians are Slavs. The Greek takes higher ground. His mind moves among abstractions. He talks not of Greeks, but of Hellenism, not of fact, but of right. That Hellenism has a right to Macedonia is his thesis, and he is never at a loss for an argument.[9]

Either way, by the end of the 1890s Ottoman Macedonia had become the focal battleground of at least four antagonistic state nationalisms. Athens, Sofia and, to a lesser extent, Belgrade coveted the Greek- and – more numerous – Slav-speaking Orthodox Christian element; Athens and Bucharest fought for the allegiance of Vlach-speakers; Albanian nationalists for that of both Christian and Muslim Albanian ones; while another – as yet non-state-identifiable nationalistic movement – sought the loyalty of all indigenous inhabitants under the motto "Macedonia for the Macedonians", though it increasingly fell under the spell of Sofia.

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[6] Délégation Hellénique 1919: 20 (emphasis in the original).
[7] Exertzoglou 1999: 81-2.
[8] Kazazis 1992: 413.
[9] Brailsford 1906: 194.

In what came to be called in Greek discourse the Μακεδονικός Αγώνας (Macedonian Struggle), Athens sought, first through ecclesiastical and educational means and then, in the 1900s, through armed violence, to mould the identity of Orthodox Christian Macedonians (Greek, Slav and Vlach speakers alike) in its own national image in a bid "to incorporate local ethnic groups" into its "imagined community".[10] This was an undertaking of some magnitude, not only because it took place in the face of a fierce religious and ethnonational strife or because it was carried out in the Ottoman "commonwealth"; or even because expectations often exceeded what was realistically possible on the basis of available resources, the Great Powers' equivocal stance, and the lack of potential ethnic homogeneity even in areas where the Greek-speaking element seemed to prevail. The enormity of the task in hand was augmented by the fact that it aimed not solely at making "Greeks" out of illiterate and parochial, often non-Greek-speaking, peasants but also at deterring these same people from becoming "Bulgarians", by turning to the Exarchate, or "Serbs" or "Macedonians". And all this, at a time when at least some of the "targets" of the competing "-ization" enterprises either crossed the divide and aligned themselves with the erstwhile enemy or, on occasion, chose not to take sides; a not uncommon phenomenon that compelled a "witty French consul" in the region to exaggeratedly "declare that with a fund of a million francs he would undertake to make all Macedonian French", by teaching them that "they are the descendants of the French crusaders who conquered Salonica in the twelfth century[;] the francs would do the rest".[11]

This fluctuation propelled Greek diplomats and nationalists to invent the term "ρευστή εθνική συνείδηση" (fluid national consciousness) in an "attempt to grasp a non-national reality, an order of things quite unthinkable within a nationally-oriented understanding of things".[12] Understandably, perhaps, when eventually

[10] Kitromilides 1990: 43.
[11] Brailsford 1906: 103.
[12] Exertzoglou 1999: 88 (n. 8).

some of the alleged practitioners of such a "non-national reality" found themselves – or chose to remain – on the "wrong" side of "national" borders in the 1920s, following the partition of Ottoman Macedonia and in the aftermath of the exchange of populations, the Greek authorities could not but look upon them, as well as the committed "Schismatics" (the followers of the Exarchate), as an element alien and inimical to the national community; a constituent part of the "scourge" that, according to the then Metropolitan of Corinth (and future Archbishop of Athens and All Greece), was poised to "overthrow the existing order of things".[13]

The Μακεδονικός Αγώνας, in many respects a conflict of attrition, and the Second Balkan War of summer 1913 provided the catalyst for the crystallization of the notion of the "rival Slav in whom", as a seasoned British diplomat had recalled in 1905, "far more than in their ancient oppressor the Turk, the Hellenes [have] long come to see their most dangerous enemy".[14] In the process, the Bulgarian "race", which "like no other one in the whole world, hated and hates Hellenism",[15] was elevated to the enemy *par excellence*. "At last! After seven centuries [sic], the God of Greece made it possible for the Greek fist to re-acquaint itself with the Bulgarian Tatarian scull",[16] exclaimed the author of a book appropriately titled *Οι αιώνιοι εχθροί μας Βούλγαροι* (Our perennial enemies the Bulgarians). As evidenced in soldiers' letters from the front published in the Greek press, wherein the newly-crowned King Constantine was accorded the title "Bulgaroctonus",[17] such discourse had filtered down to the rank and file. At the same time, contemporary "popular posters"

[13] AEV 251: Damaskinos to Venizelos (16 August 1931).
[14] Rumbold 1905: 41.
[15] Cited in Skopetea n.d.: 15
[16] Cited in Skopetea n.d.: 21.
[17] Papapoliviou 1999: 47.

depicted the Greek soldier as Βουλγαροφάγος (Bulgar-eater)[18], and were adorned with inciting verses such as:

> The sea of fire which boils in my breast
> and calls for vengeance with the savage waves of my soul,
> will be quenched when the monsters of Sofia are still,
> and thy life blood extinguishes my hate.[19]

As the 1913 Carnegie Endowment inquiry into the causes and conduct of the conflict maintained, albeit not without provoking substantial criticism both at the time of its publication and later on, hatred towards the Bulgarians was underscored by the pervasive belief that "they are not human beings",[20] and was viciously manifested in the field – particularly during the Second Balkan War. Partly in revenge for "unspeakable" atrocities committed by the "despicable Bulgarians" against "unfortunate Turkish and Greek civilians", partly animated by a desire to remove "for good these beasts" from Macedonia,[21] Exarchist Slav-speaking villages were razed to the ground, their inhabitants either fleeing under cover of the retreating Bulgarian troops or taken prisoner, as they were deemed to be *komitadjis*, or killed on the spot.[22] As a Greek staff officer gleefully informed his wife: "Spare the rod and spoil the child comes from heaven! With this sacred [practice] we put these hideous monsters in the place they deserve."[23]

The partition of Ottoman Macedonia among the former Balkan allies momentarily brought to an end the war of attrition over this most heavily contested region of the "sick man of Europe". Yet, on an intrastate – and briefly, again, when Bulgaria

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[18] A neologism, like "Τουρκοφάγος" (Turk-eater), in use since at least 1888; Koumanoudis 1980: 224.
[19] Cited in CEIP 1914: 97.
[20] CEIP 1914: 95.
[21] Extracts from the letters of a Greek staff officer to his wife, cited in Tricha 1993: 327, 324, 318, respectively.
[22] CEIP 1914: 186-207.
[23] Cited in Tricha 1993: 326; see also Papapoliviou 1999: 48.

occupied parts of Greek and Serbian/Yugoslav Macedonia during both World Wars, on an interstate – level it survived well into the interwar period. In theory, Athens, Belgrade and Sofia availed the "other" of the opportunity to take up their respective citizenship. However, membership of the civic nation was incompatible both with that of the national community and with the predominant notion of nationhood/ethnic descent as the basic attribute of national identity. In this light, the ethnic heterogeneity of newly acquired spoils could not but intensify the "-ization" practices of the immediate past.

