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## THE REVOLUTION OF 1821 AND ITS IMPACT ON YOUR ANCESTORS

Dear ladies and gentlemen

It is my honor and privilege to analyze how the Revolution of 1821 influenced our ancestors at various levels (economic, social, migration). Although you are far from Greece, you can read and continue your interest. The need for understanding the history of Greece and especially the period from 1821 to 1900 is very important because back then, great changes took place which someone who does genealogical research needs to know in order to have an overall picture. Let's not forget that because of many troubles and wars, the periods where written documents and testimonies about families and historical facts were minimal. In order to fully understand the impact of the 1821 revolution on Greek families, we have to understand the quality of life and the vicissitudes that existed before, during, and after the revolution. Most examples I will discuss have the Laconia prefecture as their geographical center. This is because I come from there and am knowledgeable about the local history and genealogy. Also, many people from that region emigrated to the United States and there is significant interest in the southern Peloponnese.

### **The situation in Greece before the revolution of 1821**

The social conditions in Greece during the Ottoman rule, known as the Turkish occupation, (*Tourkokratia*) were miserable in most places and for most people. The good conditions of

social peace and tranquility for centuries seemed unknown. A feeling of insecurity was the main social feature of most villages of Greece, both in the islands and on the mainland. In the islands of Greece and in coastal and semi-mountainous settlements, there was a scourge of piracy by various adventurers. Typical examples of this situation are the island of Kythera<sup>1</sup> and the settlement of Paleochori<sup>2</sup> in Eastern Laconia.

Around 1540 the Ottoman pirate Barbarossa (Greek origin) attacked Kythera and destroyed with great fury the island's capital. The destruction was so great that many myths and legends about this invasion survive until today. The capital of the island (Paleochora) was not inhabited again because of the fear of those who survived. Much of the population was massacred, and another part was captured and sold in the slave markets of the East. The vastness of destruction was so great that the Venetians, who took control after a short period, were forced to bring in people from neighboring Crete and Laconia. The population in Paleochora was not sufficient enough to make progress in financial development and trade, and to support the safety of the island. The Venetians considered economic development of occupied areas to be particularly important because they wanted to have increased tax revenues.

In the same period another part of Greece was attacked by Muslim pirates. This village was Agios Georgios or Paliochori near Neapoli in Eastern Laconia. The oral tradition is that Algerian pirates attacked the small village which was hidden in the mountains. After they plundered it, they took prisoners to sell them as slaves. One of these was a member of the Livanos family who was transferred to the Algerian coast. After a while he escaped and came back to his home place. He, together with members of Mpactis family, was the founder of village Agios Nikolas near Neapoli.

A corresponding case is the destruction of the village of Kalyvia<sup>3</sup>, which is the original location of the village Elika, in Eastern Laconia. There the Turks invaded and after the

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<sup>1</sup> Ελένη Μπαλτά «Η Οίωμανική Απογραφή των Κυθήρων 1715- Ινστιτούτο Νεοελληνικών ερευνών Αθήνα 2009 σ.104

<sup>2</sup> Ε. Αλεξάκη «Οικιστική Εξέλιξη στον δήμο Βοίων Λακωνίας- περιοδικό Λακωνικά Σπασουδαί τ.18 Αθήνα 2006, σ.285

<sup>3</sup> Ο.π σ.281

destruction of the village, they took 20 prisoners. On the road to Tripolis (capital of Morea), one of the prisoners escaped and went back to the area he knew well. This man is the ancestor of the Simigianni family which lives in village Daimonia, located near Kalyvia.

Stories that explain how a family managed to survive during the Ottoman occupation are common in Greece and are of great interest, especially in small settlements, where they are often verified.

