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Greek immigrant in the United States since 1910

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THE GREEK IMMIGRANT
IN THE
UNITED STATES SINCE 1910

by

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requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts.

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I

INTRODUCTION

The Greeks in the United States have always been a minority group, constituting a very small fraction of the population of the country. They are of interest, however, because they came to this country in large numbers at a time when the United States was in the process of expansion and rapidly becoming a great world power. Railroads, factories, water systems, roads, tunnels and bridges were being built, and the resources of the land were rapidly being tapped. The Greek immigrant has contributed his full share to the building of America. Nevertheless, he has been overlooked and is not given the credit which he deserves. Instead, he has been branded as criminal, liar, "the scum of the earth," as he was often called.¹ He has been looked upon as a human being unable to adjust himself in his new environment in America. Fear was expressed in America at one time that the Greek contributions to this country would be only cruelty, ignorance and crime. American anthropologists have gone so far as to say that the intelligence of the Greeks, along with the other southeastern European immigrants, was so dangerously low that it impeded progress in the United States, and that the American Republic was losing prestige among the nations of the world.

¹ Francis E. Clark, Old Homes of New Americans, p. xxii.

The Greek immigrant's side of the story has not been presented. It must be admitted that the Greeks who came to this country in the earlier periods of the heavy Greek immigration were not educated people, but formal education may not necessarily reflect degree of intelligence. Because they lacked education they found themselves in a very difficult position when it came to adapting themselves in a new land. The Greek immigrant was exploited and cheated by ruthless American capitalists as well as by his own people who had acquired an advantageous position in the new world.

The author of this paper is himself an immigrant from Greece. He did not come to America, however, under the same conditions that affected most of his predecessors. He did not have to struggle in order to exist as did his father and others of his nationality. He does not pretend to speak from personal experience, but he has had the opportunity to observe and interview many of the older immigrants. The never-ending stories of hardships and exploitation suffered by the Greek immigrants and told by the author's father are firmly fixed in his memory.

In the following pages an attempt will be made to point out that the early immigrant from Greece, regardless of his ignorance, his lack of education, his inability to understand the language of his new country, has made contributions to American development. He has died to preserve the American

way of life. He has intermingled with other nationalities in the American "melting pot," and has taken part in the growth of American democracy. He has made himself important in this, the land of opportunity.

A considerable amount of work has been done with Greek immigration to the United States prior to 1910. This study will begin with 1910, a period of notable activity in the political life of Greece. From time to time, however, it will be necessary to refer to earlier periods of immigration.

II

REASONS FOR GREEK IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

The United States Census Report for 1910 shows that there were 101,285 Greeks in the United States in that year. By 1920 the number of Greeks in this country had increased by 126,770 to a total of 228,055. The decade following 1910 was a period of stepped-up immigration. In subsequent decades the rate of immigration decreased progressively. Between 1920 and 1930 only 75,696 persons were added. By 1940 the number of Greeks in America had grown to 326,672, showing an increase of 22,921 for the preceding decade. The last census in 1940 indicates that the male population of Greeks in the United States outnumbered the female by 76,616, while that of 1910 shows the men to number 93,447 and the women 7,835. Sixty-eight per cent of Greeks in the United States in 1940 were males, while ninety-three per cent had been males in 1910. The increase of population may not be attributed entirely to direct immigration, as a large percentage of the Greeks in America, and particularly in the later years, are native-born of Greek parentage. At the beginning, the birth-rate was low. In 1910 there were only 8,401 children of Greek immigrants in America, but in the succeeding decades a noticeable increase appeared, until

finally in 1940 the native-born Greeks were greater in number than those of foreign birth.²

Greeks came to the United States from a number of places outside Greece. Prior to 1920, and particularly before the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, large numbers emigrated from the islands of the Aegean and from Crete, Thrace, Macedonia and Asia Minor, all of which were ruled by the Ottoman Empire. The main gate of exodus was through Greece proper. Emigrants from all parts of the Turkish Empire found their way to Greek ports and thence to America. In 1910 12,652 persons came from those regions; in 1911, 9,878; in 1912, 9381; and in 1913, 14,566.

While immigration continued to increase, emigration to Greece from the United States is also noticeable in the decade following 1910. In 1913 an all-time high was reached. In that year 30,603 Greeks left the United States for their homeland. A total of more than 135,000 immigrants returned to Greece between 1910 and 1920.

The roots of large-scale emigration from Greece are traceable in part to the economic difficulties of that country in 1891. According to Mr. Burgess, a student of the Greek

² The following figures are taken from the United States Census Reports for 1910, 1920, 1930 and 1940, showing the number of Greeks in the United States in those years:

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of foreign born</u>	<u>No. of native-born</u>
1910	92,884	8,401
1920	175,972	52,083
1930	174,526	129,225
1940	163,252	163,420

problem of emigration, that was a year of depression,

brought about in part from the lack of diversified industry and from the ever-shifting changes in the government, and brought to a crisis at the time by the failure of the all-important currant industry. With hard times at home, the Greek came because he could get more money in America; and when once started he kept coming.³

This industrial stagnation was not due to lack of capital, however, for large sums of money were deposited in the banks in Athens at the time. It was, partially at least, due to the lack of confidence of the Greek investors in their national government.⁴ They were unwilling to invest their capital in a nation whose government promised nothing but instability and uncertainty. Hoping to find greater opportunity in America, the Greeks began to leave their homeland in large numbers. Up to that time the number of Greeks in the United States was negligible. Only 1,887 of them were noted in the 1890 census.

No matter how desperate the economic condition of a nation may be, its people do not emigrate in large numbers unless they hope to find great improvement elsewhere. Unless the far-away land promises a high level of industrial production, higher wages and better living conditions, the potential emigre is unwilling to take a chance. This is true not only of Greece, but of every country in the world

³ Thomas Burgess, Greeks in America, p. 17.

⁴ Percy E. Martin, Greece of the Twentieth Century, p. 120 and Chap. X.

whose emigrants seek to improve their lot. According to Frank Warne:

The statistics of emigration from Germany show the largest number of departures to the United States in those years when there was the greatest and most active industrial and commercial activity in this country--when factories, work-shops, and remunerative prices brought comforts and luxuries to the American farmer.⁵

And so America afforded a relief to the hard-pressed Greek peasants. They began to emigrate by the thousands. The situation was viewed with alarm by Percy Martin, an authority on Greek problems.

In some countries such as England, the growth of population makes it impossible for all native-born men to find a means of livelihood at home and surplus members of society must seek employment abroad; but while Greece is undoubtedly a vigorous state, she is urgently in need of every single able-bodied man who can be pressed into the service of her agricultural and mineral production. . . . Some districts are almost bare of labour, and wages are higher today as a consequence than they have been in the history of the country. . . . It is more difficult to appreciate the desire to leave other parts of Greece where abundant reward awaits the agriculturist, and where the conditions of living should be infinitely more agreeable to the native-born Hellene than the stuffy and overcrowded purlieus of most North-American cities.⁶

By 1910, however, a great national improvement began to take shape in Greece. The election of that year was won by the Liberal Party whose leader was an outstanding, shrewd, far-sighted individual, Elevation Venizelos, a Cretan politician who had been a revolutionary all his life. He

⁵ Frank Julian Warne, The Tide of Immigration, p. 30.

⁶ Martin, pp. 161-62.

knew what the country needed and he set himself the task of improving the internal conditions of that country. He was a man of action.

Although he was as ready to talk at length (which means hours) as any other Greek, he skillfully avoided the long parliamentary and popular discussions which had been the bane of Greek politics, by asserting that the people were tired of listening to words and called for acts.⁷

Upon his ascension to power a complete reorganization of the country was undertaken. Two hundred municipal schools were opened. The University of Athens was enlarged and professors from abroad were invited to Greece to enlighten the Greek students in new and better engineering and agricultural methods. The educational system in the primary and secondary schools was changed to encourage the "pure" Greek language. More emphasis was placed on the classics which up to that time had been neglected. The students were taught that they were descendants of the ancient Greeks, and pride was instilled in them. The corrupt court system which prevailed at that time was reorganized. The Ministry of the Interior was overhauled and a better and effective police system was instituted. Bandits who for several years had terrorized the populace were arrested and brought to justice. A Ministry of Public Works was established to direct internal improvements. The Premier himself inspected and took part in the building of roads, bridges, schools and the like. His

⁷ Herbert A. Gibbons, Venizelos, p. 161.

sudden appearance in public works in itself had a stimulating effect upon the Greeks. Money was allotted for draining large areas of swamp land to increase the national grain yield and to create work for a large number of people. The telegraphic lines and postal services were extended to cover remote areas in the mountains where peasants had lived for centuries in practical isolation. The merchant marine industry was encouraged to build more and better ships to compete with those of other maritime nations and so to help correct the unfavorable balance of trade. For that purpose a training school for merchant marine officers was created in Piraeus. "From 1910 to 1915 Greek foreign commerce increased from 300,000,000 drachmai to 500,000,000 drachmai."⁸ A National Labor Relations Board was established to help the settlement of grievances between workers and employers. New laws for regulating sanitary conditions were put into effect and strictly enforced. An article in the constitution of 1911 provided for the expropriation of lands to institute all farmers and peasants as proprietors in fee simple.⁹ Specialists from France were brought into the country in 1910 to promote fruit cultivation and to direct the drainage of swamps. Experts from other European nations were hired to show the Greek peasants how to combat diseases of fruit trees and how to preserve wines. A scientific cultivation

⁸ Martin, p. 176.

⁹ Ibid., p. 178.

of the land was undertaken. The "life-saving" product of Greece, the olive, was improved in quality, and olive-growers were subsidized by the state. Egyptian and American cotton were experimentally introduced into Greece, and the former particularly proved to be of superior quality. One student goes so far as to claim that:

If Greece were planted from one side to the other with cotton, there would not be one cantar remaining at the end of the season, for every bale would be bought for twice the price which is paid for the North American cotton.¹⁰

Tobacco, another important Greek product, was improved in quality and its production expanded from 5,471 okas in 1900 to 7,369,750 okas in 1911. German firms sent their agents into Greece to buy her choice tobacco on the spot.¹¹ Under Venizelos' own direction potato-growing became important, and the crop grew from 16,000,000 tons in 1910 to 48,000,000 in 1919.¹² The olive crop in 1912 was expected to be one of the largest in the history of the nation.

Greece was able to reduce the public debt held by foreigners and so to reduce the payment of interest. Imports from other countries declined in relation to exports. The mercantile fleet was bringing in gold receipts. Furthermore, internal conditions improved so that Greece was in a position

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 262.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 266.

¹² Gibbons, p. 179.

to fight and to win in the Balkan Wars which brought her new subjects, and consequently more revenue to the treasury. The average Greek family in 1910 was nearly self-sufficient and relatively prosperous.

Each of the small towns of villages which form a characteristic feature of the Greek social organization is almost entirely independent. The majority of the families raise their own living materials; thread is spun and cloth woven by hand and at home; baking is done in the stone or mud oven which stands in every typical dooryard; shoes, cooking utensils and various implements and tools are made in small shops in the villages.¹³

In spite of the internal improvements in Greece, when the Greeks started to emigrate to America they kept coming. "A few Joshuas and Calebs travel to this new Canaan and then write back telling of the milk and honey they find here, or else they go back with the grapes of American gold, and after that the trails need no blazing."¹⁴ The Greeks who had arrived in America prior to 1910 wrote letters to their relatives and friends back home. They portrayed success in anything they had undertaken in the land to which they had migrated. They encouraged their relatives and friends to come to America where everything was plentiful. Wages were very high for the common laborer in comparison to the wage earned in Greece. Food was plentiful. Jobs were promised to all who would come. Money from America began to flow into

¹³ Henry P. Fairchild, Greek Immigration to the United States, p. 62.

¹⁴ Frederic J. Haskin, The Immigrant, p. 36.

Greek towns and villages. By 1910 \$120,000,000 had been sent to Greece.¹⁵

Many families that were considered destitute before their sons had emigrated were able to build new homes, buy new stock, and in general to improve their economic and social standing considerably. Such families were able to marry their daughters with no difficulty into what they considered "good" families, the aristocrats of society, within the village. Large dowry had been provided for them by their brothers and relatives in America. Money was sent to build large and beautifully decorated churches. Schools, roads and the water systems were given large contributions for their improvement. The children of many families were now able to continue their education to high school. Up to this time only the well-to-do were able to send their children to any school beyond the fourth grade. Now expenses were set aside for many of them to go to school and become "big men." Haskin attempts to make this point more understandable to the American reader:

And if your brother were to go to South America and send enough money back to his parents in a single year to buy a home, and with it a letter saying that other members of the family could do just as well and that he had places for them all, wouldn't you want to go? Well, that's exactly what happens when the 'new' immigrant sends his money orders home. In many cases a proud father and mother, when they receive such letters, pass them from hand to hand and let all their neighbours see the great prosperity of

¹⁵ Carl Wittke, We Who Built America, p. 449.

their son, until the whole community knows of his success in America.¹⁶

The villagers looked with respect and admiration upon those families who had sons and relatives in America. They were quickly climbing up in the social scale. Persons who had nothing before the great emigration were now influential and were able to finance others. They were in a position to supply passage money for individuals who desired to leave their homes and come to the United States or to other parts of the world.

"The Greek press . . . kept playing up such stories as the enrichment of a formerly illiterate peasant, and fed its readers daily with the most fantastic exploits and successes of immigrants."¹⁷ Stories and pictures of wedding ceremonies of an ignorant peasant were glamorized. Biographical sketches of Greek immigrants in Chicago or New York were given wide publicity, the stress always being laid upon the amount of money the immigrant was worth and how much he had contributed toward the building of a church, a school, a reservoir or what not, in his native village. The opportunities were great in America!

From time to time many of the common laborers would return loaded with "gold" to their homes in Greece. Rings,

¹⁶ Haskin, p. 449.