In the case of Greek Macedonia, the homogenization drive was given a substantial boost with the signing in November 1919 of the Greco-Bulgarian Convention of Neuilly on the "reciprocal voluntary emigration" of Greek and Bulgarian minorities.[24] Proposed by Athens and sanctioned by the Allies, it was hailed by Venizelos as the means by which Greek populations would be "embedded" in areas with compactly-settled "foreign" ones.[25] Put under the auspices of the newly-established League of Nations, the convention obliged both contracting parties "not to place directly or indirectly any restriction on the right of emigration" (Article 2); crucially, there was no mention of not exercising pressure, overt or covert, on potential migrants – though both parties seemed to have done exactly that.[26] As numerous directives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Governor General of Salonica (GGS) to local officials make abundantly clear, the "national interest" necessitated the emigration of as many Slav-speakers as possible, particularly of "former Schismatics" imbued with "φυλετικό φανατισμό" (racial fanaticism), who should be compelled to move to Bulgaria through "skilful and specialized work".[27] On top of the undue

[24] League of Nations 1927: 102-5.
[25] Ladas 1932: 28-31, Divani 1999: 58.
[26] For the treatment meted out to the Greeks of Bulgaria, see Divani 1999: 355-61.
[27] Indicatively see IAIE 1923/31.3: MFA to GGS (26 May 1923); GGS to Prefects and Deputy-Governors, (8 June 1923).

pressure exercised by gendarmes on potential migrants,[28] the latter included preferential treatment accorded to Greek Orthodox refugees over the allocation of appropriated and exchanged lands and dwellings, particularly in central and eastern Macedonia,[29] summed up, somewhat exaggeratedly, in the admonition "move out you, who are Slav-speaking Bulgarians, so that we, the descendants of Pericles, might move in."[30] Such favouritism not only "persuaded" Slav-speakers to emigrate but, on occasion, led to incidents of inter-communal strife between those who remained and the newcomers.[31] In the event, and according to official League of Nations estimates, as many as 92,000 Slav-speakers had migrated to Bulgaria and 46,000 Greek-speakers to Greece by May 1929.[32]

In between, hundreds of Slav-speakers were forcibly "relocated" to other parts of the country or exiled to Bulgaria on suspicion of "spreading pro-Bulgarian propaganda" and, after the establishment of the Macedonian Front in late 1915, on charges of "collaborating with the enemy";[33] following the end of the Great War, this measure was extended to include the families of the "supporters of Bulgarianism".[34] Others, who had evaded their military service, were hunted down and court-martialled.[35] And in

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[28] IAIE 1923/17.4: Chiefs of Staff to Ministry of War (18 July 1923).

[29] IAIE 1923/21.4: Mixed Commission to Minister of Agriculture (21 July 1923), and FO 371/8566/C15084: British Embassy at Athens to FO (20 August 1923), enclosing "Notes on a tour made by the Mixed Commission on Greco-Bulgarian emigration in western and central Macedonia" by Colonel A.C. Corfe.

[30] Karavidas 1924.

[31] Indicatively see AEV 113: Prefect of Serres to Ministry of the Interior (17 February 1933), reporting on the murder of two refugees by native "Bulgarophones with Bulgarian consciousness", and AFD 26/1/53: Governor General of Macedonia to Ministry of Agriculture (2 May 1933).

[32] Memorandum 1929: 37; cf. Ladas 1932: 123.

[33] Hassiotis n.d.; cf. Gounaris 1997: 92.

[34] IAIE 1919/A.5.4: Note of Colonel A. Mazarakis (April 1919).

[35] Indicatively see IAIE 1923/6.7: Report by Captain I. Mathios (17 November 1922).

early 1923, amidst a state of martial law and on the justifiable grounds that they had been aiding and participating in the incursions of Bulgarian bands (the *komitadjis*) into Greece, Athens sent to internal exile (mostly in Thessaly and Crete) more than 5,000 Slav-speaking "activists" and their families from eastern Macedonia and (principally) western Thrace. Following international pressure and the threat of reprisals against the dwindling Greek minority in Bulgaria, the exiles were allowed to return in the summer of that year, only to find that their dwellings and lands had been given to incoming Greek Orthodox refugees. And although civilian authorities provided them with immediate relief, its scale was too limited to halt the exodus to Bulgaria.[36]

Table 1: Ethnic Composition of Greek Macedonia (1912)[37]

			No.	%
Greeks	Greek-speaking	442,342	513,198	*42.50*
	Slav-speaking	70,856		
Muslims			438,945	*36.35*
Bulgarians	Exarchists, Uniates, Protestants		181,552	*15.04*
Jews			66,312	*5.49*
Others			7,424	*0.62*
		Total	1,207,431	*100*

Source: Kostopoulos 2002: 105.

[36] See FO 371/8565 (numerous files), IAIE 1923/6.3 (also numerous files), and Michailidis 2003: 111-34. Local Greek officials disputed Bulgarian allegations that the deportees were ill-treated, maintaining that the "fatherly care" they were provided with exceeded even that accorded to "the hundreds of thousands of destitute Asia Minor refugees"; IAIE 1923/KtE/8.1: Governor General of Crete to MFA (14 May 1923).

[37] Population data on heteroreligious and heterolingual groups, whether recorded in official censuses or mentioned in state reports and publications of all kinds, should be treated with caution and *only* as estimates.

Table 2: Ethnic Composition of Greek Macedonia (August 1915)

			No.	%
Greeks	Greek-speaking	486,456	722,615	*56.21*
	Slav-speaking	74,887		
	Refugees	161,272		
Muslims			353,300	*27.48*
Former Schismatics & current Orthodox			133,942	*10.42*
Bulgarians			1,912	*0.15*
Jews			66,430	*5.17*
Others			7,424	*0.57*
		Total	1,285,623	*100*

Source: Kostopoulos 2002: 105.

Table 3: Population of Greek Macedonia according to religion and mother tongue (May 1928)

	No.	%
Orthodox/Greek	1,161,191	*82.21*
Orthodox/*Macédonoslave*	80,668	*5.71*
Orthodox/Turkish	70,032	*4.96*
Jewish/Ladino	59,073	*4.18*
Orthodox/Vlach	13,465	*0.95*
Orthodox/Armenian	10,743	*0.76*
Others	17,305	*1.23*
Total	1,412,477	*100*

Source: IEI/GSIE 1935: xxix.