The widespread insecurity and unrest of the period before the revolution of 1821 had a heavy impact on the concentration of the population, the growth of dispersion, and of course in geography and development of the settlements. Typical examples are settlements in the Peloponnese and Laconia like Koumousta, Faraklo and Kremasti. During the last the last Byzantine period, Koumousta was a small fortress with few houses, considered an outpost of the great castle of Mystras<sup>4</sup> with a small population. But in 1700 we see a big change in the physiognomy of the settlement. Now it numbers about 700 people (158 families), meaning it is an active and strongly populated community in the highlands of the Taygtos mountains. In order to feel more secure and to avoid any contact and aggression by the Turks, the Greek population moved to more mountainous and inaccessible places that are not visible from the plains of Sparta, which the Turks possessed for economic reasons.

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<sup>4</sup>Θ. Κατσουλάκου – Π. Χ. Στούμπου «Η Κουμουστά της Λακεδαίμονας– Πολιτιστικός Σύλλογος Ξηροκαμπίου, Σπάρτη 2012, σ. 26

Mistra	Maschi d'anni							Femine d'anni					In tutti
	Fami- glie	1 sin 16	16 sin 30	30 sin 40	40 sin 50	50 sin 60	Vecchi	1 sin 16	16 sin 30	30 sin 40	40 sin 50	Vecchie	
1. Parori	102	101	32	34	21	11	13	77	44	22	22	26	403
2. Seg <sup>o</sup> Pacota	5	5	—	1	—	2	2	4	2	2	—	—	18
3. Schura	14	6	4	4	6	—	2	10	7	—	1	3	43
4. Magulla	127	92	50	42	18	13	14	98	55	36	24	20	462
5. Seg <sup>o</sup> Pardali e Misogli	5	—	—	3	—	—	4	1	—	3	1	1	13
6. Cumusta	158	145	55	38	49	15	25	112	63	54	45	27	628
7. Seg <sup>o</sup> Scarachi	4	4	1	2	1	1	—	1	1	1	2	—	14
8. Perivolia	26	9	12	5	7	7	6	2	5	9	5	5	72
9. Caminia	11	6	3	3	5	—	1	10	1	7	1	—	37
10. Zoga	72	84	30	28	13	8	17	66	26	17	20	26	335
11. Seg <sup>o</sup> Cosi	9	7	6	2	2	2	1	8	4	4	2	—	38
12. Cotizza	69	67	21	17	20	9	13	52	22	20	14	26	281
13. Musica	6	2	2	3	2	1	—	1	1	3	1	1	17
14. Liadina e Potamia	28	23	7	9	8	3	5	24	9	11	7	2	108
15. Coremi	3	2	1	1	1	1	—	1	2	1	—	1	11

In the case of Faraklo<sup>5</sup>, Eastern Laconia, we have a different change. From a small rural Byzantine settlement without a particularly important role, in 1700 there is a developed community consisting of 1100 people who were mainly engaged in farming. In this case, we have growth and a concentration of population in the highlands for safety reasons and a better quality of life. The case of Kremasti is not much different. From a small village during the Byzantine period, in the Venetian census of 1700 it appears with 1500 inhabitants. Again we have people who abandoned their homes and settled in the mountains for more protection.

In short, the depreciation of lowland and coastal settlements led to the development (economic, social), of mountainous areas; in particular, Mani, where the complete absence of plains combined with the warlike spirit of the people led to tremendous population and urban development in the period before the revolution of 1821.

The religious oppression was also significant. Sultan may have granted certain privileges, especially those concerning religious ceremonies, but there were serious limitations on the

<sup>5</sup>Κ. Στάππα Η Λακωνία κατά την Τουρκοκρατία και Ενετοκρατία, 1460 – 1821 Αθήνα 1993

architecture of the temples, operating mode and even the attire of the enslaved Greeks. The steeple bells were forbidden to ring while the height of the church bells had to be small<sup>6</sup>. Green was the favorite color of the Prophet Muhammad so the *rajahs* (enslaved Christians) could not wear it. Also, the administrative division of the Ottoman Empire and the autonomy that every Pasha had in his area of responsibility gave local rulers the opportunity to be as hard as possible in the implementation of religious laws. However, the most important problem was the general actions of the Ottoman Empire towards people who were not Muslim. Today we could say that they were “second level citizens” who were treated unequally. The following examples from the villages of Laconia are typical:

A letter from the people of Arna<sup>7</sup> to the governor, Ioanni Kapodistria, in 1828 references that in 1778, one of the Drogkari brothers who lived in Arna changed his faith from Christian to Muslim. After doing this with Turkish help, he displaced his brothers from their father’s fortune and kept it all for himself. His brothers and their progeny remained Christians and demanded justice in 1828.