¹⁷ Francis J. Brown and Joseph S. Roucek, Our Racial and National Minorities, p. 341.

watches, gold chains, and earrings for their sisters and their prospective brides were among their souvenirs from America. A returning emigrant would sit up entire nights telling stories of his exploits in America and of the opportunities which existed: for only a few pennies he could buy a "bucketfull" of milk or butter, and meat was practically given away. Stories of this sort were appealing, in particular to the young men who had believed that life in their native village, under the constant paternal control, was getting dull. Many were willing to take a chance in America.

Nor was the American capitalist idle during this period. He was in need of new, cheaper, vigorous labor. America was a new country, rapidly expanding economically. Opportunities for him were unlimited. Critics called attention to the unethical practices followed by some companies in recruiting immigrant labor.

Common laborers who have been in America are hired to go about among the peasants, flash money, clink glasses, and tell of the wonderful wages awaiting them. Little do the poor sheep suspect that their bell-wether is paid by the steamship agent for forming the group and by the employer to whom he delivers them.¹⁸

It is obvious that the activity of these agents may be of the most pernicious nature. The welfare of the immigrant or the benefit of either country concerned are of no concern to them. Their sole aim is to get business. So long as the immigrant has the wherewithal

¹⁸ Edward A. Ross, "The Old World in the New--Economic Consequences of Immigration," The Century Magazine, 87:28 (November, 1913).

to pay his passage, it matters not to them where he got it, nor are they deterred by any doubts as to the fitness of the immigrant for American life, or of the probability of his success there. In fact, it is claimed that the steamship companies prefer a class of immigrants which is likely, eventually, to return to the old country, as this creates a traffic going the other way. . . . Every possible means is used to make the peasant dissatisfied with his present lot, and to impress him with the glories and joys of life in America.¹⁹

One of these agents is said to have made as much as \$50,000 a year in the early days of the movement.²⁰

There was no limit to the variety of methods used to induce emigration to America. The influential villagers had been won over by the agents and their representatives. The mayor, the postman, and even the priest and teacher were exerting their efforts to stimulate emigration, to induce the poor, ignorant peasant to leave his home. Colorful pictures and all sorts of booklets, guides, pocket geographies and books of description of the United States were used as tools. "In much of this literature were alluring contrasts between the favorable prospect awaiting the new settler in the United States and the harsh conditions surrounding him in Europe: seldom was reference made to the experiences of unsuccessful immigrants."²¹

¹⁹ Fairchild, Immigration, p. 152.

²⁰ Edward A. Ross, The Old World in the New, p. 183.

²¹ Frank J. Warne, The Immigrant Invasion, p. 27.

The steamship companies had no scruples in propagandizing to increase the volume of immigration since they were able to reap very large profits from the immigrants. The peasants did not require luxuries. More of them could be carried. The immigrant was the cheapest kind of cargo to carry, for he loaded and unloaded himself and his baggage.²² To make things easier, or at least for the voyage of the Greek immigrant's comfort, two new steamship companies with Greek names came into existence. The environment for the "boys" from Greece was made much more pleasant. Greek food was served and the Greek language was spoken aboard ship. A leading student of immigration is convinced that such practices were responsible for doubling the number who came to America.

In fact, had it been left to the initiative of the emigrants, the flow of immigration to America could scarcely have reached one-half its actual dimensions. . . . Throughout our history these efforts have been inspired by one grand, effective motive--that of making profit upon the immigrants. The desire to get cheap labor, to take passenger fares, and to sell land have probably brought more immigrants than the hard conditions of Europe, Asia and Africa have sent.²³

According to H. P. Fairchild, the Greeks came to America primarily to make money and to return to Greece.²⁴ It is beyond question that a great number of Greeks did

²² Maurice R. Davie , World Immigration, p. 180.

²³ John R. Commons, Races and Immigrants in America, pp. 107-8.

²⁴ Fairchild, Greek Immigration to the United States, Chap. IV.

come to America to make money and to return to their country, their village, their wives and their families. It was not easy for those immigrants to leave their environment, to leave a life to which they were accustomed, and to seek new adventures in a strange land, a land of which they had no knowledge whatsoever. Uncertainty and hardships abroad awaited the new immigrants. "For each participant the removal to America involved choices, decisions, and actions that cut like a surgeon's knife athwart his habitual mode of life. It involved breaking with the ways of his ancestors and often times running counter to the advice of timorous friends."²⁵ "Migration tears a man away from the traditions, the routine, the props on which he has learned to rely, and throws him among strangers upon his own resources. He must swim or drown."²⁶

In Greece the young men of the family are held responsible for the family's welfare. One of the most disgraceful customs which has prevailed in Greece for hundreds of years, and which still persists, especially in rural areas, is the tradition of dowry. When a girl grows to marriageable age her parents search for a husband for her. When one is found who is suitable to the whole family, negotiations begin. First and foremost the question of the

²⁵ Marcus L. Hansen, The Immigration in American History, p. 30.

²⁶ Commons, p. 126.

dowry is brought up. In fact, the negotiations depend entirely upon the agreement on the dowry. Cases have been known where, even after the agreement has been reached and the date of the wedding set, a trivial matter regarding the dowry agreement has resulted in the breaking of the engagement; but this is unusual, since a legal contract is signed by both parents of the bridegroom as well as by the parents of the bride. The bride and bridegroom may not know each other until the day of the wedding. All the negotiations are carried on in secrecy between the two families. The bride is not always consulted, although the bridegroom is. This is not as bad as it may appear, however, since the girl and boy have been brought up in the same community ordinarily, have gone to the same school, and are neighbors and know each other well. The wedding is pompous and usually very expensive. The brother of the girl, if there is one in the family, is held responsible for seeing that a fair amount of money or a house and a number of acres of land are provided for his sister. Incidentally, the expenses for the wedding are borne by the girl's parents. In order to marry his daughter off, more often than not, the father is forced to borrow money at a very high interest rate, and to mortgage his entire property, as well. If there is no way of acquiring the amount of money desired or the acreage and other assets asked by the "negotiator," the girl will, in all probability,

remain single. To make matters worse, many families will have several girls. Furthermore, the girls will have drained the family income over the years by accumulating a hope-chest. This is begun at an early age and continues until marriage. In those families where the parents cannot provide the daughter's dowry, the young man of the family must bear the responsibility. To many of these young Greeks, emigration to America seemed to offer the solution to the problem, for wages there were much higher than in Greece.

Many other immigrants saw an opportunity in the New World to make money, to save it by temporarily enduring hardships and maintaining themselves on a minimum standard of living as they had in their own country, and to return to their home village to start a little business of some kind, or to buy a few acres of land and a few sheep, goats, cattle and the like--only enough to maintain their families and to live a fairly leisurely life.

It is not hard for one familiar with the history of modern Greece to understand why thousands of immigrants came to the United States from the Turkish-dominated provinces. The Greeks were Orthodox Christians, while the official Turkish religion was Mohammedan and, to a large extent, anti-Christian. The Turks would frequently invade the Christian churches while service was going on, and abuse the worshippers. This sort of interference was an insult to the Grecian pride and caused deep resentment against the Turks. From the

establishment of Greek independence in 1830, the Greek government encouraged propaganda and agitation for the liberation of the Greeks still remaining under Turkish rule. The Greek government secretly organized societies to encourage the population to defy Turkish authorities. Along with that went the strong feeling of nationalism and the desire of the inhabitants of Turk-ruled provinces to be united with the liberated Hellas. Attempts of the Ottoman government to induct Greeks into the national army for military service were met with antipathy and defiance by the challenging Greeks. The Hellenes felt superior to the "barbarians" and therefore refused to bear arms and to pay taxes to the Porte. In retaliation the Turks took drastic measures to suppress the spirit of the Greeks, measures so brutal as to provoke local disturbances and even revolutions. Many Greeks, in order to be relieved of Turkish abuse and burdensome service, left their native towns and villages and came to America.

These immigrants were not motivated primarily by the desire to accumulate a fortune and then return to their homeland. With them, political and religious persecution were dominant causes of migration; freedom and security, their goal.²⁷

When Dr. Fairchild insisted that "Greece is a very democratic country politically; . . . as far as any real persecution (religious), there is none,"²⁸ he was referring

²⁷ Brown and Roucek, p. 342.

²⁸ Fairchild, Greek Immigration to the United States, p. 20.

to Greece proper before the Balkan Wars. But independent Greece governed a population of only slightly over two million of the six million Greeks. The Cretans' desire to be united with the Hellenic Kingdom and Turkish failure to establish and maintain a good government and to fulfill its promises to the islanders, drove many of the nationalistic-minded Cretans away from their home island. A large number of them came to the United States to find new homes, new freedom, new life. And the same was true of Macedonians, Thracians and Aegean islanders.

While large numbers of Greeks were induced to migrate by economic pressure at home, by persuasion of the agencies set up to instigate their emigration to America, or by religious and political oppression under Turkish rule, other thousands of young Hellenes came to seek adventure in the new land. They were willing to take their chances in unknown lands, regardless of the promises and warnings. There was no need to induce them to leave their country. They were ready. There is a great deal of truth in the saying that the Greeks have inherited their "wandering" characteristic from their ancestors. Many authorities agree that "the Greek is still a wanderer, adventurous, devoted to a seafaring life."²⁹ "The vast proportions to which emigration from Greece has attained may, to a great

²⁹ Ibid., p. 20.

extent, be attributed to the Greeks' adventurous character, a quality which they, no doubt, inherited from Ulysses. Their roving spirit induces them to journey to far distant lands in search of El Dorado."³⁰ Indeed, the Greeks have gone to many other lands, as well as to the United States.³¹ Although not in such large numbers as those that came to the United States, the Greeks went to Arabia, Argentina, Canada, and elsewhere in considerable numbers.

There were many people in Greece who did not get excited by the feverish movement of emigration to America. Emigration of others made business so prosperous for many by reducing competition that there was no need to go elsewhere to make money. And the storekeepers in large cities such as Patras and Tripolis thrived upon the poor villagers coming to America. They saw that the persons departing had only enough money left for their tickets and no more. Suits, hats, shoes and other articles of apparel were sold to them. The peasants were told that America was a very cold country and that they must have many clothes for themselves. There were others who may have had a burning desire to sail, but whose parents needed them at home to plow the fields and harvest the crops. To disobey the will of the parents was unthinkable. Furthermore, the young men in Greece had to

³⁰ Martin, p. 164.

³¹ Walter F. Wilcox, International Migrations, I, pp.551,953.

serve for at least two years in the national army upon reaching their twentieth birthday. No able-bodied man could be excused from that obligation. It was necessary for those Hellenes to wait until that service was completed before emigrating.

The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 reduced the number of Greeks who came to America, for many of them had to serve in the army. The outcome of the wars was favorable to Greece, as large areas in Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace were ceded to her by Turkey. Thereafter the Greek government did not hesitate to use all in its power to hold its citizens at home. This was a great opportunity for the Premier of Greece to use his patriotic program to halt emigration from the country. There was plenty of land in Greece now for everybody. The country needed all of its citizens to build up the nation. Greece, because of the uncertainty of the international situation, was forced to maintain its army in readiness in these years. The First World War followed soon after the Second Balkan War, and again there was need for men to serve in the army. Lack of shipping space also prevented large-scale emigration to the United States. The Graeco-Turkish War, the last major war between those two nations, broke out shortly after the end of the First World War. This conflict was disastrous for Greece. Refugees poured into the country from Asia Minor by the hundreds of thousands.

Greek immigration into the United States would probably have reached its highest peak after the Greco-Turkish War if American immigration policy had remained unchanged. But the American people had anticipated the large immigration after the wars in Europe and decided that some sort of a restriction be placed upon those entering the country. The Congress of the United States toyed with the idea for some time, and finally a law restricting immigration was passed over a presidential veto. Under the Immigration Act of 1917 a large number of foreigners were excluded from entering the United States. Idiots, imbeciles, feeble-minded persons, epileptics, insane persons, persons of constitutional psychopathic inferiority, persons afflicted with tuberculosis; persons with physical or mental defects, chronic alcoholics, paupers, beggars, vagrants, convicted criminals, polygamists, anarchists, prostitutes, contract laborers, persons who could not read in any language, and many, many other individuals were not permitted to enter the United States. The Emergency Quota Legislation of 1921, provided for a quota system based upon the United States census of 1910. Under this law Greece was allowed to send 3,294 persons a year. Under the Immigration Act of 1924, based on the census of 1890 instead of that of 1910, only 100 Greeks could come into the United States annually. The National Origins Act later, based upon the

percentage of Greeks in proportion to the total population of the United States in 1920, fixed the number of Hellenes allowed to enter this country annually at 307.³²

More than ninety per cent of the male immigrants who came to America from Greece were between the ages of fourteen and forty-four. Unfortunately statistics do not show the exact ages of individuals entering the country, but it is generally assumed that the average age of those immigrants was between twenty-two and twenty-four. Assuming that the majority of the immigrants in that group were between the ages of eighteen and thirty, it may be surmised that a very small fraction of those were married, due to the fact that tradition in Greece does not allow marriages of young men at an early age unless it is made economically profitable, and in that case there should be little reason for emigration. Ordinarily, a young man will not marry until he has completed his military service in the national army. When he returns to his native village he will have become twenty-two or twenty-three years old. But he is not yet released from responsibility. He must work to gather enough money for the dowries of his sisters. He is fortunate if he has a brother in America who has prospered and has generously contributed to the cause. If he has no sisters, he still must see that

³² Sidney Kansas, United States Immigration Exclusion and Deportation and Citizenship of the United States of America, p. 53.

his parents are well secured financially. Only then is he free to marry, that is when the "right girl" comes along-- when his parents have found one to their liking, one whose dowry is sufficient to meet their needs. If he is the only son in the family, his chances of marrying a girl with a large dowry are very good. And if so, he does not need to emigrate, no matter how beautiful the picture of the far-away land may be painted.

Immigration of women from Greece has increased considerably in recent years. It was uncommon, however, to see large numbers of Greek women arriving in the United States during the period of heavy Greek immigration. The lack of female emigration from Greece may be attributed to the fact that Greek women are devoted to home life and are under strict paternal control until marriage. After marriage they must dedicate themselves to the raising of their children and to maintaining the home of the husband's parents. An old tradition which has been passed down to modern Greece through the centuries prohibits the girls from wandering away from home unless accompanied by parents or brothers. They are only permitted to carry on the daily routine of home work which includes working in the fields, tending stock and the like. There are today thousands of girls and women in Greece who have not gone outside their native village.