According to an official report compiled for the then (1915) Governor General of the region, on the eve of the Balkan Wars in the lands that a year later came to constitute Greek Macedonia, the "Greek" element (both Greek- and Slav-speaking) was estimated at 42.50% of the total, rising to 56.21% by August 1915 (Tables 1 and 2). Thirteen years later, in the official census of 1928, which did not distinguish between ethnic and non-ethnic Greek citizens, the religious and linguistic other was recorded as comprising less than 18% of the total (Table 3). The pitfalls of such contentious (and partly incompatible) data notwithstanding, conventional wisdom holds that, in line with the prevailing trend of population movements in the southern Balkans and Asia Minor at the time, from 1912 onwards to at least until the mid-1920s scores of indigenous heteroreligious and heterolingual others "moved out", either in the face of advancing and/or retreating armies or in the context of the Greco-Bulgarian and Greco-Turkish exchange of populations, and were replaced by ethnically-kin newcomers: refugees and "exchangeables".[38] In line with Venizelos's unequivocal October 1922 view of the refugees as a means by which Macedonia (and western Thrace) would become "Greek lands" not only from a political but also from an ethnological point of view,[39] on 10 August 1923 the GGS informed his superiors in Athens that hundreds of thousands of "new Greek citizens" should be embedded by the Directorate General of Settlement with "our national programme of the Hellenization of Macedonia" in mind.[40] Thus, in less than a generation, the ethnic composition of the region was dramatically altered in favour of the Greek element.

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[38] Indicatively see Pallis 1925, and Pentzopoulos 2002: 124-40.
[39] Cited in Svolopoulos 1988: 114-15.
[40] IAIE 1923/KtE.39.

Table 4: Estimates on population movements out of and into Greek Macedonia (1912-25)[41]

	Muslims	**Slav-speakers**	**Greek Orthodox**	+/–
1912-13	10,000 [a]	43,700 [b]	15,000 [a]	– 38,700
1913-14	100,000 [c]		117,090 [d]	+ 17,090
1915-20			150,000 [a]	+ 150,000
1920-25	350,000 [a]	53,061 [e]	776,000 [f]	+ 372,939
Total	*– 460,000*	*– 109,826*	*+ 1,058,090*	*+ 488,174*

Sources: (a) Pallis 1925: 13, 14, 15; (b) Kostopoulos 2000: 31; (c) Pelayidis 1997: 332; (d) Pelayidis 1998: 369; (e) Michailidis 1998: 16; (f) Pentzopoulos 2002: 134 (n. 31).

As Table 4 suggests, such a teleological viewpoint is by and large correct, especially with regard to the Muslim element. However, it shrouds the fact that other than directly war-related processes also account for changes in the region's human geography. For it was the gradual erosion of Ottoman rule in the Balkans and its substitution by the forces and agents of the centralizing nation-state that also facilitated what Lord Curzon called the "unmixing of peoples". The advent of modernity in Greek Macedonia was bound to bring about significant changes in the politics, socio-economic fabric, and cultural milieu of all communities – co- and hetero-religious, co- and hetero-lingual alike. These ranged from the novelty of participating in an electoral process moulded in the fashion of "Old Greece" and, from 1915 onwards, to that of the εθνικός διχασμός (national schism) of "Greater Greece", to military conscription for men; from the wearing away of communal administration to the vagaries of unelected appointees and law-enforcement officers, and the unscrupulousness of school teachers; from the loss of the

[41] Drawn from official Greek and League of Nations sources.

Macedonian hinterland as an outlet for economic activities through the drawing of national borders to a centrally-imposed system of taxation; from the closing down of all Exarchist schools to a uniform educational system and the further dissemination of the Greek language as the "mother of wisdom" – to name but a few. And however slow and/or imperfect the forces of modernity may have been,[42] the changes they sought to effect were grounded on "the hegemony of the nation and its implied legitimation",[43] that is along the lines of *a* Greek national consciousness, which, contrary to the 1907 attestations of Kazazis, *could be* taught and *could be* imposed by coercion in the post-1912 period.

This is not to suggest, however, that the "enterprise" was not without its problems, as the following extensive passage from a late 1922 report – one of many of its kind – of the Prefect of Florina, where the bulk of Slav-speakers resided, attests:

> It cannot be said that the situation with regard to national convictions [εθνικά φρονήματα] is pleasing. The population of the prefecture, by and large foreign-speaking [ξενόφωνος] and of another nation [αλλοεθνής], of course is not delighted with any kind of improvement in our nation
> al matters. It is necessary for all officials, but particularly administrators, policemen and *above all educators*, to work systematically so that in due course the inhabitants' national consciousness can be changed. Here, one cannot speak of distinctions along party lines but along national consciousnesses [...]. Staff in schools should be the best available [and imbued] with national consciousness. Boarding schools and kindergartens should be established as well as night schools in which adults, male and female, learn the [Greek] language.[44]

In other words, homogenization, in this case through the instilling of a Greek national consciousness on "foreign" speakers allegedly bereft of Greek national convictions, would be principally effected

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[42] A point that underscores Gounaris's (1997) account.
[43] Karakasidou 2000: 58.
[44] IAM/GDM 87a (emphasis in the original); cf. Karakasidou 2000: 58.

through their linguistic Hellenization, which in "due course" would lead to their being imbued "with the national character of the Greeks" – as Paparrigopoulos would have it. The point, of course, was not simply to make them learn how to speak and to write in Greek but, principally, to teach them "to feel and to think ελληνιστί [Greek]".[45] As the leading demoticist Manolis Triantafillidis put it in 1916, linguistic assimilation

> means that I teach and spread among foreign speakers my language, I make them use the language I speak – not as though it is alien, for example as we learn French or German, but in a manner that will slowly [assist them] in making it their own, as though it is their maternal tongue, so that they use it on every occasion of their life, in good and bad times, for their thoughts and feelings, at home, at work and in their social life.[46]

Not unsurprisingly, the enterprise was to focus on the moulding of future adults. As it was exaggeratedly put in early 1921 by the inspector of primary education in the province of Kastoria (also one with sizeable communities of Slav-speakers):

> In most Bulgarian-speaking villages, men over the age of twenty and almost all women have Bulgarian convictions, and as such look at our Greek greatness [μεγαλείον] with hatred, secretly undermining it to the best of their abilities. Whatever we do regarding these down to the marrow Bulgarians [μέχρι μυελού οστέων βούλγαρους], will go amiss. I do not believe the same holds true in the case of those less than fifteen years old. I trust that we can make them Greeks with good elementary education and scouting organizations.[47]

That much was also evidenced in the, admittedly, far more refined view of a leading ideologue of the Metaxas regime (and son-in-law of the *archigos*) twenty-seven years later:

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[45] IAM/GDM 90: Prefect of Florina to General Directorate of Macedonia (13 January 1925).
[46] Triantafillidis 1916: 3; cf. Kostopoulos 2002: 85.
[47] IAIE 1921/41.2: V. Voyias to Governor General of Kozani-Florina (2 January 1921).