Another letter from the people of Rozova<sup>8</sup> to the governor, Ioanni Kapodistria, references that in 1760 Smail Spahi Karamani, an Ottoman Albanian officer, killed the priest Ioanni Kiriakaki in anger when the village bell rung in the morning. The villagers ran to the church to see what happened. When they saw the priest dead and they learned what happened, they asked why??? Then they were attacked by Karamani who killed another villager named Skordogianni. The people were so afraid that they abandoned their village for a while, and he became ruler of the bigger part of the village.

Economic pressure was another big issue for the enslaved population during the Ottoman rule. The areas that produced agricultural products (especially in the plains) were heavily taxed. Families had to pay special (not permanent) contributions to local rulers in order to receive better treatment in interpersonal relationships. However, the heaviest tax was the one that was called “tax of the Blood.” Some Christian families were obligated to send a boy to

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<sup>6</sup>Τοπική παράδοση του Χωριού Βαρβίτσα

<sup>7</sup>Γ. Β. Νικολάου «Συνέπειες της Τουρκικής κυριαρίας στα Βαρδουνοχωρια της Λακωνίας» περιοδικό Λακωνικά Σπουδαί τ. 16 Αθήνα 2002 σ. 346

<sup>8</sup>Ο.π. σ. 350

serve in the Ottoman military. From these boys the Ottomans created fanatic soldiers that rocked Europe in the 16th century. They were called janissaries<sup>9</sup>. For Greek families, that was a tremendous obstacle to family cohesion as many of the boys adopted the Islam faith and cut their bonds with their families. Others were killed and nobody learned anything about them. The situation for the girls was similar. They were kidnapped and transferred to the harems of local pashas. During that time, it was difficult for families to stick together.

The oppressive level of Ottoman taxation is shown by the number of words related to economic activity during the Turkish occupation that remain to this day in the Greek language: *haratci*, *moukatas*, *peskesi*, *mpaxisi*. Even nowadays, Greeks know the meaning of these words.

Another common tactic of the exploitation of poor Greek families was the demand that they sign Loan Agreements. This was done by force and with the usurious purpose of taking the fortune of the family. Usually low ranked Ottoman officers forced Christians to sign repayment bills for short periods of time. If the Christians could not repay, the Ottomans would take their possessions. A characteristic example of such an agreement was signed in 1775 between the monks of the monastery of Gola in Lakonia (with representatives Stratigi Kirkila and the priest of Koumousta, Vasili Economou) and the Albanian officer Gianni Sciftari (Shqiptar) or Vlachaki<sup>10</sup> who forced them to repay the bill (a Loan) in short time.

In another case in 1775, Zenelaga<sup>11</sup> (Muslim aga) in charge of Albanian mercenaries forced villagers of Paliochori (near Koumousta) to sign a repayment bill for the protection offered to them without their consent. The villagers tried to repay, on time, the amount of money Zenelaga wanted but they failed. So one day he went to the village and killed the local Greek leader, Ioanni Viga. Many of the villagers abandoned their houses and fled to Mani where the Ottoman presence was weak.

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<sup>9</sup> David Nicole – Angus McBride “Armies of the Ottoman Empire” osprey Publishing books

<sup>10</sup> Θ. Κατσουλάκου – Π.Χ Στούμπου «η Κουμουστά της Λακεδαίμονας» πολιτιστικός σύλλογος Ξηροκαμπίου Σπάρτη 2012 σ. 35

<sup>11</sup> Ο. Π. σ.35

## THE REVOLUTION OF 1821

The pressure of the Ottomans on the Greek population created desires for freedom and national independence. The thirst for better life conditions often led to rebellions and revolutions against Ottoman rule. All failed, due to the bad organization and poor means of the rebels, with dramatic results for the population and the Greek families. But the most organized revolution broke out in 1821.