The Greek government by a Royal Decree in 1920 interfered directly to prevent emigration of women. Under this decree

The emigration of women and minors of the female sex over 16 years of age is not allowed unless accompanied by a husband, father or mother, elder brother, uncle, son-in-law, brother-in-law, or other near relation; or unless they are invited by such persons or by their prospective husbands living in the country where they wish to go, who will expressly guarantee their protection by declaration made either before the local authorities and legalized by the Greek Consul, or directly before the Greek Consular authorities.³³

As the Greeks established themselves in America they began to bring their families to the United States. Others returned to their native villages to marry and bring their wives to this country.

³³ Grace Abbott, The Immigrant and the Community, p. 62.

III

REASONS FOR RETURNING TO GREECE

Internal developments in Greece, the economic betterment of that nation, its wars with its neighbors, and the patriotic appeal by Premier Venizelos, himself, without doubt had their effects upon the Greeks in the United States. Many of them decided to return to their homeland.

During the Balkan Wars, the Greek government called on its citizens to return to their home country to fight against their age-old enemies, first the Turks and later the Bulgarians. Why did so many Greeks answer the call? The call for many of them meant family which they had left in Greece, the welfare and protection of that family. Others were moved by the appeal of patriotism, and the hope for a greater Hellas. The dream of a "greater Hellas" was a deep-seated idea among the Greeks, a dream which came down to them from their ancestors. In part it was the realization that the Hellenic Kingdom could not survive without the lands and populations of the Turkish-dominated Greeks. Greece would not be free and independent, many believed, until its capital was Constantinople. They believed that the time which had been so religiously prophesied for many centuries was now at hand. Thousands upon thousands of Greeks left the United States to return to Greece to fight for that idea, a greater Greece. These Hellenes owed it to their government, their

country of birth, to return to help when that nation needed them. But they had no intention of remaining there. "There is no escape, and they must serve out the required time . . . but all, without exception, mean to return to American as soon as they are free."¹ Some of the immigrants returned to take charge of the family chores while the father or brothers were fighting in the Balkan Wars. Still others went back for the mere sport of the opportunity to fight. According to one authority:

War was always among the Greeks themselves essentially a sort of sport. It was what is called a rough game, and involved some element of personal danger, but after all, only enough to make it interesting. . . . The average man among the modern Greeks is a veritable child in his fondness of sport, for adventure, for everything which involves hazard and chance.²

At the conclusion of the wars Greece won a large part of the Turkish Empire populated by Greeks. The new land acquired by the Hellenes was larger than the entire former kingdom. There was a need for development of the northern provinces. "The land acquired by the kingdom is almost all fertile, accessible, and inhabited by a well-developed and well-disposed peasantry. . . . In Salonika and Kavalla, with their fertile valleys, the Greeks have gained two most important ports. . . . Greek Macedonia and the Greek littoral is highly fertile; the arables of Kavalla . . .

¹ F. R. Wells, Letter to the Editor, The Nation, 99:102 (July 23, 1914).

² Benjamin Wheeler, "The Modern Greek is a Fighting Man," The North American Review, 164:611 (1897).

are the most profitable regions."³ In addition to these regions, Crete and several islands in the Aegean came under the control of the Hellenic Kingdom.

The large number of Greeks leaving the United States during the Balkan Wars caused an alarm in America and some writers took the opportunity to discredit the Greek population in the country:

Our Greek immigration . . . is largely of a temporary character, those coming here still retaining allegiance to their mother country, as is witnessed by the fact that during the Balkan Wars in 1912-13 as many as forty-five thousand returned to Greece to serve in the Greek army.⁴

And yet those men should not be condemned because they returned to their country to fight to protect their parents and relatives. It is well to keep in mind that almost ninety-six per cent of the Greek immigrants were between the ages of sixteen and forty-four, in the prime of their youth. An interview by K. C. M. Sills with some of the Greeks who had gone to fight for the honor of their native land, or to protect their relatives, shows their intentions of returning to the United States upon the conclusion of the war. Those who were questioned spoke highly and were indeed proud of their adopted country. "Almost to a man they looked forward to returning here after the war; indeed,

³ Martin, pp. 303-5; Lord Courtney of Penwith, Nationalism and War in the Balkans, pp. 303-4.
⁴ Warne, The Tide of Immigration, p. 67.

many had left their younger brothers in charge of shops and business during their absence.⁵

The Greek government did everything in its power to persuade its people to return to their homeland. An opportunity for which many had waited was now at hand. A larger, more powerful Greece worthy of her ancestors was in the making. A special agency was set up in Athens to assist the returned emigrants, and to encourage others to come back. A decree was proclaimed:

Every agent must give free of charge to the Ministry of the Interior twenty third-class tickets and sixty half-tickets every year from New York City to Greece which will be used for those Greeks who wish to return to Greece.⁶

Those who did not manage to get there during the wars were anxious to renew relationships with their relatives and friends, and upon the conclusion of the First World War many of them returned. It must be admitted, also, that many Greeks did not find conditions in the United States as pleasant as they had anticipated. They became discouraged and decided to return to their native land.

The great majority of these emigrants soon became disenchanted, and many of them returned embittered in spirit, impoverished in pocket, and ruined in constitution, having been obliged to live in New York, Chicago, and other seething cities under conditions more comfortless and less sanitary than

⁵ Kenneth C. M. Sills, "Letter to the Editor," The Nation: 97:309 (October, 1913).

⁶ Frances Kellor, Immigration and the Future, p. 73.

in their own country, where at least the atmosphere which they breathe is pure, the climate is congenial, and there is plenty of room to move about. . . . Those who manage to reach Greece after their bitter experiences are eaten up by consumption, and frequently communicate the disease to their children and relations.⁷

M. E. Ravage, an immigrant from Roumania, expresses his inability to tear himself away and forget his native land. His words undoubtedly apply to the Greek immigrants in the United States:

I immigrated, but I left my heart behind. The farther I travelled from my own country, the dearer it became to me. I had broken with the traditions of my people, but I could not dissolve the bonds that held me to them. They had become stronger, and I found myself loving my country as I had never loved it before. How could I help it? Love is not a reasoning thing. I had been born there. I had spent my childhood on its hillsides and by the banks of its rivers. The sharers of my boyhood exploits even now tilled its ancient soil. My ancestors lay buried there. A vast storehouse of memories and associations clutched me to them.⁸

Another author, Mary Antin, gives a dreary picture of the European immigrants who returned to their homeland:

Some go back to recover from ruin encountered at the hands of the American land-swindlers. Some go back to be buried beside their fathers, having lost their health in unsanitary American factories. And some are helped aboard on crutches, having lost a limb in a mine explosion that could have been prevented. When we watch the procession of cripples hobbling back to their native villages, it looks more as if America is exploiting Europe.⁹

⁷ Martin, p. 162.

⁸ E. Ravage, "The Loyalty of the Foreign Born," The Century Magazine, 94:204 (October, 1914).

⁹ Mary Antin, They Who Knock at Our Doors, p. 94.

IV

THE STRUGGLE OF THE GREEK IMMIGRANT; HIS ULTIMATE TRIUMPH

According to the Census Report of 1910, the Greek population in the United States was dispersed through the nation. Massachusetts led the list of states with 11,413 Greeks, followed by New York with 10,097, Illinois with 10,031 and California with 7,920. Other states with comparatively large numbers of Greeks were Pennsylvania, 4221; Washington, 4,187; Utah, 4,059; Oregon, 3,555; Nebraska, 3,459; Iowa, 3,356; Missouri, 2790; and Ohio, 2,555. The states with the least numbers were Arkansas with 179, North Carolina with 174, Mississippi with 117, Vermont with 113, Arizona with 77, and Delaware with only 34. The Census Report of 1940 does not show any significant changes or shifts of Greek population, except that the increase in that population is noticeable particularly in the states with large numbers of Greeks.

Upon arrival in the United States the Greek immigrant had his destination picked by someone else. In many cases the money for his trip had been advanced by a friend or relative in America, but most often by a representative or agent of a large railroad company or factory. The agent or his representative received the immigrant upon his disembarking, and immediately shipped him into a central office from where he was sent to the area where work on the rail-

road section or in other places was awaiting him. For his service the agent, ordinarily one of his own nationality, received a certain amount each week before the worker was paid his weekly wages. The money was deducted for the "services of the boss." The deduction ranged from two to five dollars per week and it was to last as long as the immigrant remained with the same boss. The railroad companies cooperated fully with the agent in withholding the worker's wages until the charge by the "boss" was taken out. According to William P. Shriver, who has done considerable work on the subject, "Every charge made by . . . [the agent] is deducted by the railroad employer before the wages are paid, upon the sole statement of the [agent]".¹

The railroad company provided living quarters for the large number of Greeks who went to work on the section. The "box-cars," familiar in the United States today, were used by the Greek immigrants for living quarters, but were not as sanitary as they now are. The company moved them from place to place as the work was completed, in much the same way as is still done. Much freedom of choice was left to the workers, insofar as desiring to make a move to another area was concerned. As long as the immigrant was with the same company he was allowed to move freely, and transportation was free to wherever there was a need for workers on the same road. Furthermore, he was not required to remain on the same

¹ William P. Shriver, Immigrant Forces, p. 90.

job. He had no obligations, and even if he desired to leave his employer he was free to do so. However, if he quit his job voluntarily he lost his privileges of free transportation on the railroad. If the immigrant elected to remain with the company, he was forced to buy his supplies from a company store. According to some authorities he was required to pay a certain amount for rent and other incidentals:

\$1 to \$3 is deducted every two weeks for supplies, whether the men buy supplies or not. . . . The company also deducts \$1 per week for shack rent. . . . There are no sanitary provisions whatever for the men who have been faithful in the road's service for many years.²

Another student remarks that "No matter how little he uses, he pays five cents a week for salt and kerosene which amounts to two dollars a month for ten men in a shack."³

The hardships that the railroad worker had to endure in order to save enough money to send to his parents or to repay his debt for passage money and other obligations were very great. A group of immigrants would get together and elect a person, often the oldest in the group, to be the cook and housekeeper. Each would pay a certain amount of his wages for food, and the diet was kept as strict and cheap as possible. The group would buy second or third-grade foods. One of the men would be the "buyer" for the group. He was

² Ibid., p. 90.

³ Frances A. Kellor, "Who is Responsible for the Immigrant?" The Outlook, 106:913 (April, 1914).

to go into the stores and buy the necessary supplies such as food, clothing and other essentials for all. And since he was the interpreter he also had to go to the bank to make out checks to be sent to the home country. He was chosen for his integrity and unquestionable honesty, and of course particularly for his knowledge of the English language. His understanding of the language consisted of a very few and usually mispronounced words such as "bread," "coffee," "meat" and the like. He often found it necessary to make motions in order to be understood. One story is told among the Greeks about an elderly man who had been selected to go to the store to buy eggs. Going there and not finding the eggs in the usual place, he attempted to make the grocer understand that he wanted eggs. He told him as best he could in English; then he told him in Greek. The grocery clerk was bewildered, unable to understand the language of the old man. Then the immigrant took an onion which looked like an egg and pointed it to the attendant, but still no response. Finally, in desperation, the old man squatted down and began to imitate a chicken. He got the eggs. Another man was sent to buy bread for the gang. He knew the word "bread," but no more English. Upon his arrival at the store he greeted the clerk with the word "bread." Naturally the grocer assumed that he wanted only

one loaf of bread, and he brought it. But when the immigrant saw one loaf, he was much disturbed and motioned to the clerk that he wanted more. Another loaf was brought, but still it was not enough. The process continued until finally the clerk in disgust brought the entire box which contained twenty-five loaves. The immigrant smiled with relief; that was what he wanted, but he did not know how to say it. There are a number of incidents of this type told by the early immigrants.

The buyer and the cook were usually the same person. Another of his duties was to bake bread. This was an everyday affair. He was required to bake several loaves of bread, since the group was usually large and "heavy bread-eating." The oven for the baking, ordinarily a large one, was built on the outside of the house. Once in a while the cook would attempt to ration the food and bread. But the system operated on the same basis from section to section. Some of the workers would leave and go to another group, but conditions were not different there and eventually he would find himself returning to his original company. At times the entire group would take turns in staying home to do the cooking and baking for the day. A roster was made up and each man's name appeared opposite the day when he was to be in charge of the kitchen.

Recreation on the section consisted of native dancing on days when there was no work. Among the group there would invariably be one or two persons who could play an instrument. Usually in the afternoon or night the celebration would begin and last until the late hours of the night.

For those who elected to remain in the city and work in the factories, conditions were even worse than on the railroad. They were very poorly paid and were required to live in "slums." The Greeks were the poorest paid immigrants in America.⁴ The wages were low, irregular, uncertain; the hours excessive; the work exhausting; and the monotony was destructive to the minds of those who were away from their homes and their families, deprived of normal family life. A large number of persons would rent one house, and as many as ten to fifteen of them would occupy one room which was used for sleeping as well as for living quarters. Each man was required to wash his own laundry. One can easily understand why the immigrant often would not be able to take proper care of himself--he worked hard and long hours during the day and was not able to work more at home at night. Sanitary conditions were deplorable. The men's main and only object was to earn and save money. The immigrants were willing to forego any and all luxuries in order to follow that pursuit. They even went so far as to neglect their

⁴ Peter Roberts, The New Immigration, p. 69.

persons without realizing the consequences. The Greek immigrant could not afford to be as free with his money as the native American worker.