> The Greek psyche is not an acquired virtue. One cannot be in spirit Greek, if one is not Greek by birth, however hard we try. What we can do is to assimilate non-Greeks in such a way that, because we are stronger as a race, after one or two generations we can effect the assimilation of the *xenos*, who will see in his children and grandchildren Greeks.[48]

Crucially, whereas in the convoluted times of the struggle over Ottoman Macedonia at the turn of the century religious affiliation was considered as the basic marker of national identity, now, whether at a governmental or the local level, the maternal tongue of *all* Slav-speakers, former Patriarchists and former Exarchists alike, became a basic criterion employed to contest their "allegiance [...] to the imperative of ethnic loyalty".[49] In August 1927, another inspector of primary education, this time in the prefecture of Florina, explicitly invoked Greek "as the face of [Greece] and of [Greekness] itself",[50] when opining that the "spoken language" must reflect "unequivocally and indisputably the national image of this land". Arguing that "the existence of Slav-speaking pupils in the midst of Greek rule and Greek education throttles our Hellenism in this corner of Greece", his remedy centred on the propagation of the Greek language and, crucially, the "uprooting of this repugnant foreign-like language, on the hearing of which every Greek soul is irritated", so that the people's "national convictions can be revived and strengthened".[51]

The return to the early nineteenth-century Koraic notion of language constituting the very nation was also conditioned by the looming danger of Slav-speakers being used as a kind of Trojan horse by neighbouring Slav states, and the publicly unspoken conviction that, even among former Patriarchists, large numbers of them either were against the "nation" or harboured pro-Bulgarian convictions. In what amounts to an acknowledgement of the bankruptcy of the official nineteenth-century discourse on the per-

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[48] Mantzoufas 1938: 1326.
[49] Cf. Hutchinson and Smith 1996: 307.
[50] Cf. McDonald 1989: 5.
[51] Cited in Carabott 2003: 143-4.

ceived "Greek consciousness" of Ottoman Macedonia's Slav-speakers, on 16 June 1923 the Minister of the Interior, one Yeoryios Papandreou, opined that numerous "pro-Greek" inhabitants of Macedonia, who over the centuries had been "unfortunate enough to abandon their paternal linguistic idiom", had recently ceded "even their Greek convictions [...] hating everything Greek".[52] Neither the credulous assertion of the compilers of the 1928 official census that the majority of the 80,608 *Orthodoxes macédono-slavophones* had a "Greek national consciousness",[53] nor the appellation Σλαβόφωνοι Έλληνες (Slavophone Greeks), which was employed in public discourse in the post-1928 period, could conceal the evidence and perceptions to the contrary. In addition to the moral and, on occasion, logistical support offered by some pro-Bulgarian "elements" to the raids of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) into Greek Macedonia, and the "anti-national activities" of locals who had emigrated to the United States and Canada, Greek officials, from prefects and governor generals to heads of the gendarmerie and high-ranking prelates of the church in the region, not to mention discerned nationally-minded citizens, incessantly spoke of *voulgarizontes*, *voulgarofrones* or simply groups with "Bulgarian consciousness"; of "borders guarded by partly enemy populations, by name and law Greeks, by soul Bulgarians"; of people who "detest anything that is Greek", "collaborate with foreign gangs, hail foreign States, threaten us, scorn us, call us names, slander us", and "delude themselves that one day the whole of Macedonia will become Bulgarian".[54]

Not surprisingly, the urgency that underscores such a discourse shaped the dynamics of linguistic Hellenization, over and above the content and logistics of the whole homogenization process. For example, the compulsory character of primary schooling provided for in the constitutions of 1911 and 1927, was emphatically re-affirmed in the Venizelist educational legislation of 1929

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[52] IAIE 1923/6.7.
[53] IEI/GSIE 1935: xxviii.
[54] Carabott 2003: 151.

and effectively and persistently monitored thereafter; and in the case of Slav-speaking pupils, it was facilitated by the "assistance" of law-enforcement authorities – as a local schoolteacher gleefully maintained in 1931.[55] Likewise, the establishment of night schools for illiterate adults, originally proposed as early as 1914, was not solely designed to combat illiteracy but, crucially, to provide non-Greek-speakers with "elements from the contemporary life of the nation" through the teaching of "national history and geography".[56] In the words of another schoolteacher, night schools constituted the "basis of the Hellenization endeavour", and the work carried out therein was considered to be "of immeasurable significance for the national good".[57]

Admittedly though, the whole enterprise was to centre on the moulding of the Slav-speaking youth's soul from the tender age of four. As early as October 1913, the Inspector General of Primary Education in Greek Macedonia had published a 32-page manual in which he highlighted the pivotal role that kindergartens could play in inculcating Greek sentiments in the soul of foreign-speaking offspring. Taking the cue, a month later, the Minister of Public Education Ilias Tsirimokos announced in Parliament the opening of numerous kindergartens in non-Greek-speaking communities so that the "offspring of the people" learn to speak and think in the nation's "mother tongue".[58] There was, of course, the intractable issue of what was the "nation's mother tongue": the spoken vernacular, *dimotiki*, or the official written language, *katharevousa*? Tsirimokos' fellow leading demoticist, M. Triantafillidis, had no qualms in arguing for the former:

> *Linguistic assimilation cannot but be attained through the living language, and it is this language that must be taught in all*

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[55] AFD 104/1: Concise study by P. Iliadis on "Slavophone Macedonians" (31 August 1931); PMO 2000: 294, 297; Lefas 1942: 56-7.
[56] Dimaras 1986: 172.
[57] AIM 36: Memorandum by G. Papadopoulos (22 July 1938).
[58] Cited in Kostopoulos 2002: 93-4.