In Greece, there were not many centers with armed forces. So, an essential base of rebels went to Mani where there was experienced manpower and the complete absence of Turkish troops. In other areas, it had been decided that the families had equipment to create local centers of resistance. Communication back then was difficult, so the facts had to be accurate and organized. On 23 March 1821, Petros Mavromihalis (bey of Mani – local chieftain) conquered Kalamata<sup>12</sup> with a charge of 2000 men from Mani. This became the first town liberated by the revolutionaries. There were other chieftains (Kolokotronis, Nikitaras, Anagnostaras, Papaflessas, etc.) who, having Kalamata as a base, went to their provinces to spread the events of the uprising. Capturing a city was a great accomplishment for the Greeks, who then declared their independence.

In the northern Peloponnese, the epicenter of revolutionary processes was Patras, a key financial center of that time. The main representatives of the Peloponnese capital who were there were able to provide money for the revolution. Families like Lontos, Zaimis, Fotilas and others played a very important role in the revolution. Over time and after the military successes of the first months of the revolution, more and more Greeks who were initially hesitant contributed to the fight. For example, the islands of Greece entered the revolution one month later. (Chios one year later). Rich and powerful families like Kountouriotis, Laskaris, Sactouris, and Voulgaris owned fleets. By September of 1821, all of southern Greece was at war with the most important event being the conquest of Tripolis, administrative center of Peloponnese.

The rebellion of Ali Pasha of Ioannina against the Ottoman Sultan played an important role in the successes of the early days of the revolution. A great part of the Ottoman forces of the

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<sup>12</sup>Γεϊργίου Τερτσέτη «Απομνημονεύματα Θεόδωρου Κολοκοτρωνη» εκδόσει Νέος Σταθμός Αθήνα σ. 76

Peloponnese was sent to Ioannina to fight Ali pasha. This was an opportunity that the revolutionaries could not miss. The large concentration of troops removed from the Peloponnese gave the leaders of the revolution the opportunity to establish their dominance in the Peloponnese relatively quickly. The forts of Peloponnese did not have their heavy Ottoman guard. By the end of 1821, most castles of the Peloponnese either were occupied or besieged. Problems, however, did not take long to appear. Greek rebels were not a trained army with a single command, but a set of indignant, angry people who fought for freedom. Even basic objectives (national consciousness, central administration, and religious consciousness) could not be taken for granted. Some people were fighting for religious freedom, some for statehood, some for social rights<sup>13</sup> and some simply for looting. The conflicting interests brought many hard times and harsh confrontations.

On the other hand, the Ottoman Empire could send thousands of troops into the battlefield and to every problematic place. The Ottomans had war-experienced personnel in great scale, both on land and at sea. After the defeat of Ali Pasha and his execution by the sultan troops, the matter of importance for the sultan was the Greek uprising. A key measure of dealing with the Greek revolution was terrorism. The complete destruction of islands of Chios, Kassos, Psara in conjunction with the campaign of 30,000 men under Dramali Pasha in Peloponnese brought tremendous demographic upheavals throughout Greece. A typical example is the destruction of the island of Chios<sup>14</sup> where most of the population was executed by the Turkish invaders and the rest were sold in the slave markets of the East. The few families who survived tried to find shelter on other islands and in the Peloponnese. Some examples from that period which exist today are the Liadi family from Petrina<sup>15</sup>, the Chios family from Gythio, and the Chiotis family from all over Laconia. All of these families came from Chios during that period.