If he denies himself comforts, it is to save money. While the unmarried native workman may save or spend at pleasure, the immigrant, in nearly every case, must save money. If he has left wife and children in his native country, he must save money to pay their passage. If his own passage was paid by a relative or a friend, he must save to repay his debt.⁵

The exploitation of the immigrants in the factory towns was even greater than that on the railroads, since the poor ignorant immigrant was always under the constant watch of the police who often took pleasure in causing excitement and fear among the herd of immigrants. The exploiter took advantage of the immigrant's ignorance and always threatened him with exposure to the authorities. The immigrant often broke the law, since he had no familiarity with city ordinances concerning garbage disposal and other sanitary measures. The exploiter was some Greek who had been in this country for a short time, and who had learned a few words of English. He approached the green immigrant and told him that if would pay him five or ten dollars he would secure him a job in the mill where he, himself, was employed.⁶ The securing of a job for the immigrant by his fellow-countryman was no guarantee that the newcomer could stay there permanently, since the employer had no knowledge of the verbal agreement between the two employees.

⁵ Isaac A. Hourwich, "The Economic Aspects of Immigration," Political Science Quarterly, XXVI, p. 663.

⁶ Fairchild, Greek Immigration, p. 140.

A number of the newer immigrants worked in the vegetable and candy business in the cities. Their lot was no better. They were forced to work many hours a day with very little pay. Their living conditions are well described by one writer:

The boys who sell vegetables, fruits and candies usually live in basements or other filthy surroundings, sometimes over horse stables. Their bedrooms are small, poorly ventilated, and usually filled to their capacity with beds. These have no sheets, no pillow cases, and at times no pillows. The only coverings are cheap blankets from Greece which become foul-smelling under prolonged absence from the washtub. Sometimes three and four boys must sleep in one bed. The supply of unsold stock is kept overnight in these quarters, usually under the beds. . . . They start to work by sun-up and work until sun-down.⁷

The misery of these boys was the result of the so-called "padrone system," one of the most infamous forms of human exploitation. This system became so deplorable in America that the United States Congress found it necessary to launch an investigation of it. As far as can be ascertained, the padrone system came directly from Greece. It was not new to the immigrants in America. They were well familiar with it in Greece, long before they came to the United States.

Due to the fact that religious belief in Greece prevents any thought of birth control, the peasants usually

⁷ Frederic J. Haskin, The Immigrant, p. 181.

acquire a large family. They soon find it hard if not impossible to maintain and adequately feed and clothe their several children. Therefore it becomes necessary for the father to "give away" some of the children. This takes form in several different ways. Often within the village a couple which has no children will ask one of the large and poor families to transfer to them one of the many children for eventual adoption. Before any legal procedure of adoption can take place, the child is required to work for his foster parents for a certain number of years. Many a time this will last for several years, at the end of which the foster parents will decide to return the child to the real parents as unacceptable. The child receives no pay whatever for the work he has done. The only benefit he might have received would be that of having gone to school, something that in all probability he would not have been able to do had he remained with his real parents. This form of exploitation, as bad as it may sound, is practical, since the child is near his parents and often has the opportunity to complain if he is not treated well. He may even leave his foster parents and return home.

Another form of the padrone system is the "thoulos." This follows more or less the same procedure, except that the child is taken far away from home to a city. By a

verbal contract he is transferred to a doctor, a lawyer, a merchant or to some other person of economic independence who in all probability will have several others. The child will be required to work for from six months to a year without pay as an apprentice. At the end of that period he may earn a very small wage, amounting in 1937 to between one and five dollars a year, which will be sent directly to his parents. The contract may include an arrangement to buy the child a pair of shoes each year, the cost to be deducted from his pay. Often, however, the promise will not be fulfilled. The master may give the apprentice a worn-out pair of shoes that had belonged to one of his own children, and deduct from the wages the full price of new shoes. Contracted children are kept under close supervision and are not permitted to wander around the city. They are kept ignorant of their surroundings and are not permitted to make friends with other children of their age. They are severely punished by whipping if they fail to obey the orders of the master, and are completely dominated by fear. Sometimes one of these children, unable to stand the whipping any longer, will wander away into the filth of the city, only to be returned to the master or picked up by another padrone as bad as the first. He has no way of letting his parents know his plight. The sleeping quarters

of such children are usually the basement or the floor of the business establishment. Their food consists of plain bread and olives or cheese. They are not permitted to dine with the family.

The padrone system took root in America from the very beginning of Greek immigration. It was introduced into several different types of business, but seems to have been predominant in the boot-blackening business. There the children, illegally brought from Greece, were required by the padrone to work long hours and to sleep in crowded and unsanitary quarters. There was no choice--they had to go through that stage. The "boss" warned them from time to time that according to the laws of the United States they were not to leave his employe, and that anyone who attempted to find employment elsewhere would be arrested by the police.⁸

In 1910, 5,127 agricultural workers entered the United States from Greece; in 1911, 9,207; in 1912, 8,546; in 1913, 9,514. Yet very few Greeks went into farming upon their arrival in this country. One of the chief reasons for their not going into farming was the fact that many of the people in that category had no intention of remaining here permanently, since their main thought was to make money and

⁸ "The Bootblacks," editorial in The Survey, 26:854 (1911); Anton, p. 96.

return to their homeland to enlarge or improve their own farms there. Furthermore, they brought no money with them with which to buy land immediately upon arrival. The hard times which they had experienced with farming at home also turned many immigrants away from farming in the new land. And they seemed to prefer remaining in the city near relatives and friends. It was easy to obtain a job in a factory where no special skill or capital was required. The invention of new and improved machinery made it possible for manufacturer and mine operator to offer employment to the cheap and untrained alien.⁹

The Greeks in America were engaged in many other occupations. In the mines they mined iron, coal, lead and zinc. So important were they in mining in some sections that their withdrawal in 1912, when a large number returned to Greece, caused some alarm. "The Utah coal mines and the lead and zinc mines of Illinois employ many thousand Greeks--indeed, a dozen of the Illinois mines had had to close because of the exodus of Greeks and other foreigners."¹⁰

Fishing was another occupation followed by the Greek immigrant when he arrived in the United States. One man who, like many Americans, believed that the Greeks all stayed in the cities, changed his mind when he went west and found

⁹ Jeremiah Jenks and Jett W. Lauck, The Immigration Problem, p. 102.

¹⁰ Editorial, The Outlook, 102: 513.

hundreds of Greeks occupied in the fisheries from Seattle to Alaska. He discovered that there had been Greek fishermen in Alaska for decades working alongside the Finns, Norwegians and Russians.¹¹

The immigrants from Greece worked in practically every job offered in America. In California they gathered the harvest, in Arizona they dug irrigation ditches, in Oregon they felled forests, in West Virginia they tunnelled coal, in Massachusetts they planted the tedious crops suitable to an exhausted soil. In the cities they built subways and skyscrapers and railroad terminals. Wherever rough work and low wages went together, the immigrant found a job.¹²

No labor was too hard for the Greek immigrant.¹³ He worked long hours and went without many necessities in order to save enough money to start a little business of his own. All he needed was a start; the rest he was able to do himself. "Ambitious, adaptable, versatile, and most of all, thrifty, he set out for himself as soon as he had accumulated a small capital. Within a few years the hired, rootless laborer became the independent, settled storekeeper,

¹¹ Konrad Bercovici, On New Shores, p. 296.

¹² Antin, p. 65.

¹³ Edward A. Steiner, On the Trail of the Immigrant, p. 285.

providing labor and opportunity for other newcomers.¹⁴
 In whatever occupations they entered, the majority of them were successful.¹⁵ Once the Greek becomes a businessman he is no longer dependent on anyone. He is a shrewd and energetic man of business:

and reproduces the energy of his ancestors. Homer represents the wily Diomed as suggesting to Glancus an exchange of arms to seal their friendship and forthwith gives his bronze in return for the costly gold of the Trojan.¹⁶

In 1912 there were over six hundred Greek restaurants in Chicago and two hundred in New York. In 1932 there were a hundred and fifty restaurants in New York under the Quality Restaurants' Association, organized for the purpose of buying collectively and educating its members on points of high quality and service. The Foltis-Fisher Company, a chain of restaurants owned and operated by Greeks, is the inventor and distributor of a well-known vegetable juice.¹⁷

John Racklios, born in Pangrati, a small village near Kalavryta in the Peloponnesus, came to the United States at a very early age. He was a typical Greek immigrant, having to struggle, work hard and long hours in whatever work he could find. He worked in shoe-repair shops, in restaurants, in theaters, and sold fruit in the streets of

¹⁴ Brown and Roucek, p. 346.

¹⁵ Fairchild, Greek Immigration, p. 191.

¹⁶ Thomas J. Lacey, "The Romance of the Greek Immigrant in the United States," The Ahepan, 6:12 (June, 1932).

¹⁷ Brown and Roucek, p. 346.

Chicago, until he was able to get enough money saved to start a business of his own. At first he opened a small restaurant, later he opened another, then a third and so on until he owned thirty-two of them in Chicago. His home was estimated to be worth more than a half million dollars. Fairly reliable observers believed that at one time Racklios was worth more than five million dollars. Today, in every town of any size, the Greek restaurant owner may be found. It is estimated that approximately forty thousand restaurants are owned and operated by Greeks throughout the United States.¹⁸

Aside from the small community candy stores familiar in small towns and cities, the Greeks operate many large concerns. The DeMets Company, with fourteen stores in Chicago, is owned by Hellenes. Fifty-five establishments sell the Andies Candies, also manufactured in Chicago by Greeks. The Joy Company Candy Shoppes of Chicago number eighteen in the metropolitan area. The Mavracos Candy, whose products are sold in seven large stores, employs two hundred and fifty persons in St. Louis.¹⁹

A number of hotels, large and small, are owned by Greek immigrants. It will suffice here to mention only a few of the most outstanding, nationally recognized concerns. John Venetos is the owner of the luxurious hotels, the "Mohawk" in Brooklyn, New York, and the "Mohican" in New London,

¹⁸ Bobby Malafouri, Hellenism in America, p. 277.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Connecticut. In New York the "St. Moritz" and the "Buckingham" with thirteen hundred rooms are owned by the Taylor brothers. The "Park Chambers," the "Rex," the "Newton" and others in New York belong to early Greek immigrant families. Large hotels with Greek proprietors are found in St. Louis, San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, Mobile and elsewhere throughout the nation.²⁰

It has been said that the Greeks eat a lot of bread and that it was the dream of every immigrant from Greece to own a bakery. Not many of the newcomers realized that dream, but there were some who became important in that field. The Malbis Bakery of Mobile, Alabama, sells its products in twenty-two states. It employs more than six hundred people. The Blue Bird Baking Company of Newton, Ohio, has branch factories in Columbus, Cincinnati, and Louisville, Kentucky. Other large baking concerns are owned by Greeks in Pittsburgh, Detroit, Boston, San Francisco, Greenville, South Carolina, and in many other large cities in the United States.²¹

Many Greeks found rich profit in the tobacco industry. In 1932 the Stephano Brothers of Philadelphia, a large tobacco processing company, was producing several known cigarettes such as "Ramesis," "Marvels," "Smiles," "Melachrino" and others. The Axton-Fisher Tobacco Company

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

produces the "Spud" and "Twenty Grand" cigarettes. Other large cigarette and cigar producers include the Pialoglow Tobacco Company, the Poulidis Brothers Company, the Cress Cigar Company and the Banakis Tobacco Company, all owned by Greek immigrant families.²²

The Greeks also entered the import-export business. They brought into the United States olives, wines, cheese, olive-oil, dried vegetables, currants, figs and other Mediterranean products to be sold in this country. Of these firms the most successful and most outstanding is the Lekas and Drivas House. It was founded in 1892 in New York by George Lekas and George Drivas. They were the first to import these products into America. At first only Greek immigrants patronized them, but soon other nationalities including Americans began to buy in their stores. The Lekas and Drivas House has representatives throughout Greece to buy and store the produce for shipment to the United States. The import-export business did not stop with the Lekas and Drivas House. There were many private concerns which did their own import-export business with the mother country and elsewhere in the world. They import coffee from Brazil and other areas in large quantities. Coffee is imported and sold by Pascal, Lincoln, T. & A.,

²² Ibid.

Mecca, Florida, United, Golden Eagle, Adelpia, Apollo, Java, Semos and other Greek companies.²³

Successful Greek immigrants in the petroleum industry include William Helis, whose oil wells in Louisiana and Texas produce 1,500,000 barrels a year, and the Lairopoulu Brothers of Oklahoma City, with several oil wells in the state of Oklahoma.²⁴

Perhaps in no other business were the Hellenes more successful than in the theater business. Alexander Pantages, an immigrant from the island of Andros, managed a vaudeville circuit in the western states with headquarters in Seattle. His shows are well remembered in Missoula and in the entire Pacific Northwest. Pantelis Antonopoulos is the owner of over forty theaters in Pittsburgh. In Pennsylvania and West Virginia Mike Manos owns twenty-two theaters under the name of Manos Enterprises. Dem Chrysos is the proprietor of the Indiana-Illinois Theaters, with twenty-four outlets in those states. John Kalafati of Cleveland owns twenty-four theaters, and A. C. Constant owns and operates the A. C. Constant Theater Circuit of Ohio, with headquarters in Steubenville, which includes fifteen or more theaters.

There are hundreds of Greek immigrants in America who

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

have entered the theater industry, but none has achieved the fame of the Skourases. Born in Skourocherion in the Peloponnesus, Charles Skouras came to this country first. He worked as a newsboy, waiter, and bartender in St. Louis to save enough to send back home for Spyros and George, his two brothers. All three worked in hotels and restaurants, undergoing the same hardships as other immigrants, until they earned enough to buy a "nickelodeon." Then they were on their way. In 1926 they were operating thirty-seven "movie-houses" in St. Louis; in 1945 they had seven hundred and fifty in the United States and four hundred and fifty more in England, Egypt, Australia and New Zealand. In 1942 Spyros became president of the Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. The Skouras Theater Corporation was the first of the non-banking institutions in the United States to sell war bonds during the Second World War. This enterprise was so successful that hundreds of other establishments followed the lead of the Skourases. In addition to the Skouras theater chain, George has a number of his own "movie-houses" throughout the country.²⁵ Louis Adamic, discussing American minorities, says of the Skouras brothers: "They are extremely able, alert and hardworking men, attending to their business and trying to give the public its money's worth."²⁶ Charles Skouras was the highest paid individual in the United States

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 255-60.