> *Macedonian* [kindergartens and primary] *schools* where there are foreign speakers.[59]

In the event, the issue was resolved in 1927, when the ecumenical government decreed that the language of instruction in primary education would be the *dimotiki*, though other inherent obstacles to the assimilation of Slav-speakers via education survived for much of the interwar period.[60]

In the meantime, parallel attempts were made to Hellenize the principal carriers of the cultural environment in which the Slav-speaking youth grew up, through the linguistic and spiritual assimilation of the Slav-speaking mother:[61]

> *For it is primarily she who transmits to her children and perpetuates through them the Bulgarian language, Bulgarian manners and customs, Bulgarian culture.*[62]

To this effect, the state, in cooperation with the Society for the Dissemination of Greek Letters, opened a number of female boarding schools in western and central Macedonia in which Slav-speaking girls received a Greek education (ελληνοπρεπή μόρφωσιν). Upon graduation, it was envisaged that they would return to their homes and turn them into centres of the "dissemination of Greek ideas, of Greek manners and customs, of Greek culture".[63]

Circumstantial evidence seems to suggest that such persistent efforts to "wrest control of enculturation away from the private domain of the family and to place it under the control of state institutions",[64] met with limited success – at least in the short term. Not only because the kindergartens, primary and boarding schools and the like were hampered by a perennial shortage of suitable

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[59] Triantafillidis 1916: 6 (emphasis in the original).
[60] Lefas 1942: 457; cf. Carabott 1997a: 250-1.
[61] Cf. Karakasidou 1997a: 99-103.
[62] IAIE 1934/A.21.II: P. Dimitriadis to Minister of Education and Religious Affairs (8 January 1932) (emphasis in the original).
[63] AEV 373: Dimitriadis to A. Zaimis (3 August 1927).
[64] Karakasidou 1993: 1. For enculturation practices among young male Slav-speaking conscripts, see Kostopoulos 2000: 138-9.

personnel, inadequate infrastructure and insufficient funds, but also because:

> Today's Greek school is neither a true educational nor an assimilatory force – at least as far as agricultural and stock-raising populations are concerned. It seeks to put by force in the head of rural Slav children a few incomprehensible words and expressions that neither relate to their daily experiences nor are essential for their advancement.[65]

If the logistics of linguistic Hellenization and the non-compatibility and recalcitrance of some members of the target group account for the limited short-term success of the enterprise in hand, in the long term it was the vulnerable, defenceless status of the Slav-speaking element and its real and imaginary association with revisionist Bulgaria, the enemy from without *par excellence*, that undoubtedly conditioned its assimilation. On paper at least, the collective ethnic rights of the two main other "others" in the region (see Table 3), the Sephardic Jews, and the Vlachs (and, of course, those of the Muslims of western Thrace), were explicitly guaranteed by name in international and bilateral agreements.[66] And, in any case, the former could hardly be considered assimilatory material, whereas the pro-Rumanian Vlachs were an insignificant minority, the vast majority of Vlach-speaking citizens having already been assimilated.

By contrast, the Slav-speaking element as a whole was not only potentially open to assimilation but, crucially, was not even recognized by name as constituting a heterolingual minority. Its well-being was theoretically assured in the context of the broad obligations that Greece, together with numerous other European states in the immediate aftermath of World War I, had undertaken vis-à-vis those of its citizens who belonged to "racial, religious or

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[65] Karavidas 1931: 240.

[66] See League of Nations 1927: 23. On the August 1913 Greco-Rumanian accord concerning the religious and educational rights of Vlach-speakers in Greece, see Antonopoulos 1917: 101-2, 154; on the "integration" of the Salonica Jewry, see Marketos 1999.

linguistic minorities". Placed under the auspices of the League of Nations, these obligations were appended to the abortive Treaty of Sèvres of 10 August 1920, but only came into force following the ratification of the Treaty of Lausanne (July 1923) on 30 August 1924. Until then, former Schismatic citizens could neither directly resort to international "instruments of checks and balances" nor collectively seek to safeguard their educational and religious rights in the face of homogenization, as could the Sephardic Jews and the pro-Rumanian Vlachs. That much was demonstrated immediately upon the advent of Greek rule in Macedonia, when all Exarchist schools were closed down, while Exarchist churches were temporarily placed under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, before being taken over by the Autocephalous Church of Greece in 1928 – both measures justified retroactively by the 1919 Neuilly Convention on the Greco-Bulgarian voluntary exchange of populations.[67]

The emphasis on homogenization through the assimilation of Slav-speakers continued, even after the coming into force of the so-called "minorities treaty". Indeed, the evidence at hand does not seem to corroborate the standard contemporaneous Greek standpoint on Athens's policy vis-à-vis the "Slavophones", neatly expressed recently as aiming at "granting them minority rights, while promoting at the same time their integration into the national body".[68] Asked by the government to comment on the minorities treaty, on 28 December 1920/10 January 1921 the renowned Professor of Constitutional Law N. Saripolos noted that articles 7 and 8, which provided for "the free use not only of foreign languages but also of corrupted ones, i.e. certain Greco-Slav linguistic idioms, in courts and schools", were in breach of the 1911 constitution (Articles 16/§4 & 107; see Table 5). To this effect, he proposed the following constitutional amendment: "The provisions of the treaty on the safeguarding of national minorities [...] are applicable even if they contravene articles of the con-

[67] In particular, Article 6/§4; see League of Nations 1927: 104; cf. Michailidis 1996b: 196.
[68] Michailidis 2003: 244.

stitution or those of the pertinent legislation." For only then could Article 1 of the treaty, which had provided that "Greece undertakes that the stipulations contained in Articles 2 to 8 of this Chapter shall be recognised as fundamental laws, and that no law, regulation or official action shall conflict or interfere with these stipulations, not shall any law, regulation or official action prevail over them", be implemented by "the legislator, the judge, the civil servant in general".[69] Not only did his proposal remain a dead letter, but, in the wake of the abortive Politis-Kalfoff protocol of September 1924 that had recognized the Slav-speaking element of the country as constituting a "Bulgarian" minority, an additional caveat was raised by the MFA, which accepted the view of its legal counsellor S. Seferiadis (father of the future poet-laureate Yiorgos) that minority rights could only be granted to those minority groups whose members "are trustworthy [ειλικρινείς] citizens [...] of the State of which they happen to be nationals".[70]

Table 5

Articles on "Private educational establishments" in the 1911 & 1927 Constitutions[71]	**Key articles of the Minorities Treaty**[72]	**Assessment of Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs**[73]
	Article 7/§4: No restriction shall be imposed on the free use by any Greek national of any language in private intercourse, in commerce, in religion, in the press or in publications of any kind, or at public meetings.	

[69] IAIE 1923/KtE 8.1.
[70] IAIE 1925/B/37.1: Seferiadis to MFA (10 December 1924).
[71] Axelos 1972: 149, 166, 173-4.
[72] League of Nations 1927: 22-3.
[73] IAIE 1921/15.2: Undated MFA memorandum.