However, all these destructive actions were not sufficient to extinguish the Greek Revolution. Turkish troops proved unable to set their domination in Peloponnese. After five years of war,

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<sup>13</sup> Γιάννη Κορδάτου «Η κοινωνική επανάσταση του 1821», Αθήνα 1924

<sup>14</sup> Μαρία Γιατράκου «Ειδήσεις από την Καταστροφή της Χίου» Ανάτυπο από το περιοδικό «Παρνασσός» τόμος ΚΗ (1986) σ. 560 κ.έ

<sup>15</sup> Σ. Λ Μυλωνάκος «Χιώτες στην Λακωνία» περιοδικό Λακωνικά τεύχος 182 (1997) σ. 1- 4



Sultan was unable to deal with the revolutionaries. In 1825, he called the pasha of Egypt for help. (Egypt was a protectorate state under Ottoman rule). The pasha sent his son, Ibrahim pasha. The army was reorganized and trained by French officers who had fled to Egypt after the fall of Napoleon. Ibrahim's arrival in Peloponnesus brought much political, military and social unrest. After he easily won some battles in Messenia, he began to destroy everything in his path in order to break the spirit of the revolution. Fear and terror returned to the hearts of Greek families as the war seemed uncertain. Ibrahim pasha was strong and it seemed that nobody could deal with him. Very few chieftains tried to take him on because he seemed undefeatable. Laconia paid a heavy cost from his raids. With the exception of the area of Mani where Ibrahim was defeated three times<sup>16</sup>, he burned villages throughout Laconia, killed the population, enslaved men, women and children in order to terrify and gain profit. In the period of 1825 – 1826, villages like Vrodama, Geraki, Vlachiotei, Kremasti, Levetsova (Krokees), and Apidia felt the cruel face of slavery and destruction. A letter from residents of Eastern Laconia to Governor Ioanni Kapodistria in 1828 gives the names of people who were enslaved by Ibrahim's troops and their relatives who tried to find them. Typical is the following list with names from this letter<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Δ. Κόκκινου «Η Ελληνική επανάσταση» τ. Ε σ. 424 εκδόσεις Μέλισσα Αθήνα 1976

<sup>17</sup> Η. Παπαθανασόπουλου «Λάκωνες τραυματίες και αιχμάλωτοι επί Ιμπραήμ». Περιοδικό Λακωνικά Σπουδαί τ. 1 σ. 305 Αθήνα 1972

Ὄνόματα καὶ ἐπίθετα	Ἑλικία	Ἀρρέτων	Θηλέων	ἐποχὴ αἰχμαλωσίας	ποῦ ἤδη εὐρίσκονται	ὄνομα κρατούντος
Κανέλλα Νικολάου Φασμουῦλη			1			
Ἄθανάσιος Κωνσταν. Μανέζη		1				
Πάνος		1				
Μαρουλίτσα			1	1824		
Παναγιώτα			2	1825	Πάτραν	
Κανέλλα						
Αἰκατερίνα			1			
Μιχάλης						
Παναγιώτης			2		Μοθώνην	
<b>Βρονταμαῖς</b>						
Αἰκατερίνα γυνὴ τοῦ Γεωργιάκη Γουβιώτη αἰχμαλωτισθεῖσα μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν εἰς τὴν σπηλιάν Διαμάντω ἀδελφῆ Γ. Ρουμπίκη			1			
Γιαννούλα θυγάτηρ αὐτοῦ			1			
Διαμάντω τῆς Διαμαντίνας Μπουντουρίνας			1		Νεόκαστρον Μοθώνην	Χασάν Καπετάν
Ζωίτσα γυνὴ Διδασκάλου			1			
Παναγιώτης υἱὸς τῆς Χριστίνα Ἀγγελῆ Σταμάτη		1	1		Μοθώνην	Ἀχμέταγα Κεφισὴν Κρητὰ
Σουσιάννα ἐγγονὴ Χριστοῦ Σταμάτη			1		Πάτραν	Ἀληκανῆ Λαλαίου
Γεώργης			1		Μοθώνην	Ἀνατολίτην
Γεωργίτσα			1		»	»
Χριστίνα			1		»	»
Ἄθανάσης			1		»	»
Γιαννάκης			1		»	»
Βενετσάνα			1	1	»	»
Γιαννάκης			1		Πάτραν	Καραμεχμέτ
Σοφία			1		»	Μυστριώτην
Δημητράκης Θεοδ. Ζαραφωνίτη		1			»	ἐξαδέλφου
Σταθοῦ Δημήτρη Καπετανάκου			1		»	Ἀληκανῆ εἰς Λαλιώτη χήρας
Μαρία Χριστίνας Λιωτισίνας			1		Μοθώνην	
Χρυσούλα γυνὴ τοῦ Ἀργύρη			1		»	
Ἰωάννης						
Γεώργης						
Ἀνδρέας						
Χριστίνα γυνὴ Ἀνδοῦα Μήτρη			1		Μοθώνην	
Γεωργίτσα ἀδελφῆ Γ. Κωστάκου			1		Μοθώνην	
Μαρούλα θυγάτηρ Δημ. Φαρλέκα			1		»	
Παναγιώτα Γριαγιδάραινα			1			
Ἀγγελίνα γυνὴ Ἀγγελῆ Τσιλιώτου			1			εἰς χεῖρας Πασᾶ
Αἰκατερίνα θυγάτηρ τῆς			1			