²⁶ Louis Adamic, A Nation of Nations, p. 278.

in 1946 with an income of \$568,144.²⁷

During the Greek War of Independence in the early nineteenth century many philhellenes and humanitarians went to Greece and brought back to this country a number of children who were later to distinguish themselves in many professions and thereby set an example for the immigrants who came in later years.²⁸

One Alexander Paspatis was brought to the United States and sent to school to become one of the most outstanding doctors of his time. He returned to Athens and then to Constantinople to help his countrymen.

Loukas Miltiades Miller was adopted by a Colonel Miller while the latter was in Greece. He brought the boy to this country and sent him to school. Loukas became a colonel in the United States Army like his foster father, and distinguished himself during the Mexican War. He later moved to Wisconsin and in 1853 was unanimously nominated and elected to the United States House of Representatives. He was always active while serving the interests of his constituents in Congress. It was largely due to his efforts and far-sightedness that the State Asylum for the Insane and the Normal School were established in the state of Wisconsin.

John Zachos, brought to America by a Dr. Howe, graduated

²⁷ Malafouri, p. 260.

²⁸ The following cases are taken from the files of The Ahepan.

from Kenyon College in Ohio and later became the editor of the Ohio Journal of Education and principal of the Grammar School at Antioch College. He was an associate of Horace Mann. The young Zachos took part and distinguished himself in the American Civil War. Later he was ordained a Unitarian minister, and was appointed a professor at Meadville Theological School in Pennsylvania. Still later he was the curator of Cooper Union in New York. He was the author of several books on elocution. Always interested in the enlightenment of the less fortunate, he worked tirelessly toward the education of negroes and their adaptation into American society.

Another outstanding Greek of the early period was George Musalas Calvocoresses, a survivor of the massacre of Chios, who was brought to the United States and sent to school by Alden Partridge of Vermont. At the age of sixteen he qualified for and was accepted in the Naval Academy at Annapolis. Upon his graduation from the Academy he went with the Wilkes Expedition. During the Civil War he was commander of the U. S. S. Supply and later of the U. S. S. Saratoga. He was cited by the Secretary of the Navy for his zeal and noble services to the United States, and was retired as a rear-admiral. His son, George Partridge Calvocoresses, was also a United States naval officer. He took part in all the Philippine naval battles under Admiral

Dewey, and was the executive officer of Dewey's flagship. He rose to the rank of rear-admiral and served as commandant of the Naval Academy for several years.²⁹

E. A. Sophocles, another Greek immigrant, distinguished himself as professor at Harvard for forty-one years. When he died in 1893 he left his valuable library and his entire estate to that institution.

Perhaps no one among the early Greeks in America was esteemed and admired more than Michael Anagnos or Anagnostopoulos. He was loved and respected by both Greeks and Americans. Michael tended sheep on the hillsides of Epirus for his father when one day he decided to go to Yanina to attend school. When he later graduated from the University of Athens he associated himself with an Athenian newspaper of which he soon became the chief editor. In 1867, while Dr. Howe was in Greece distributing relief to the Cretans, he was in need of a secretary and Anagnos won the position. Dr. Howe offered to pay him for his work, but the young Hellene said, "You owe me nothing, sir." "But," protested the doctor, "you have been working for some time, and I wish to pay you your salary." "Dr. Howe, what salary do you receive for helping my country?" Anagnos asked. "I, not a penny! That is a different matter," said Dr. Howe.

²⁹ V. I. Chebithes, Ahepa and Progress of Hellenism in America, p. 16.

But Michael would not accept anything. He asked the doctor to bring him to America, and Dr. Howe willingly complied with the young man's request. In Boston the Howe family took the young man into its confidence, and he later married one of the Howe daughters, Julia. Gradually he took over the responsibilities of Dr. Howe who was getting old and unable to keep up as the head of the Perkins Institute for the Blind. For thirty years Anagnos devoted his entire time and effort to improve and enlarge the institution. He established an endowment fund which he designated the "Howe Memorial Press" to improve the embossed and braille systems of reading for the blind, a fund which is in existence to this day. He was the first man to establish a kindergarten for blind children. Nor did he forget his native land. He returned to Greece and to his native village and established a school named after his mother. In 1906 he again visited the land of his birth. While in Greece he was compelled to visit a dying uncle in Roumania. There he took sick and died. At the memorial services held in Boston Governor Guild of Massachusetts said: "The name of Michael Anagnos belongs to Greece, the fame of him belongs to the United States; but his service belongs to humanity."³⁰ The testimony of one of his blind pupils exemplifies the love and respect of his students:

³⁰ Annie E. S. Beard, Our Foreign Born Citizens, p. 17.

His strength comforted our weakness, his firmness overcame our wavering ideas, his power smoothed away our obstacles, his noble unselfishness put to shame our petty differences of opinion, and his untiring devotion led us all to do our little as well as we could. . . . Better than all, he taught us to the best of our ability to be men and women in our own homes.³¹

The problems of the Greek immigrant had become Anagnos's own. His countrymen had turned to him for advice and financial aid, and he had given generously of both. He served as president of the community of Greeks in Boston and was the founder and president of the first Greek organization to be founded in the United States. The name of Michael Anagnos will remain a monument to Hellenism everywhere. He set an example for the Greek immigrant to follow.

He was the man who taught the Greeks of America to learn and adopt everything that is good in the American character, the only man whom all Greeks revered and implicitly obeyed; the man who did good for the sake of the good; the man who conceived the idea of establishing a Greek school in Boston; the man who expected every Greek to do his duty toward his adopted country--America.³²

One of the most outstanding Greeks in the United States today is Dean Alfange of New York City. Alfange came to this country with his parents at an early age. His father died while Dean was only a child, and he found it necessary to find work to support his mother. He worked part time and

³¹ Ibid., p. 16.

³² Ibid., p. 17.

attended school in New York, and went on to college to receive his degree in law. In 1937 he won the Theodore Roosevelt Award for his book, The Supreme Court and the National Will. He became a successful lawyer and in 1942 ran for Congress on the Democratic ticket in the seventeenth district of New York. He failed to receive the nomination, however, but in the same year was nominated for governor of New York by the American Labor Party. He was the only candidate to that office who was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. In 1944 Alfange was the chairman of the Liberal and Labor Commission which founded the Liberal Party of New York. He participates in Greek-American affairs, and became Supreme President of the Order of Ahepa at a time when that organization needed strong leadership.

The contribution of the immigrant, in which the Greek has borne his full share, was glorified in the following editorial in The Survey magazine:

The Immigrant Contribution

I am the immigrant.
 Since the dawn of creation my feet have beaten paths
 across the earth.
 My uneasy bark has tossed on all seas.
 My wanderlust was born of the craving for more liberty
 and a better wage for the sweat of my face.
 I looked towards the United States with eager eyes
 kindled by the fire of ambition and heart
 quickened with new-born hope.
 I approached its gates with great expectation.
 I entered in with fine hope.
 I have shouldered my burden as the American man-of-
 all work.
 I contribute 85 per cent of all the labor in the
 slaughtering and meat packing industries.

I do $7/10$ ths of the bituminous coal mining.
 I do $7/8$ ths of all the work in the woollen mills.
 I contribute $9/10$ ths of all the labor in the cotton
 mills.
 I make $3/10$ ths of all the clothing.
 I manufacture more than half the shoes.
 I build $4/5$ ths of all the furniture.
 I make half of the collars, cuffs and shirts.
 I turn out $4/5$ ths of all the leather.
 I make half the gloves.
 I refine nearly $19/20$ ths of the sugar.
 I make half of the tobacco and cigars.
 And yet I am the great American Problem.
 When I pour out my blood on your altar of labor, and
 lay down my life as a sacrifice to your God of
 Toil, men make no more comment than at the fall
 of a sparrow.
 My children shall be your children, and your land
 shall be my land because my sweat and my blood
 will cement the foundations of the America of
 Tomorrow.
 If I can be fused into the body politic, the melting
 pot will have stood the supreme test.³²

³² The Survey, 40:214 (May 25, 1918).

V

THE GREEK IMMIGRANT, VICTIM OF AMERICAN PREJUDICES

"Scum O' the Earth"

At the gate of the West I stand,
 On the isle where the nations throng.
 We call them "scum o' the earth";

Stay, are we doing you wrong,
 Young fellow from Socrates' land?--
 You, like a Hermes so lissome and strong
 Fresh from the master Praxiteles' hand?
 So you're of Spartan birth?
 Descended, perhaps, from one of the band--
 Deathless in story and song--
 Who combed their long hair at Thermopylae's Pass? ...
 Ah, I forget the straits, alas!
 More tragic than theirs, more compassion-worth,
 That have doomed you to march in our "immigrant class"
 Where you're nothing but "scum o' the earth."

Complaining about the arrival of new immigrants is an old American tradition. The same charges that were hurled against the so-called "new immigrants" which consisted mainly of southeastern Europeans, including the Greeks, had been thrown against earlier immigrants from northern Europe. Since the beginning of America the newcomer had always been discriminated against. During the colonial period the fear that foreigners might take over the country forced the early colonists to pass laws against them. An early governor of Pennsylvania in 1727 feared "that the peace and security of the province was endangered by so many foreigners coming in, ignorant of the language, settling together and making a separate people."¹

* This is part of the poem "Scum O' the Earth" taken from Francis E. Clark, Old Homes of New Americans.

Maryland, Virginia and Massachusetts enforced discriminatory religious legislation to prevent undesirable immigration. Suspicion of foreigners was apparent in the Constitution of the United States. By Article I, Section 2, a foreign-born person is prevented from becoming an elected member to the House of Representatives unless he has been a citizen of the United States for at least five years. Section 3 of the same Article specifically bars any person of foreign birth who is not a citizen from being elected a senator. Article II of the Constitution prohibits a person from becoming President of the United States if he is not a natural-born citizen of this country.

In 1807 the immigrants were characterized as the "vagabonds and wandering felons of the universe and hordes of vulgar Irish scarcely advanced to the threshold of civilization, and the excrescences of gouty Europe who descend upon our shores and through civilization are transformed from aliens to natives--from slaves to citizens."²

General Andrew Jackson complained in 1824:

It is time we shall become a little more Americanized and instead of feeding paupers and laborers of England, feed our own; or else in a short time by continuing our present policy we shall be paupers ourselves.³

A new political party, the Nativist Party, was organized in 1835-1836, whose principle purpose was to oppose immigration and to put "the foreigners in their place in America." The Know-Nothing Party (1857) which managed to elect five

² Warne, p. 237.

³ Garis, p. 35.

senators and fourteen representatives to Congress, as well as several officials in their respective states, was bitterly opposed to immigration. The party's cry was: "Put None but Americans on Guard Tonight."⁵

Later, John B. McMaster, an outstanding American historian, expressed the anti-immigrant point of view with particular vehemence:

The steadily increasing stream of immigration, the number of paupers and petty criminals sent to our shores by the parish authorities in Great Britain, the persistence with which these undesirable classes of immigrants clung to the large cities, filling the streets with beggars and the almshouses with inmates . . . utterly ignorant of the political and social institutions of the society of which they suddenly became a part . . . bringing with them all the prejudices of their native land,
 . . .⁵

Immigrants were looked upon as "a worthless and depraved class, the dregs of all nations, the very canaille of the city, bands of homeless, houseless mendicants."⁶ Immigration was considered as an indiscriminate influx of foreigners and the immigrants were referred to as "hordes of foreigners," "a deluge of paupers of Europe, the sweepings of English poor houses, swarms of foreign beggars of both sexes; the jails and workhouses of Europe pouring their felons and paupers into the United States."⁷

⁵ John B. McMaster, A History of the People of the United States, VI, p. 421.

⁶ Warne, p. 128.

⁷ Ibid., p. 127.

The very same charges were made against the "new" immigrant. American readers once more began to read of the shortcomings of the poor immigrant:

A large per cent of immigration is made up of outcasts, thieves, and offscourings of the earth, who are forced to leave their own lands and still are allowed to land upon American soil. Isn't it time we began to take measures to stop this inflow of foreign scum?⁸

Every possible means was used to discredit the Greek immigrant. He was considered clanish, undemocratic, criminal, a troublesome individual. One author claimed that the Greeks in America were clanish, although he studied them seriously enough to know better.⁹ Fear was expressed that they could never be amalgamated into the American system. The Greek immigrants did tend to herd together, but the reason lay not in their clanishness. They, an "undesirable" lot of people, were in a strange country whose language and customs they could not understand and whose people were hostile to them.

Sometimes a peddler would be set upon by street gamins or older roughs, his tray or cart upset and all his wares stolen. This and other things scared them and gave them a kind of inferiority complex and kept them away from American life.¹⁰

One Greek immigrant recalls the indignities suffered by street peddlers from police and pranksters:

Besides being under the constant watch of the police who chased us away from the central locations every

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Fairchild, Greek Immigration, p. 127.

¹⁰ P. L. Coryllos, "Greek-American Organizations," The Ahepan, 7:14 (April, 1933).

day, we were always in fear of the ill-mannered children who were annoying us, stealing our wares, and sometimes upsetting our carts in order to amuse themselves by watching us struggle to put our merchandise back in order.¹¹

But as soon as the Greek immigrants learned the English language and the American way of life, they began to mix with other nationalities, to become a part of the American people and not a separate and distinct nationality. They intermarried with practically every nationality in the American "melting pot."¹² The clanishness all but disappeared.

Another charge made against the "new" immigrants was that they were undemocratic, socialistic, unable to appreciate the American system of government. They were blamed for bringing into the country socialism and anarchism:

Socialism and anarchism are not plants of American growth nor of Anglo-Saxon origin. They are not natural to the American mind; they are the importations of foreign agitators who come here for the purpose of making converts to their doctrines. . . . Coming as they do with different environments, different ideas of government, different social relations and ideals; they will hold on to their ideals, spreading their doctrines in this country and undertaking to force the same upon us.¹³

¹¹ Ilias I. Tzanetis, The Immigrant, p. 71.