Article 107 [**only in 1911 Constitution**]: The official language of the State is that in which the constitution and legislative texts are written. Any intervention seeking to corrupt it is prohibited.	[*§5*] Notwithstanding any establishment by the Greek Government of an official language, adequate facilities shall be given to Greek nationals of non-Greek speech for the use of their language, either orally or in writing, before the courts.	As regards §5, the Greek Government is neither thinking to – nor can – appoint in each court as many translators as the number of linguistic idioms that are spoken in the new lands. Therefore and for the time being, it will confine itself to the appointment of translators of Turkish, which is the most widespread language after Greek.
Articles 16/§3 & 23/§3: Individuals and legal entities are allowed to found private educational establishments, which operate according to the Constitution and the laws of the State.	*Article 8:* Greek nationals who belong to racial, religious or linguistic minorities shall enjoy the same treatment and security in law and in fact as the other Greek nationals. In particular they shall have an equal right to establish, manage and control at their own expense charitable, religious and social institutions, schools and other educational establishments, with the right to use their own language and to exercise their religion freely therein.	Concerning Article 8, we note that the creation of propagandist centres with monies sent from abroad should not be allowed. A detailed examination of funds to that effect should precede any consent to the establishment of such institutions, while a rigorous inspection of those that already exist should eliminate any foreign intervention. We specifically stress that the relative application should correspond to the free [will] of the community and should not be the work of a few trouble-makers.
	Article 9: Greece will provide in the public educational system in towns and districts in which a considerable proportion of Greek nationals of other than Greek speech are resident	The provisions of Article 9, especially as regards foreign-speaking Christian populations, are particularly dangerous because they could form the pretext for foreign propagandist

	adequate facilities for ensuring that in the primary schools the instruction shall be given to the children of such Greek nationals through the medium of their own language. This provision shall not prevent the Greek Government from making the teaching of the Greek language obligatory in the said schools. In towns and districts where there is a considerable proportion of Greek nationals belonging to racial, religious or linguistic minorities, these minorities shall be assured an equitable share in the enjoyment and application of the sums which may be provided out of public funds under the State, municipal or other budgets for educational, religious or charitable purposes. The provisions of this Article apply only to the territories transferred to Greece since January 1st, 1913.	activities. For this reason in order to apply the provisions of this article, [applications] should be received from compactly-settled populations via their legal representatives, who should truly express the free will of the minority that they represent.

As the right-hand column in Table 5 suggests, Athens was not eager to "execute" its minority obligations vis-à-vis the Slav-speaking element. Seizing on the fact that the treaty as a whole neither explicitly set out the precise criteria on the basis of which a population group was to be considered a "minority" nor specifically named the "Slavophones" as such, it was content to leave the matter of granting them minority rights to their own devices.

Only when taken to task, did it seek to meet its "obligations" – albeit grudgingly. Thus in the aftermath of the Greek Assembly giving the thumbs down to the Politis-Kalfoff protocol, and in response to a League of Nations request to provide information on the measures it had taken to fulfil its obligations vis-à-vis its "Bulgarian minority", in the summer of 1925 it produced the so-called *Abecedar*, a primer printed in the Latin script, compiled in the *macédonoslave* dialect, and intended for use in the schools of areas with sizeable Slav-speaking communities.[74] Later in the year, the establishment of a seven-member department charged with the administration and supervision of primary education among foreign speakers in northern Greece was proposed by the Ministry of Education,[75] while on 2 February 1926 the MFA sent a circular to the authorities in Macedonia informing them that Greece was obliged to set up in primary schools of Slav-speaking communities a "separate class in which the language of instruction was to be the Slav dialect".[76] Following the vehement objections of both Belgrade and Sofia and the open opposition of pro-Greek Slav-speakers, the experiment with this "linguistic Frankenstein" was abandoned – with the blessing of the League of Nations. Henceforth, Athens would repeatedly and unequivocally state its intention to grant Slav-speakers their own "minority schools" – albeit only if they so requested.[77] This time around there was not going to be any "skilful and specialized work" to that effect; and, although not publicly admitted, any such requests (and none was forthcoming) were to be examined in light of the petitioners' νομιμοφροσύνη (law-abidingness) to guard against the possibility of these schools becoming centres of anti-Greek propaganda.[78]

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[74] Michailidis 1996a: 336-7.

[75] AFD 104/1/10: Unsigned and undated typescript; Michailidis (1996a: 336) maintains that the said department was established by "legislative degree".

[76] AEV 373: Dimitriadis to Zaimis (23 August 1927).

[77] Michailidis 1996a: 337-40, Divani 1999: 334, 337-8.

[78] AKK 19: Memorandum by K. Karavidas (30 April 1925); cf. here Table 5.

Seven years later, replying to a complaint lodged by the Bulgarian Church with the League of Nations concerning the "situation of the Bulgarian minority in Greece, particularly with reference to certain questions of a religious nature", Athens reiterated the view that the "Slavophones" had Greek convictions, "lived like good Greeks, and were peaceful and law-abiding" citizens. On the vexed issue of whether religious services in churches attended by Slav-speakers were conducted in the Bulgarian language, as stipulated by the minorities treaty, its reply was both nebulous and credulous. Maintaining that religious services were always performed in the language that was in accordance with the wishes of the flock, it pointed to a government decree that allegedly forbade any prohibitions in usage of a language other than Greek (to date, no such decree has been "unearthed"), and argued that, in any case, the issue fell under the jurisdiction of the Autocephalous Church, over which the government had no powers of intervention.[79] In what was yet another telling test of its resilience, the League of Nations dropped the matter altogether.

Perhaps the most blatant contravention of the minorities treaty occurred with regard to Article 7/§4 (see Table 5). And yet at the core of the whole Hellenization process lay the eradication of "every trace of this barbarian-like linguistic idiom", as the Prefect of Pella put it in 1921.[80] Whether referred to as a Bulgarian, Slav, mixed-Slav or a foreign idiom or as the Macedonian-Slav, Slavomacedonian or Bulgaromacedonian language, the Slav-speakers' mother tongue was seen as a disruptive element that introduced chaotic, destabilizing characteristics in an allegedly organized world system; one that mirrored at best their fluctuating allegiance – at worst their opposition – to "Greek ideals".

The unofficial and – with the imposition of the Metaxas dictatorship in August 1936 – official banning of that "repugnant foreign-like language" "in the street, in public places, in trans-

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[79] Michailidis 1996b: 196-9.
[80] Cited in Kostopoulos 2002: 94.

actions and generally in every relevant instance", as a Metaxist enthusiast put it,[81] came on top of concerted efforts to promote the reconfiguring of the Macedonian landscape through the official renaming of most local Slavic and Turkish place-names into Greek – an enterprise "of great and urgent necessity", according to a high-ranking official of the MFA, which had begun in the late 1900s.[82] And if one is to take at face value the allegations of Macedonian internet sites, the desecration of tombstones written in Cyrillic and the whitewashing of similar iconography constituted an "all too familiar story" in post-1912 Greek Macedonia.[83] Indeed, on 4 January 1941, the Holy Synod sent a circular, asking priests to replace remaining Slavic icons in churches with Greek ones.[84] Such practices were in line with the Hellenization of Salonica's skyline in the immediate aftermath of the Muslim exodus and the arrival of the refugees. Writing on the demolishing of minarets on the orders of the municipality in March 1924, a local journalist opined thus:

> Their threatening height will no longer intimidate us, nor remind us of the former misfortunes of our race, the frightful slavery and the suffering of their subjects. The voice of the muezzin will no longer bother our ears [...]. Nothing, nothing at all must remind us again of the epoch of slavery.[85]

Other equally visible practices included the putting up of numerous signs in Macedonian townships and villages urging the inhabitants to "Speak Greek", and the refusal of postal authorities to deliver letters as long as the name of sender and addressee was in Cyrillic.[86] An equally distinguishable practice was the re-

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[81] See here n. 57.