Abstract with Laconian prisoners from Vrodama

Ibrahim's obstruction in the Peloponnese combined with his destructive fury resulted in the creation of a movement whose members from other countries were friendly to Greeks. This movement was called *Filelines*. Foreigners from various parts of the world arrived in Greece to assist, both militarily and economically, the Greek revolution for freedom. The presence of these people affected political developments. The shift of English policy in the Greek issue dragged other powerful states of the time (France, Russia) to end the domination of the Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean. As a result, in the naval battle of Navarino in 1827, the Turkish fleet met absolute defeat. In 1828, 15,000 French troops under general Maizon<sup>18</sup> landed in the Peloponnese to eliminate the remaining Ottoman forces. The Ottoman domination was weak both on sea and land until the end of 1828. The creation of the Greek State was now an accomplished fact for the Ottoman Empire.

### **The situation in Greece after the revolution of 1821**

The Greek State selected its leader before it was recognized and declared independent and while fighting still raged in the countryside. Considered the most appropriate for the position was the former Foreign Minister of Russia who had Greek origins, Ioannis Kapodistrias. He arrived in Nafplio on the 18th of January 1828. His reform project aimed to create an organized state from a zero basis and with few financial resources. This was difficult to achieve as the war was still raging and there was chaos everywhere. Another problem was that the notables and the old aristocracy of Greece stubbornly refused to accept the reforms.

The main changes made in the social level was the single central administration, the creation of schools, reorganizing the army, organizing care for orphans of war, creating a fair tax system, creating courts, etc. The island of Hydra, which had many powerful ship owners, and the area of Mani<sup>19</sup>, which had many powerful chieftains, reacted strongly against parts of these reforms but no one was willing to discuss the issues. The governor wanted to create a modern State but the old aristocracy did not want to lose their privileges.

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<sup>18</sup> Abel Blouet "Expedition Scientific de Moree" Paris 1831

<sup>19</sup> [www.ime.gr](http://www.ime.gr) (ίδρυμα Μείζονος ελλητισμού).

As a result, the strongest representatives from these areas, the Kountouriotis and Mavromichalis families, organized the murder of governor Kapodistrias in 1831. We must understand that the political interests and the military power of these families were great. Even now, both of these families are considered heroes of Greek revolution because they offered both military and financial help.

From this point, political developments began to expand. The great political powers of Europe (England, Russia, France), made decisions for Greece. They sent the young prince of Bavaria, Otto, to be the king of Greece. In 1833 Otto, age seventeen years, landed in Nafplio (capital of Greece). Because of his young age, a regency committee was formed to assist him with his government work. The early years of the reign of King Otto were the backbone of the social developments that would follow. Administratively, territorial and provincial elders were abolished and were replaced by mayors, prefects for better local government. The Bavarians tried to create a modern power distribution plan. Local governments were too difficult to be controlled at that time, so they had to become involved with local communities. Do not forget that many people were feeling indignant: the Ottomans left, but then the Bavarians came. The Greek family should be included in this management model to find peace. In the education system, schools were established in all municipalities of the country (three-tier). In the army, the irregular troops were disbanded and, according to the European prototype of the time, a core of Bavarian officers and troops, line infantry and light infantry, was created. Of course the traditional war costumes remained in use.