¹² The Census Report for 1920 shows Greek immigrants married to other nationalities as follows:

Germans	2,111	Austrian	917	English	224	Irish	555
Italian	302	Hungarian	224	Russian	419	French	221
Swedish	176	Canadian	339	Spanish	43	Rouman	76
Finnish	22	Norwegian	82	Scotch	71	Danish	56
Swiss	78	Dutch	21	Portuguese	30	Others	415

¹³ Garis, p. 220.

Yet the Greeks cannot rightly be held to be undemocratic. For centuries they have cherished the democratic principles of freedom of the individual and freedom of discussion. These the modern Greek has inherited from his ancestors. An American war correspondent in Greece during the Turco-Hellenic war of the 1890s wrote warmly of Greek democratic practices:

Perhaps the most perfect example of pure democracy that exists anywhere in the world is found among the Greeks of today,—a state of equality the like of which is not to be found with us nor in the Republic of France. Each Greek thinks and acts independently, and respects his neighbor's opinion. . . . The country was like a huge debating society.¹⁴

Those were the same Greeks who came to America. The ideas and ideals which they brought with them to their new country were those which they had inherited from their ancestors of classical times.

A great deal of argument has taken place in an attempt to disassociate any connection between the Greeks of today and the Greeks of the past. Anthropologists such as the German, Fallmerayer have published volumes in an endeavor to prove the theory that ancient and modern Greeks are unrelated. Dr. Fallmerayer asserted that Slavic place names outnumber Greek in modern Greece and that the language has been diluted with Slavic. The Slavic place names may indicate only that Slavs lived in the area at one time and either joined

¹⁴ Elizabeth W. Latimer, The Last Years of the Nineteenth Century, p. 209.

their blood stream to that of the Greeks or were driven out by the Byzantines. During the recent German-Italian-Bulgarian occupation of Greece many of the place names in the country were changed into German, Italian or Bulgarian names, but it would be ridiculous for anyone to assume that those places have been depopulated of their original people and are now or were at any time populated entirely by the invaders. And as for the language of the Greeks, there are very few Slavic words that are in common use in Greece today, perhaps no more than seventy in number.¹⁵ The modern Athenian prefers to use the French "merci" instead of the Greek "evchoristo" for "thank you," but that does not indicate that the Greek language has been Gallicized.

It is true that the modern Greeks have mixed with foreign elements as have all nationalities, but the Hellenes have shown sufficient elasticity to be able to absorb foreign cultures and peoples without losing their own national characteristics. Instead, fresh vitality and rejuvenation have resulted from such contacts.¹⁶

The existence of the Greek race and language on the shore and islands of the Levant has been an unbroken one down to our time. . . . The Hellenic race amalgamated readily with many of the races with which it came into contact; but nevertheless they were all assimilated, and the resulting type was Hellenic still.¹⁷

¹⁵ The Ahepan, 6:8 (May, 1933).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Living in the midst of the same surrounding, with the same climate, the same needs, and the same occupations, the Greeks have retained many of the peculiarities of their ancestors. The foreign blood which runs in their veins has been thoroughly assimilated. They are still hospitable, democratic, fond of politics and of discussion, divided in factions, eager for information, quick to adapt themselves to circumstances.¹⁸

The Greeks in the United States have been blamed for sending large amounts of money to their homeland. The same persons who made accusations of the sort were ignorant of the facts or, what is worse, they did not want to know the facts. It must be admitted that the Greeks did send money to Greece, but so did every other immigrant group in America. Between 1851 and 1854, during a period of four years, \$28,948,000 was sent to Ireland by Irish immigrants in the United States, and that is "without taking into account the amounts sent to Ireland through private sources."¹⁹ Every nation in the world benefitted from money sent to it by the immigrants in America. But the immigrant did not steal the money; for every day's savings sent home, he left the equivalent in the product of his labor in the United States. Nor did immigration into this country in the early period of its history create unemployment, as was claimed by some. In Hoquiam, Washington, the sentiment against the "new" immigrants was so strong that the "white people" under the

¹⁸ Thomas D. Seymour, "Modern Greece," Scribner's Magazine, 4:63 (1888).

¹⁹ Garis, p. 53.

leadership of a "Christian," resolved to drive out the immigrants. The slogan was "the foreigners have taken our jobs."

Some Christian men coming to the fore to save the good name of the town assured the agitators that work would be found for every 'white man' displaced by the foreigners. That calmed the tempest, but the agitators would not take the work when it was offered them; they preferred to live on inflammable speech which stirred up strife between brother and brother.²⁰

One of the most infamous, most shameful incidents ever to take place in the United States because of prejudice against the Greek immigrant happened in South Omaha:

A Greek went into the house of a young lady of questionable character, and a policeman, following the man, arrested him without overt cause whatsoever. The Greek resisted and, in the scuffle which followed, the officer was shot. That was Saturday night. The following Sunday morning as the bells were ringing, calling men to worship, a mob assembled and, under the leadership of a disreputable fellow, began storming the Greek quarters, smashing windows, breaking doors, and pursuing the terror-stricken and defenseless Greeks in all directions. On the corner of L Street and 24th Avenue was the firm of Demos Brothers--superior men in every sense of the word, one of them being married to an American girl. This store was several blocks away from the Greek quarter, but on came the raging mob, as the surging tide was lashed by gust of rage and passion. They attacked the store at a time when the white-haired mother of the Demos Brothers sat quietly at the soda fountain, strewed on floor and street the contents of windows and cases and left that place, which represented an investment of more than \$7,000, a mass of ruins. The brothers and their families fled for their lives. They had two other stores in Omaha, which they immediately gave up, for they knew not how far this wave of fury, fanaticism, and savagery would sweep, and in a week they found themselves reduced by mob violence in Christian America from the position of prosperous merchants to paupers.²¹

²⁰ Roberts, p. 294.

²¹ Ibid., p. 299.

Hitler is credited with having said that if one repeats a lie often enough he will believe it himself. Lies were hurled at the American public to stir them to hate and despise the immigrant from southeastern Europe. Many made speeches, wrote articles in newspapers and magazines, and in every other possible way denounced the foreigner. One of these stereotype-minded individuals could see nothing commendable in the "new" immigrants:

I have seen gatherings of foreign born in which narrow and sloping foreheads were the rule. The shortness and smallness of the crania were very noticeable. There was much facial asymmetry. Among the women beauty, aside from the fleeting epidermal bloom of girlhood, was quite lacking. In every face there was something wrong--lips thick, mouth coarse, upper lip too long, cheek-bones too high, chin poorly formed, the bridge of the nose hollowed, the base of the nose tilted, or else the whole face prognathous. There were many sugar-leaf heads, moon-faces, slit mouths, lantern-jaws, and goose-bill noses that one might imagine a malicious jinn had amused himself by casting human beings in a set of stew-molds discarded by the Creator That the Mediterranean peoples are morally below the races of northern Europe is as certain as any social fact.²²

It is apparent that American judgments against the Greek immigrant were colored by prejudices, ignorance and misunderstanding--the lack of desire in the American mind to attempt to understand others. Americans judged their own group by its best men and women, but were prone to consider as typical the lowest of other nationalities.

²² Roy L. Garis, "America's Immigration Policy," The North American Review, 220:76 (1924).

VI

MAJOR GREEK-AMERICAN FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS
TO COMBAT PREJUDICES AND TO EDUCATE THEIR
PEOPLE IN THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE

It would be a great exaggeration to suppose that all of the people of the United States despised the Greek immigrant. Many intelligent people recognized the injustice done to the new arrivals and attempted to alleviate matters somewhat. They pleaded with their fellow citizens to give the immigrant a chance, to approach him seriously and sincerely. Some citizens asked for tolerance and understanding:

If we give the immigrants a favorable milieu, if we tolerate their strangeness during their period of adjustment, if we give them freedom to make their own connections between old and new experiences, if we help them to find points of contact, then we hasten their assimilation.¹

It was realized by many that the immigrant was in need of protection, understanding, participation, acceptance of his social and national values.

In Lowell, Massachusetts, a law was passed which required all persons twenty-one years of age or less who could not speak, read and write English to attend night school classes. This measure was a far-sighted expression of willingness on the part of some Americans to bring the immigrant within the American family and to afford him some respite from his arduous labors, to grant him a taste of knowledge for which he craved.

¹ Robert E. Park and Herbert A. Miller, Old World Traits Transplanted, p. 308.

Eventually, it was hoped, the immigrant himself would demand better conditions.

Teachers of Christian organizations began to take part in projects to teach the immigrant the English language and the customs of the people. Workers of "Y's" established offices at home and abroad to help the immigrant prepare himself for arrival in the United States, and at the same time to make him feel at home when he landed in America. Meetings were held where foremen and others who dealt with foreigners were briefed on a fairer and more sympathetic attitude.² It was pointed out that a better, healthier America depended on the understanding of its future citizens, the immigrants. If the newcomers were given a chance, it was held, they would become good citizens and consequently American progress would be hastened considerably, while if they were neglected the consequences would be humiliating.

Nine times out of ten immigrants who have become assets have been given a real chance, have been helped to secure education and an opportunity for self-expression; while those who have become liabilities have been mistreated, ground down and encouraged to absorb ideas of Bolshevism.³

The attempts to relieve the immigrants from the burdens which they were doomed to carry were none too successful. There was much talk and little action, but such efforts did do something for the Greek immigrant. He awoke to the fact

² Editorial, The Missionary Review, 46:606 (1925).

³ Ibid.

that there was a need for him to do something himself to check the confusion and misunderstanding which was driving the Greek nationality to insignificance and inferiority in America. A need was seen for a powerful organization which would unite the Greeks into an impregnable body whose main purpose would be to combat prejudices, misunderstanding and jealousy, and to hold up the Greek name, ideals and language, to educate its members and all those of Greek descent in the American way of life, and to teach them respect and admiration for American democracy.

A number of organizations, local, professional and others, were formed in America by immigrants from Hellas. In 1933 there were over fifteen hundred such organizations. Most of these societies, however, were of local character and their scope was limited to assisting their members who were in need of help and to help the new arrivals from Greece to adjust themselves in the United States and in the particular locality in which they settled. Since, more often than not, these societies were made up of people from the same place of origin, they had their eyes and hearts set on the needs of their region back home. They saved and sent large amounts of money to their villages to build new churches, schools, roads and the like. They were familiar with those needs.

The first society of wider scope, one which attempted to embrace all Hellenism in America and eventually in the world, was the "Pan-Hellenic Union," originated by none other than Michael Anagnos. In 1904 he conceived the idea and organized the "National Union" in Boston, Massachusetts. He dreamed of expanding it to cover the entire world wherever Greeks were found. He died before he realized his dream, however, and others took up his work. In 1907 the "National Union" held its first national convention in the City of New York and its name was changed to "Pan-Hellenic Union," a name which Anagnos himself had earlier suggested. The enthusiasm of the Greeks in America was a burning flame. They received the idea with open hearts. By 1911 the organization had eight thousand members, and by the following year the membership had jumped to thirty thousand with one hundred and fifty branches throughout the United States. Its objects were:

1. To protect the immigrant and to help him in sickness and poverty.
2. To instill veneration and affection for the laws and institutions of the United States.
3. To teach the English and Greek languages to the children of immigrants.
4. To preserve the ideals of the Greek Orthodox Church.
5. To secure the moral and material assistance of the Union towards the needs of Greece.⁴

⁴ Corylos in The Ahepan, 7:16.

The organization had, and still has, a tremendous influence upon the Greek immigrant who now felt as though he belonged to a group with status. During the Balkan Wars the "pan-Hellenic" undertook the financing of passage money for those Greeks in America who desired to return to Greece to fight. Large amounts of money were raised to help the families of needy Greeks in Greece, as well as those families who were left in America when their fathers, brothers or sons went to the battle front. The Greek Red Cross received a good share of the money. The society still contemplated the possibility of including within its jurisdiction every Hellene in America. Annual dues for members were small and its ceremonies simple. There was no special qualification for membership. The internal conflict which followed, the laxity of discipline within the order, and the belief of many of its members that the organization had accomplished its objective upon the defeat of the age-old enemy, the Turk, allowed the society gradually to lapse into a state of suspended animation from which it never revived.⁵

During the period of the first World War young Greeks, the bloom and flower of Hellenism in America, supported the United States army and navy to the number of 64,000.

They trooped to battle as to a festival, and offered upon the altar of American liberty their treasure, their services, their lives, their all. In the defense of the very foundations and principles upon

⁵ Chebithes, p. 9.

which the Republic and its institutions are founded, and for the honor and integrity of its starry emblem, the mighty host of Hellenism's best and finest manhood crossed the fearful wilderness of war, passed through the red sea of slaughter--their garments are yet wet with the crimson spray--and carried on with all but yielding to none in purity of purpose or patriotic loyalty until victory for the American arms was complete and final.⁶

This was the judgment of V. I. Chebithes, a Washington lawyer of high repute who for several years served as president of the Ahepa. The supreme sacrifice was made by thousands of soldiers of Greek descent. One of them, George Dilboy, a hero of the American Expeditionary Forces in France, was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. An American Legion post is named after him, and two monuments have been erected in his honor. At the dedication of one of them Senator David L. Walsh said:

Let this monument be an inspiration for every young man of every nationality. Here is a hero. Here is a man who smelled the smoke of battle, eye, a youth who was an alien when he went into the service of our beloved country, and whose citizenship papers were not recorded in the regular legal manner in the courts of law, but whose citizenship to America was written in blood, his own blood, upon the battlefield.⁷

The sacrifices of Greek immigrants helped somewhat to alleviate the hatred and prejudice against the Greek population in the United States. Patriotic speeches appealed to all nationalities in America to rally behind the govern-

⁶ Ibid., p. 22.

⁷ From a speech delivered by Senator David L. Walsh at Somerville, Massachusetts, August 28, 1930, printed in The Ahepan, September, 1930.

ment to defeat militarism. There was little time for criticizing the foreigner; every able-bodied man was needed to serve in the army as well as on the home front. There was no particular need for organizations of national character to defend the Greek against prejudice. But this attitude did not last long. As soon as the war was over and the soldiers returned home to take up their civilian duties, the wicked gospel of dissension and discord was once more being preached. "Foreignism" again haunted America. The Greeks once more became the victim of discrimination. Cases of persecution against them and their businesses multiplied with embarrassing rapidity and with materially injurious results.