[82] Kolokotronis 1925: 3-4; cf. Kostopoulos 2000: 139-47, and Carabott 2005.

[83] Indicatively see: http://www.mymacedonia.net/aegean/hellenization.htm

[84] Kostopoulos 2001: 40.

[85] Cited in (and translated by) Mazower 2004: 351.

[86] Indicatively see *Έθνος* (Florina), no. 1 (17 January 1931), and AEV 283: Venizelos to MFA (23 November 1930).

naming of surnames with distinct Slavic endings into Greek ones.[87] Personal names, particularly of Slav offspring, were also Hellenized, partly because priests, acting on the orders of the Church,[88] refused to baptize them with Slav ones, partly on the initiative of their parents as a means of avoiding further discrimination. As a Slav-speaker from the region of Almopia recently recalled: "When I went to school, my parents changed my name. 'You cannot stand on your two feet with such a name', my mother used to say."[89] Yet, changing one's name from "Petre" to "Petros" or from "Pasica" to "Aspasia", did not result in the enhancing of Greek among Slav-speakers, at least in the short term. In the late 1940s, Slav-speaking pupils continued to converse in their mother tongue in class, incurring, like Vlach-speaking pupils in the late 1880s, the wrath – and caning – of their Greek teacher.[90]

Caning was just one of many "penalties" that Slav-speakers endured during the Metaxas dictatorship if caught violating the banning order; steep fines, drinking of castor oil, and short-term imprisonment were the norm.[91] Internal exile was also on the cards, a practice on which the regime surpassed its predecessors. The latter, in addition to scholastically monitoring the movements and activities of Slav-speakers, whose sentiments they believed to be anti-Greek, and intercepting their correspondence, had on occasion resorted to sending them to internal exile on charges of "supporting the *komitadjis*", normally for a period not exceeding thirty-six months, or deporting them to Bulgaria on the orders of the notorious Committees of Public Security. In the same vein, Slav-speakers who had migrated to the New World and had allegedly been members of pro-Bulgarian societies and parti-

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[87] Koufis 1990: 54; Karakasidou 1997b: 189; Kostopoulos 2000: 147-51.
[88] See the Holy Synod's encyclical of 20 May 1937 in Kostopoulos (2001: 39-40), wherein Slav personal names are said to be incompatible with "the dedication of every Greek [...] to true Hellenism and the preservation of our national language".
[89] Cited in Kostopoulos 2000: 150.
[90] Votsis 1998: 165-6; cf. Carabott 2005.
[91] Indicatively see Koufis 1990: 55; FO 371/22372/R3533: Waterlow to Lord Halifax (23 March 1938).

cipated in IMRO-related activities were struck off the municipal rolls and stripped of their Greek citizenship (ιθαγένεια) on the grounds of leaving the country with no intention of returning.[92]

The Fourth of August Regime introduced a new element in the equation, indeed one that has endured till now: that of bracketing together Slav-speakers with communism. This was no doubt because of the official acceptance by the Communist Party of Greece in early 1925 of the Comintern ruling on the right to self-determination of all the nationalities (εθνότητες) of Greek Macedonia and western Thrace, which was changed in March 1935 to full national and political equality for all national minorities (εθνικές μειονότητες) within the country. In line with the regime's obsessive anticommunist hysteria as well as its understandable Bulgarophobia given Sofia's revisionism, increasing numbers of Slav-speakers were deported to remote and barren places of exile as Bulgarophiles and communists. Such harsh treatment was supplemented by a law that prohibited the settlement of foreigners (αλλοδαποί) and individuals of non-Greek ethnic origin (μη Έλληνες την εθνικότητα) in border regions, such as Florina, with retroactive effect. It also provided for the setting up of Committees of Military Security, charged with exiling for a period of up to five years individuals, with or without their families, who were deemed "dangerous".[93]

All these practices of assimilation and intolerance, and their attendant mechanisms of repression and containment, did not necessarily or always set out with the homogenization of Greek Macedonia in mind, though admittedly they were used as a means to that end. Compared with those carried out by Belgrade vis-à-vis its own pro-Bulgarian Slav-speakers in Yugoslav Macedonia, or by Sofia vis-à-vis its few remaining Greek-speaking citizens,[94]

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[92] Carabott 2003: 153-4; Kostopoulos 2003: 53-5.

[93] Carabott 1997b: 67-8; Carabott 2003: 155.

[94] Conveniently, see Banac 1984: 307-28, and anecdotally IAIE 1925/A.24.7: Press Office of the MFA to MFA (23 July 1925), enclosing in translation a passage from a communal degree on the "banning" of any language other than Bulgarian in the region of Efrem.

those of Athens were probably less severe, at least until the advent of Metaxas to power. By the same token, the treatment meted out to pro-Rumanian Vlach-speakers in Macedonia (and Epirus) was benevolent when compared to that experienced by Slav-speakers. By the end of the inter-war period, when according to the official census of 1940 the Vlach-speaking population of the country numbered 53,997 souls, there were as many as twenty-two primary and three secondary Vlach minority schools, attended by around 1,300 pupils, principally funded and partly staffed by Bucharest.[95] The authorities considered such establishments hotbeds of Rumanian propaganda, which, it was argued, set a bad precedent "as Bulgarian propaganda employs the example of the Rumanian minority in order to kindle and preserve the old demand of the Schismatic Slavophones for the recognition of a Slavophone Bulgarian minority".[96] Exaggerated as such concerns may have been, inasmuch as some 8,000 pro-Rumanian Vlachs had left for the Dobrudja in 1925-26 and another 2,000 in 1932-33 in the context of an agreement on unilateral emigration between the two countries that Athens keenly sought to "promote", on occasion they even led to tampering with the official correspondence of the secretary of the Rumanian embassy in Athens, at the request of the MFA itself.[97] More importantly, perhaps, they are indicative of the mainstream perception of the time, wherein each and every element of Orthodox Christian "otherness" was seen as incompatible with Greek nationhood, the desire to assimilate – if not, eradicate – it being, at the end of the day, the norm.