Although changes in the various sectors of the state were good (such as the construction of public works and the removal of danger of a potential civil war), local uprisings broke out. People wanted civil and social rights, tax relief and removal of the Bavarians who were seen as foreigners who managed their country. Such uprisings broke out in Mani and Messenia (1834), in Akarnania, in Athens (1843), in Nafplio, Syros, Kythnos (1862). The most important event took place in 1843 in Athens where the people surrounded the palace demanding a Democratic Constitution<sup>20</sup>.

Despite local uprisings and administrative problems, the population of Greece, especially in

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<sup>20</sup>Ε Ιστορικά «Η επανάσταση της 3<sup>ης</sup> Σεπτεμβρίου 1843» εφημερίδα Ελευθεροτυπία Αθήνα 2000

cities, had a new sense of freedom and safety because of the absence of Ottomans and the presence of their own authorities (police, judiciary, educational). This brought many changes to many sectors of citizens' lives. A typical example is the city of Sparta. The absence of danger, combined with the romantic feelings of the Filhelines for the ancient Greek world, led to the establishment of modern Sparta. In 1834 the Bavarian geometer Fr. Stauffert<sup>21</sup> planned and created the city of Sparta as we know it today. His study was remarkable because it is in use even today. With the creation of Sparta, people who had lived in the suburbs of Mistra during the Ottoman period, now transferred to a brand new city in the valley, making it capital of the prefecture.

The absence of Ottoman rule also resulted in another important development: the new habitation of areas which had been possessed by Turks because of their agricultural value. Typical examples are the villages of Koumousta and Xirokampi<sup>22</sup>. As was said previously, Koumousta was a big mountainous village during the Ottoman period. Xirokampi, located on the plains of Sparta (near Koumousta) was such a small settlement that even in the first census of the Greek state in 1828, it was not referenced. But after the liberation of Greece, things changed. The population of Koumousta was decreasing year after year, while in Xirokampi it was increasing. In 1845 Xirokampi became the capital of the municipality of Faridos. In 1889 Xirokampi had 895 residents while Koumousta had only 145. Someone could say that Koumousta is the motherland of the village Xirokampi, which grew because it was in flat, agricultural lands.

After the Ottomans departed and the Bavarians arrived, stability was restored slowly upon the Greek seas. The strict laws against piracy that Kapodistrias initiated brought feelings of safety within the citizens. People left high mountain villages and came down to take advantage of opportunities near the seashore. This resulted in the growth of trade, shipping and business. Local economies developed financially as the population increased. Typical examples are the cities of Neapolis and Gythio in Lakonia. Neapolis was originally called

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<sup>21</sup> [Spartaarchitecture.blogspot.gr](http://Spartaarchitecture.blogspot.gr) [www.cs.teikal.gr](http://www.cs.teikal.gr)

<sup>22</sup> Θ. Κατσουλάκου – Π. Χ Στούμπου «Η Κουμουστά της Λακεδαίμονας» πολιτιστικός σύλλογος Ξηροκαμπίου Σπάρτη 2012

Pezoula because there was not an organized settlement but a collection of rural areas of several levels. Initially the area belonged to a family from Mani, but the Minogiannis family bought it. From this family and others who came to live in the same area, Neapolis was created. Even the name Neapolis means new town. Gythio, on the other hand, was named Marathonisi. It was a small port during the Ottoman period that was operated mainly by the Grigorakis<sup>23</sup> clan with its family branches (Tzannetakis, Tzortzakis, etc.). After 1830, this family and its allies took advantage of this position, and as a result, Gythio became capital of East Mani. The main bulk of the population moved from Inner Mani which is poor and barren, to the port of Gythio which is a more fertile and accessible area.