Once again the Hellenes in the United States saw the need for some sort of an organization of their own. Whenever a Greek met a Greek, they did not talk about starting a restaurant, as the saying goes, but talked of how to find a means to stop the maltreatment of their fellows. Two travelling salesmen of Greek parentage from Atlanta, Georgia, met in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1922. The topic of their conversation was immediately focused upon the burning question of discrimination against the Hellenic nationality. After much discussion of the problem they concluded that there should be an American-Hellenic secret society of selected members to unite the Greeks of America into a national brotherhood. Upon returning to Atlanta the two salesmen

brought their idea before four other Greek-Americans. On July 26, 1922, the secret order under the name of American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, or AHEPA, was set up and chartered by the State of Georgia. The aims of the organization were the same as those of the earlier Pan-Hellenic Union. But strict discipline was introduced and the official language of the society was English, which in itself was educational since the members thus had a chance to practice Americanization. Soon the Ahepa captivated the fancy of American Greeks. Thousands of men of good repute, among them distinguished Americans including the President of the United States, cabinet members, senators and representatives, judges, governors of states and others became members. Membership qualifications were American citizenship, good reputation and high recommendation. The Ahepa grew by leaps and bounds. In June, 1948, it claimed a membership of 61,926 persons and 362 chapters throughout the United States.⁸ The objects of the Order, as stated in its constitution, are:

1. To promote and encourage loyalty to the United States; allegiance to its flag; support to the Constitution; obedience to its laws and reverence for its history and traditions.
2. To instruct its members in the fundamental principles of government.
3. To instill appreciation of the privileges of citizenship; to encourage its members to take active part in political, civic, social and commercial fields, and to always strive for the betterment of the society;

⁸ Order of Ahepa Yearbook, 1949.

4. To pledge its members to do their utmost to stamp out political corruption in America.
5. To arouse mankind against tyranny, in whatever form;
6. To promote a better and more comprehensive understanding of the Hellenic peoples and nation, and to revive, cultivate, enrich and marshal into active service the ideals of true Hellenism;
7. To perfect the moral sense of its members; to promote good fellowship among them; to endow them with a spirit of altruism, common understanding, mutual benevolence and helpfulness; and to point out to them the advantages of education;
8. To support the American system of education to keep schools free of religious prejudice. . . .
9. To resist any tendency towards a union between Government and Church or religion. . . .⁹

The Treasury of the Ahepa has contributed generously to the victims of hurricanes, floods, earthquakes; to orphanages, museums, scholarship endowments, and Orthodox churches in America; and for the relief of needy members and their families, as well as for those of non-members. During the Second World War the organization did its best to help hasten the victory by urging its members and all those of Greek extraction to buy war bonds. Furthermore, since the war it has contributed tremendous amounts of money for the relief of the people of war-torn Greece, where it has built hospitals, schools, roads and other badly needed facilities.

⁹ Order of Ahepa, Constitution, 1937, pp. 3-5.

The Ahepa has been able to curb publication of articles injurious to the good name and reputation of the Greek people. Protests and letters from the leaders of the Order have succeeded in discontinuing the pernicious practice by motion picture producers of designating the villain in a play as "Greek" and otherwise ridiculing the Hellenic nationality.¹⁰ Another example of the organization's interest in the Greek people in America is its effort to disprove the Wickersham Report on Prohibition Enforcement and the Causes of Criminality. It was reported by the Wickersham Committee that there were 7,770 Greek criminals serving terms in the penitentiaries throughout the United States. Even so, the figure was low, being only 777 per hundred thousand of the Greek population in America. The Ahepans and other Greeks in this country, however, believing that the percentage of criminals attributed to the Hellenes was exaggerated and that the Wickersham Committee was in error, requested that state officers of the Ahepa undertake a personal investigation by contacting the prison office in each of the states. After seven months of diligent work the chairmen of forty-four states and the District of Columbia returned to the Supreme Headquarters of the Ahepa a report covering the same period as had the Wickersham Report. The result was astonishing. Only 265

¹⁰ The Ahepan, 6:13 (February, 1932).

persons of Greek descent were found to be serving terms in criminal institutions in the United States, only forty per hundred thousand instead of the 777 previously reported.¹¹

The Order of Ahepa has been and is highly praised by the American Press and influential United States government officials, as well as by outstanding citizens from every walk of life. The President of the United States, Herbert Hoover, said in 1932:

I have had occasion frequently to commend the work of the order of Ahepa and am especially pleased to do so again. . . . Our citizens of Hellenic descent bring with them the heritage of a glorious civilization which enriches our own. They have demonstrated their patriotism both in peace and in war. They make splendid citizens and we are happy to have them in our midst.¹²

His successor, Franklin D. Roosevelt, himself an honorary member of the organization, wrote in 1936: "I am proud to claim membership in an organization devoted as the Order of Ahepa is to the advancement of the principles and ideals of this Republic."¹³ On August 13, 1937, Edward A. Kenny, United States Representative from New Jersey, introduced the following resolution in the House:

Whereas the Order of Ahepa is a great patriotic American organization, the chief aims and objects of which are to inculcate loyalty to the United States, allegiance to its flag, support to its

¹¹ N. J. Cassavetes, "The Wickersham Report and Greek Criminality in the United States, The Ahepan, 6:5-8 (September-October, 1932).

¹² Herbert Hoover to Ahepa, The Ahepan, 6:10.

¹³ F. D. Roosevelt to Ahepa, The Ahepan, 10:1.

Constitution, obedience to its laws, and reverence for its history and traditions; and
 Whereas the good work and influence of this order has been so wide in scope and excellent in character as to attract the attention and win the admiration and support of all good American citizens; and
 Whereas the President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and scores of Members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, as well as governors, judges, mayors, and officials of every rank throughout the country are active and enthusiastic members of the Order of Ahepa; and
 Whereas this order will hold its fourteenth grand convention in the city of Syracuse, New York, during the week of August 15, 1937; and
 Whereas many Members of Congress are vitally interested in the policies to be formulated and in the patriotic measures and programs to be adopted hereby, and are especially desirous to attend the opening of the deliberations of the said grand convention of the Order of Ahepa: Therefore be it

Resolved, That when the House adjourns on Friday, August 13, 1937, it shall stand adjourned until 12 o'clock meridian on Monday, August 16, 1937, in order that the Members of the House of Representatives may have the opportunity to attend the grand convention of the Order of Ahepa.¹⁴

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Georgia was so moved by the Greek organization that he wrote a letter to the President of the United States in support of the Ahepans in Georgia:

Of all the citizens of Atlanta, none have surpassed them in the honor paid by them to the memory of George Washington's bicentennial and all that his name means to the future of our country. At two meetings held for the purpose there were in attendance hundreds of the most representative Greeks. One was a banquet and the other was at their leading Greek church. It would have thrilled the heart of the most patriotic son or daughter of the American Revolution to hear the

¹⁴ House Resolution 314, U. S. Government, House of Representatives, 75th Congress, 1st Session.

addresses which were made by those formerly Greeks but now most ardent Americans. I would feel it an excellent omen for the future of the United States if all emigrants of other countries would follow the example of the Greeks.¹⁵

Another Chief Justice, that of the Supreme Court of Ohio, in an address to the organization in Cincinnati, said:

I belong to a number of civic organizations, to patriotic associations, but I say to you frankly that I know of no organization to which I belong, I know of no organization within the length and breadth of this land, that has formulated higher principles, more patriotic principles, better expressed, than those contained in the preamble to your constitution. I heartily compliment this Order.¹⁶

One year after the Ahepa had been organized, another society of Greeks was founded in East Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. On December 17, 1923, the Greek-American Progressive Association, commonly known as GAPA, was chartered by the State of Pennsylvania. This group of Hellenes felt that the Order of Ahepa had disregarded the feelings of the Greeks toward their mother country and their devotion to Greek traditions and ideals. The new organization desired that more emphasis be placed on Greek traditions and the Greek Orthodox Church. Qualifications for membership are not much different from those required by the Ahepa. A person must be of Greek parentage, a member of the Greek Orthodox Church, of good character, and must believe in the

¹⁵ Chief Justice Richard B. Russell to the President of the United States, March 30, 1932, The Ahepan, 6:19 (July, 1932).

¹⁶ Address by Carrington T. Marshall, printed in The Ahepan, 4:7 (April, 1931).

Constitution and laws of the United States. He must be a citizen of the United States or must have applied for citizenship. Each chapter is permitted to have five honorary members, but the names must be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Supreme Lodge for approval. The organization recognizes the Greek Orthodox Church and expresses no opinion on political subjects. The Constitution and by-laws of the Order are printed in Greek and English. The objects of the GAPA, as stated in its constitution, are as follows:

1. To promote and encourage among its members loyalty and allegiance to the Constitution and laws of the United States. . . .
2. To teach persons of Greek nationality in the United States the principles, ideals and doctrines of American citizenship and to urge its members to become citizens. . . .
3. To promote better understanding between the American and Greek peoples.
4. To cultivate and preserve the Greek language and to strengthen the religious sentiments according to the doctrines of the Greek Orthodox Church.
5. To preserve and develop the Hellenic ideals and traditions.
6. To cooperate in benevolent and philanthropic work.
7. To inspire in its members high moral standards; to promote the spirit of good fellowship and altruism; to aid their families in case of need.¹⁷

The membership of this organization is estimated to be about the same as that of the Ahepa. Its official publication is

¹⁷ From the Constitution and By-Laws of Men's Lodges, GAPA.

the Tribune of GAPA, published bi-monthly in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Its contents are printed in Greek with a small section in English. It has more of a stronghold in the east, where a large number of Greeks are concentrated.

These fraternal organizations of national character and, in the case of the Ahepa, of international character, have been able to uphold Greek traditions, the Greek Orthodox religion and the Greek language. They have been able to turn the tide against prejudice, jealousy and misunderstanding. Through their untiring efforts they have succeeded in raising respect for Greece to its rightful place among the civilized nations of the world. It seems as though the Ahepa and GAPA have completed their missions. Whether they maintain their rigor and strength from now on does not seem to be of any great importance. The seeds of goodwill, of better understanding among the Greeks and other nationalities within the American nation, have been planted. Thanks to these organizations and their able leadership, the Greek immigrant in America today is no longer looked upon as a foreigner and a beggar, but as a worthy and respectable citizen. He may hold his head high, for he is part of America and its culture.

VII

THE GREEK CHURCH AND ITS INFLUENCE UPON THE IMMIGRANT

The average Hellene is as proud of his religion as he is of his nationality. It was the Greek Church that kept the Greek spirit alive during the Turkish domination of over four hundred years. The Greek expresses his pride and sincere devotion to his religion by building and decorating churches. This is true particularly in his homeland. One travelling through Greece will see and admire magnificent churches, even in the smallest villages. In contrast, he will not be able to recognize the school building, for often it is a small, obscure building without equipment, usually lacking even the most essential necessities. Parents will punish their children for refusing to go to church, but will encourage them to skip school. The number of churches in Greece will amaze the traveller. Many of them are only used once a year. They are built by an individual honoring a particular saint. On the day of that saint's birth or death, all the villagers file to that little church, located a short walking distance from the village, and hold services there. The isolated country church, also known as "erimokleision," which means "a small church in the country," is cared for by a family of the village. That family is held responsible

for the upkeep of the church, and must see to it that on every Saturday night and Sunday morning and on every holiday the "kandilia" are lit. The family takes a great pride in keeping the inside and outside of the church orderly and clean. On the outside, usually by the road under a tree, is an ikon and a tray in which the people passing by may leave their contributions after crossing themselves and praying that the patron saint will see them through the day's labor. It is considered a sin for anyone other than the appointed official to touch that money, and a good conscientious Orthodox Greek will never think of taking it. Mr. W. A. Elliott, who made a visit to Greece during the early years of the century, reported that the money lying unprotected in full view of all who pass is never disturbed until gathered by the priest or monk authorized to take it.¹

The number of churches does not indicate any difference in religious belief. Religion is one and the same, the church is one and the same, the Greek Orthodox, and only in some of the largest cities in Greece will one find other church denominations. Exception must be made in the northern provinces of Greece, where large numbers of Mohammedans live. There are found many mosques and a

¹ W. A. Elliott, "The Modern Greek," The Chatauquan, 43:149 (1906).

fairly large number of people who profess Islam. It can be safely assumed, however, that at least ninety-five per cent of the population is Greek Orthodox.

The Greek priest is usually the most educated person in the village. He is the true leader of the peasants. His decisions on all matters are hardly ever questioned by the villagers. The Germans, hoping to demoralize the people and to subdue them during the recent occupation, attempted to control or destroy the leadership of the priest. First of all they captured the priest of each village and compelled him to order the people to capitulate to the German authorities. If the priest refused to comply with the order, his life was endangered. Many a priest did refuse to collaborate with the invader and many were tortured in the most savage manner.

Being brought up among such a religious environment, the Greek immigrant upon arrival in the United States was lost at not finding his priest to guide him through his troublesome, trying days. At home he had always found consolation in telling his troubles to his priest whom he loved and trusted most sincerely. He was comforted by him in time of distress. He was helped by him when in need. But in America there was no priest. The immigrant dreamed, waited for the day when he could be able to bring

his church and his priest to him. Whenever a group of Greeks met to discuss anything, the matter of the church had priority. They all recognized the need, but the means were lacking.

As early as 1867 a Hellenic Orthodox Church was founded in New Orleans by cotton merchants from Greece. This may not be considered as a permanent church, however, since it was not established by immigrants but by merchants who were not permanent settlers. The real founding of the first church was in 1891. In that year a group of Greek immigrants of New York organized into a society known as "The Hellenic Brotherhood of Athena." The purpose of the organization was to establish a church in New York. In the same year another Greek society, "The Lycurgos Society" of Chicago, was set up to build a church in that city. The foundation was laid for a church-building movement among Greeks in America. From then on the going was easy. As soon as two hundred or three hundred Greeks settled in a particular town they immediately proceeded to organize themselves into a Greek community. The names of the communities varied, but the purpose of the organization always was the same. The Greek population of the town assembled on a certain day and democratically proceeded to elect a council whose duty it was to make arrangements for the procurement of money either to build or to buy a church,

to secure a priest by writing to the Holy Synod of Greece or perhaps directly to the Patriarchate in Constantinople, and to find ways and means of supporting the church and maintaining the priest and his family.