By contrast, the incongruity of the non-Greek Orthodox "other" called neither for its assimilation nor for its eradication,

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[95] ESIE 1961: cx; Papaevgeniou 1946: 28, 31, 33, 36, 42, 43.

[96] IAIE 1934/A.21.IIIa: Prefect of Florina to Governor General of Macedonia (15 June 1934).

[97] IAIE 1933/A.21b: MFA memorandum (3 July 1929), and Governor General of Macedonia to MFA (3 March 1933); IAIE 1923/30.1: MFA to Chiefs of Staff (14 April 1923); FO 371/15970: Ramsay to FO (12 December 1932): "The gradual elimination from Greek Macedonia [...] of the Kutso-Vlach element appears to [...] be an interesting and important step towards the final solution of the Macedonian tangle".

Epilogue

It is, of course, an indisputable fact that the Second World War and the Greek Civil War that followed it were instrumental in bringing to fruition the homogenization of Greek Macedonia – if not of the country as a whole, the presence of some 110,000 Muslims in western Thrace notwithstanding (Table 6). Sephardic Jews, pro-Rumanian Vlachs, Albanian Tsams, and Slav-speakers in vast numbers perished, emigrated or were "moved out". And yet, in summer 1959 in at least half a dozen of the remaining Slav-speaking villages of western Greek Macedonia the authorities found it necessary to stage pageantries in which those present went through the ritual of public language oaths. As custom decreed in instances where local matters were entwined with affairs of the nation-state, following the Sunday church service, villagers would gather at either the village square or the school yard, both adorned with Greek flags and other national emblems, to listen to patriotic speeches by the local representatives and dignitaries of the state: the president of the village council, the village priest, the village schoolteacher, and the head of the local police station. With their morale raised to a degree comparable with the solemnity of the occasion, villagers were then invited to raise their right hand and repeat after their president:

> I promise in front of God, men, and the official authorities of our State, that I will stop speaking the Slavic idiom which gives reason for misunderstanding to the enemies of our country, the Bulgarians, and that I will speak, everywhere and always, the official language of our country, Greek, in which the Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ is written.[100]

The similarity in nature and content of such pageantries with those staged in response to the declaration of Macedonian independence in late 1991 and 1992 is striking: both were state-organized and -attended, both aimed at asserting the Greekness of

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[100] Cited in (and translated by) Karakasidou 2002: 122-3; see also Kostopoulos 2000: 234-44.

Macedonia and, arguably, both reveal a deep-rooted sense of societal insecurity. What is somewhat surprising is that the former occurred at a time when the country's remaining non-Greek Slav-speaking element had been numerically, at least, rendered insignificant.

How are we to account for the 1959 pageantries? One explanation might be that after more than forty years of Greek rule, numerous population comings and goings, concerted efforts at Hellenization and the like, the eradication of that "repugnant foreign-like language" was still a *desideratum*. Giving rise to "misunderstandings" with "the enemies of our country", a perception in line with the concept of the "enemy from within and without", is certainly also an apposite reason, as the following extract from a 1962 speech of the then Minister of Foreign Affairs and Vlach by origin, Evangelos Averof-Tositsa, shows:

> International recognition of a national minority implies the admission of a foreign territorial claim, and Greece will never sign a treaty regarding the protection of a [Slavo-Macedonian] minority. Such a treaty would imply the right of foreign supervision and intervention on Greek territory. Besides, [Slavo-Macedonians] are not a nationality. In Yugoslavia, in twenty years or so, there may be created a Macedonian nation in the fullest sense of the word. That is their affair... In Greece, it is different.[101]

An additional "justification" might also be found in Article 16/§4 of the 1952 Constitution, which provided that:

> Instruction in all primary and secondary schools aims at the ethical and spiritual upbringing and the development of the youth's national consciousness on the basis of the ideological guidelines of the Helleno-Christian culture [ελληνοχριστιανικού πολιτισμού].[102]

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[101] Cited in Pribichevich 1982: 242.
[102] Axelos 1972: 213.

Either way, the perceptions on – and the mechanisms and practices of – homogenization, as discussed herein with particular reference to Greek Macedonia and the region's Slav-speaking citizens, were embedded in the exclusive, though not unique, ethno-cultural type of nationhood that the Greek state had espoused early on – and probably still does (this in light of the fact that the 1982 law which allowed political refugees of the Civil War period to return clearly discriminated against former Slav-speaking citizens by excluding individuals of non-Greek ethnic descent).[103] Although Hellenization, at least on an institutional level, never reached the heights of *Francisation*,[104] it was congruent to the invocation of Greek as the face of Greece and of Greekness itself; to the pervasive, at times, allure of the concept of the enemy from within and without;[105] and to the equally omnipresent inability (subjective as well as objective) to look beyond the "language spoken at home, in the family, [and] at the church" to that in which "the individual thinks" in order to verify one's allegiance to the "imperative of ethnic loyalty". In this light, the culture, by and large oral and familial, of Greek Macedonia's Slav-speaking citizens was seen as "alien", its carriers disfiguring the Greekness of the region and with their "anti-national" activities in the 1940s threatening it with extinction from within. The province's homogenization was intentionally politicised in the context of an age-old discourse on the Slav enemy and the emergence of a radical communist-led people's – as opposed to national – movement. It was elevated to a *sine qua non*, as the only means by which the "outsider within" could either be assimilated by the Greek national community in due course or be

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[103] Kostopoulos 2000: 298-300.

[104] Conveniently, see Schiffman 1996: chapters 4-5, where *Francisation* is defined as "the process of making French speakers out of speakers of other languages, [and/] or the process of making the territory, institutions, morals and customs of non-French-speaking regions French" (290/n.4).

[105] Cf. McDonald 1989: 2.

compelled to move out and become an "insider/outsider without", as the case might be.[106]

References and abbreviations

AEV = Archive of Eleftherios Venizelos. Benaki Musuem, Athens
AFD = Archive of Filippos Dragoumis. Gennadius Library, Athens
AIM = Archive of Ioannis Metaxas. General State Archives, Athens
AKK = Archive of Konstantinos Karavidas. Gennadius Library, Athens
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[106] Carabott 2003: 156-9; cf. Smith 1999: 187.

CEIP [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace] 1914 = *Report of the International Commission to inquire into the causes and conduct of the Balkan Wars*. Washington D.C.

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IAM/GDM = Historical Archive of Macedonia/General Directorate of Macedonia. Thessaloniki

IEI/GSIE 1935 = Υπουργείον Εθνικής Οικονομίας/Γενική Στατιστική Υπηρεσία της Ελλάδος, *Στατιστικά αποτελέσματα της απογραφής του πληθυσμού της Ελλάδος της 15-16 Μαΐου 1928*, vol. IV. Athens

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