I would be remiss to not mention the movement made in Greece (1830-1860) to provide fighters of the revolution with compensation, generally made from disposal of the national estate. Many fighters lost all their money, fortune and estate. They could not live without help. So the government decided to integrate some of the fighters into the army as officers, and to give others national estates which had previously belonged to the Ottomans. With these measures came a great dispersion of families. For example, we have Cretan families in Nafplio, Maniotes in Messenia and East Laconia, Souliotes in Messenia and people from Chios in Laconia.

Another problem faced by the Greek state in the early years of government was the assimilation and integration of the Muslim populations scattered throughout Greece. After the liberation, some of them asked to be baptized Christians in order to ensure their fortunes and not be bothered by the new government. These new believers were called *Neofotisti*. It means “the new member in the light.” Today we can find this characterization and surname all over Greece. In most cases people who have it are descendants of these people<sup>24</sup>. We must not forget that back then, religion was the basic characteristic of an ethnic group even though people did not have the same national origins.

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<sup>23</sup>Γ. Σαΐτα «ελληνική παραδοσιακή Αρχιτεκτονική, Μάνη» Πελοπόννησος Β – Στερεά Ελλάδα εκδόσεις Μέλισσα, 2004,σ. 83

<sup>24</sup>Σ. Καπετανάκη «Αριστεία του 1821 σε Μανιάτες Αγωνιστές» εκδόσεις αδούλωτη Μάνη , Μάνη 2008, maniatika.wordpress.com

After the end of the Ottoman period, efforts began to integrate the remaining enslaved areas in the Greek state. A typical example is the integration of Thessaly into Greece. After a long political dispute in the salons of Europe combined with Turkey's defeat in the Russo-Turkish War of 1878, Thessaly became a Greek state in 1881<sup>25</sup>. This annexation had significant social and economic results. First of all, the Thessaly plain, even today, is one of the most productive agricultural parts of Greece and can financially support a large population. This annexation brought a large increase in the country's productivity but also had an impact on the social fabric of Greece. A large Greek population was added to a Greek state. These people became a special ethnic group called Vlachs<sup>26</sup>, peaceful farmers with a semi-nomadic lifestyle.

The problems of this small state in the Balkans appeared quickly. The country's high debt to cover major conversion costs combined with the poor management of state finances led to bankruptcy in 1893<sup>27</sup>, which put Greece under international financial control. Additionally, the defeat of the Greek army in the war with the Turks in 1897 threw the country into a very difficult economic and social position. The final blow was the raisin crisis of 1895<sup>28</sup>. The export of Corinthian currants was one of the largest incomes of Peloponnesians (*Gofas family*). England imported huge amounts of currants for making plum-puddings and plum-cakes. However, after the grape crops contracted diseases in 1852 and 1854, the consumer habits of British people changed and the exports to England were reduced dramatically. As a result, family income in Peloponnesians was reduced in a tragic way.

This is when the hopes of young people turned to the West, which was seen as a path of

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<sup>25</sup> Σ. Μαρκεζίνη «Πολιτική Ιστορία της Νεότερης Ελλάδος» Αθήνα 1968

<sup>26</sup> Ανθεμίδης Αχιλλέας «Οι Βάβχοι της Ελλάδας» εκδόσεις Μαλλιάρης, Θεσσαλονίκη 1998

<sup>27</sup> Μ. Ψαλλιδόπουλου «Από την πτώχευση του 1893 στο Γουδί», εφημερίδα ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ 2/07/2011

<sup>28</sup> Βασίλη Πατρώνη «Το αγροτικό Ζήτημα στην Ελλάδα», εφημερίδα ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ 24/01/2010

growth and prosperity. In the early 1900's, many young people, sometimes with their families, began to emigrate to the U.S.A, Australia, and Canada. Laconia was an overpopulated prefecture. The path for a life with better conditions was open. So many people left their homes to find a better quality of life, sometimes even illegally.

As we can see, the echo of the Greek Revolution of 1821 was extensive and complicated. Movements, disasters, and changes were created, depending on the prevailing conditions. Each family acted differently, according to its geographic location and economic power. So despite the overall picture, we must be careful. We must study every case separately because each family has followed its own path in history. Only then we will touch the truth.

***THANK YOU VERY MUCH***



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