By 1910 there were thirty-two well-organized Greek communities in the United States, each maintaining its own church, its priest, and in some cases a Greek school where children were taught to read and write the Greek language. This was an increase of twenty-two in six years, for in 1904 there were only ten Greek churches in America. During the following years immigration increased tremendously. In 1918 the first Greek Orthodox Bishop, Alexander, was sent to the United States. In 1922, due to the growing importance of the church in this country, he was promoted to the rank of Archbishop of North and South America, with several bishoprics established throughout the United States. A dissension between the archbishop and the bishop of San Francisco later resulted in the recall of Alexander. In 1931 Athenagoras came over to fill the vacancy and remained as Archbishop of North and South America until 1949 when he was elected Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church and returned to Constantinople. Under the leadership of Athenagoras the Greek church made great progress. By 1936 there were two hundred and forty-one Greek (Hellenic) Orthodox Churches in America with a membership of

189,368.² Ten years later the number of churches had grown to two hundred and eighty and the membership to well over 250,000 regular members.³

The Greek Orthodox Church in America is controlled and governed by the community of Greeks, the members of the church, and not by the hierarchy of the church:

Control of the Greek Church . . . resides in the community itself and is delegated to elected officers and committees; the church edifice is the property of the community; and the priest is a salaried employee of the community. Whatever secular authority the priest may have is indirectly derived from his relation to the sacred aspects of the community system.⁴

The Greek Church is controlled from below by the elected representatives of its members, and not from above, as is the Roman Catholic Church:

The difference between the number of Greeks in the United States and the number of regular members of the Greek Orthodox Church in this country does not indicate any deviation of the Greeks in this country from their church. There are very few known cases of Greek immigrants who have been converted to other religions. While this is true of the immigrants, it is not so true of the American-born Greeks. A large percentage of the children of

² United States, Bureau of the Census, Religious Bodies (1936), II, p. 1.

³ Greek Orthodox Theological School, Report, 1946.

⁴ Lloyd W. Warner and Leo Srole, The Social System of American Ethnic Groups, p. 171.

immigrants, especially those of mixed marriage, become members of other churches. That may be attributed in part to the lack of interest in the Greek Orthodox Church by one or both parents, especially the mother, who may be well indoctrinated in a different religion and who may want her children to be brought up in that faith. Furthermore, in smaller communities there are no Greek churches and one must travel hundreds of miles to attend one. It is impracticable and expensive for the parents and children to journey such long distances.

The Church is still in its pioneer stages insofar as the American-born Greeks are concerned. Many children of Greek parents are not able to comprehend the Church teachings, since the services are held in Greek and many children have not learned the language. Recently, however, the Church has been making good progress in that direction. It has established a Theological Seminary to ordain priests from among the American-born Greeks who understand both the English and the Greek languages. They are able to explain the services in both tongues, if that may be necessary. It will help to arouse the interest of the new generation of Greeks in the faith of their ancestors.

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Appendix I

Foreign-Born Greeks in the United States
1910*

Alabama	633	Montana	1,905
Arkansas	179	Nebraska	3,459
Arizona	77	Nevada	1,051
California	7,920	New Hampshire	2,634
Colorado	2,272	New Jersey	1,575
Connecticut	1,074	New Mexico	167
Delaware	34	New York	10,097
Washington, D. C.	342	North Carolina	174
Florida	886	North Dakota	1,083
Georgia	941	Ohio	2,555
Idaho	1,843	Oklahoma	590
Illinois	10,931	Oregon	3,555
Indiana	1,370	Pennsylvania	4,221
Iowa	3,356	Rhode Island	951
Kansas	1,410	South Carolina	282
Kentucky	273	South Dakota	231
Louisiana	237	Tennessee	374
Maine	579	Texas	756
Maryland	463	Utah	4,039
Massachusetts	11,413	Vermont	113
Michigan	1,196	Virginia	721
Minnesota	1,660	Washington	4,187
Mississippi	117	West Virginia	787
Missouri	2,790	Wisconsin	764
		Wyoming	1,915

Total: 101,264

* U. S. Bureau of Census, Census Reports, 1910

Foreign-Born Greeks in the United States (contd)
1920*

Alabama	915	Montana	1,465
Arkansas	277	Nebraska	1,504
Arizona	329	Nevada	618
California	10,313	New Hampshire	5,280
Colorado	1,802	New Jersey	4,521
Connecticut	3,851	New Mexico	288
Delaware	286	New York	26,117
Washington, D. C.	1,207	North Carolina	551
Florida	1,408	North Dakota	420
Georgia	1,473	Oklahoma	619
Idaho	716	Ohio	14,540
Illinois	16,405	Oregon	1,928
Indiana	4,182	Pennsylvania	13,893
Iowa	2,884	Rhode Island	1,219
Kansas	640	South Carolina	578
Kentucky	401	South Dakota	375
Louisiana	610	Tennessee	491
Maryland	964	Texas	1,977
Massachusetts	20,441	Utah	3,929
Maine	1,228	Vermont	167
Michigan	7,115	Virginia	1,796
Minnesota	2,391	Washington	4,214
Mississippi	207	West Virginia	3,186
Missouri	3,022	Wisconsin	3,833
		Wyoming	1,236

Total: 175,972

* U. S. Bureau of Census, Census Reports, 1920.

Foreign-Born Greeks in the United States (contd)
1930*

Alabama	968	Montana	840
Arkansas	312	Nebraska	822
Arizona	356	Nevada	499
California	12,675	New Hampshire	3,233
Colorado	1,230	New Jersey	6,020
Connecticut	3,337	New Mexico	292
Delaware	339	New York	33,537
Washington, D. C.	1,347	North Carolina	1,006
Florida	1,552	North Dakota	303
Georgia	1,197	Oklahoma	642
Idaho	414	Ohio	12,050
Illinois	20,003	Oregon	1,575
Indiana	4,087	Pennsylvania	11,646
Iowa	1,910	Rhode Island	1,100
Kansas	534	South Carolina	627
Kentucky	466	South Dakota	279
Maryland	1,617	Tennessee	523
Massachusetts	16,780	Texas	1,803
Maine	748	Utah	2,197
Michigan	10,061	Vermont	225
Minnesota	1,765	Virginia	1,285
Mississippi	342	Washington	2,881
Missouri	2,405	West Virginia	2,479
Louisiana	574	Wisconsin	2,900
		Wyoming	888

Total: 174,526

* U. S. Bureau of Census, Census Reports, 1930.

Foreign-Born Greeks in the United States (contd)
1940*

Alabama	759	Montana	681
Arkansas	238	Nebraska	718
Arizona	336	Nevada	359
California	12,421	New Hampshire	2,945
Colorado	1,049	New Jersey	5,288
Connecticut	3,041	New Mexico	346
Delaware	342	New York	34,800
Washington, D. C.	1,863	North Carolina	1,114
Florida	1,643	North Dakota	251
Georgia	981	Ohio	10,058
Idaho	345	Oklahoma	499
Illinois	18,428	Oregon	1,267
Indiana	3,747	Pennsylvania	10,510
Iowa	1,535	Rhode Island	987
Kansas	439	South Carolina	713
Kentucky	435	South Dakota	263
Louisiana	505	Tennessee	562
Maine	772	Texas	1,773
Maryland	1,686	Utah	1,882
Massachusetts	15,208	Vermont	188
Michigan	8,989	Virginia	1,270
Minnesota	1,761	Washington	2,476
Mississippi	206	West Virginia	1,915
Missouri	2,182	Wisconsin	2,636
		Wyoming	759

Total: 163,252

* U. S. Bureau of Census, Census Reports, 1940.

Appendix II

Greek Immigration to the United States by Sex

<u>Years</u>	<u>Total Immigration</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
1901-1910	56,658	49,319	7,339
1911-1914	40,130	31,644	8,486
1915-1919	25,181	17,068	8,113
1920-1924	27,757	14,928	12,829
1925-1926	3,342	1,579	1,763
1927	2,130	808	1,322
1928	2,211	730	1,481
1929	2,223	731	1,492

* U. S. Bureau of Census, Census Reports, 1930.

Appendix III

Greeks Admitted to the United States
under the Quota System, Adopted in
1924 and Revised in 1927 (1925-1948)*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>
1925	95	1937	370
1926	112	1938	351
1927	164	1939	381
1928	194	1940	346
1929	166	1941	232
1930	362	1942	---
1931	308	1943	378
1932	141	1944	385
1933	108	1945	218
1934	200	1946	291
1935	324	1947	133
1936	347	1948	213

* Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1949, United States, Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1950.

Appendix IV

EMIGRATION FROM THE UNITED STATES (1910-1924)*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Emigration</u>	<u>Emigration to Greece</u>
1910	202,436	8,144
1911	295,666	9,376
1912	333,262	11,461
1913	308,190	30,603
1914	303,338	11,124
1915	204,074	9,775
1916	129,765	4,829
1917	66,277	2,034
1918	94,585	2,986
1919	123,522	15,482
1920	228,315	20,314
1921	247,718	13,423
1922	198,712	7,506
1923	81,450	2,988
1924	74,789	7,250

* Walter F. Wilcox and Imre Ferenczi, International Migrations, I, 463.

Appendix V

Greeks Admitted to the United States (1910-1924)*

<u>Year</u>	<u>From Greece</u>	<u>From Turkey in Europe</u>	<u>From Turkey in Asia</u>	<u>From British North America</u>	<u>Total</u>
1910	25,675	8,959	3,693	361	39,135
1911	26,086	7,569	2,309	411	37,021
1912	21,283	7,134	2,147	400	31,566
1913	22,437	9,374	5,192	946	38,644
1914	34,832	3,631	4,946	937	45,881
1915	11,223	647	1,460	892	15,187
1916	22,589	229	1,279	906	26,792
1917	22,006	111	205	663	25,919
1918	1,784	9	7	156	2,602
1919	368	2	1	263	813
1920	10,893	565	259	396	13,998
1921	26,232	1,649	553	289	31,828
1922	3,115	279	279	109	3,821
1923	3,057	460	179	134	4,177
1924	4,001	108	196	273	5,252

* Wilcox and Fernczi, I, 463-73.

Appendix VI

Extracts from Newspaper Editorials, Letters and Speeches

Editorial, Harrisburg Sunday Courier, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, July 7, 1931.¹

"A Fine Demonstration of Good Citizenship"

. . . The natives of Greece who have become American citizens of Harrisburg have become a self-respecting and highly respected element of the community. They are right-thinking, substantial folks and good citizens.

* * *

Editorial, Pocatello Tribune Pocatello, Idaho, July 12, 1931.²

"Why Pick on the Greeks"

Every time an individual with a swarthy skin is arrested on some charge there is a tendency among certain people to speak of them as Greeks. No wonder that those of Greek descent in this country get disgusted. In Pocatello some of our best citizens are men and women who were born in Greece. We know many of them personally and find that they differ in no respect from good citizens of any other country. . . .

Editorial, The Cincinnati Inquirer, Cincinnati, Ohio, March 4, 1932.³

"The Greek Citizen"

. . . Here we have intimate knowledge of them, appreciate and understand them--see them as genuine and patriotic citizens or in encouraging process of becoming such citizens. And we are glad of their assimilability, of their quick and sturdy adaptation to ideals which have been the heritage of their immortal race for centuries, for ideals and concepts of freedom have been always a very part of their life and consciousness. . . . Their heritage of three thousand years is a proud one, and in America they have proved themselves worthy of the great traditions of their race.

¹ Reprinted in The Ahepan, 5:9 (August, 1931).

² Ibid., p. 36.

³ Ibid., 6:13 (April, 1932).

Editorial, The Sunday Missoulian, Missoula, Montana,
June 18, 1933.⁴

. . . The Greeks, naturalized and those on their way to secure final papers of citizenship, have shown praiseworthy devotion to American institutions and to American ideals. They want to be known as patriots, loyal to the code and ready to do their part, assuming all obligations without complaint and striving in every way to make themselves good citizens. . . . Missoula never has had a cause to be ashamed of those who have taken their places in the community. They have been found ready and willing to respond to the call for community service. Many of them have become leaders in the business life of the city. They are fine examples of American citizens and that they intend to maintain themselves as such is indicated by such activities of Ahepa as were in evidence at the dinner on Flag Day.

Editorial, The Binghamton Press, Binghamton, New York,
January 11, 1932.⁵

"The Greek is a Good Neighbor"

He is a thrifty person, a good husband, father and neighbor, who takes his duties of citizenship seriously and is particularly interested in the absorption of incoming fellow Greeks into the American System. And among the new groups he is perhaps the best racial example of distinction between the civic and the political. His interests in civics are naturally academic; rarely is he in politics and still more rarely in politics for profit.

Editorial, The New Mexican, Santa Fe, New Mexico, June 7, 1933.⁶

We sometimes get cynical about the land of the free and the home of the brave, its politics, its economic injustices, its corruption in high places, its racketeering and its crime.

It gives us a jolt when a group of foreign-extraction citizens, as happened here Monday night, do fervent and highly emotional homage to the flag and the government of America; and proclaim that they have organized thousands of their brothers for the single

⁴ Ibid., 7:5 (August, 1933).

⁵ Ibid., 6:6 (February, 1932).

⁶ Ibid., 7:5 (May, 1933).

purpose of making them better and more patriotic and law-abiding citizens of the United States.

It bids us pause when we learn that half of the entire Greek male population of this country bore arms for the United States in the World War.

And to know how they weave the golden age of Greece, Salamis and Thermopylae and a hundred ageless names of heroes, with Washington and Lincoln and the Argonne Forest into a fabric of militant Americanism in one of the most inspiring of all nationalistic experiences. . . .

Do we know more about America, are we more sophisticated and less naive than these children of the Acropolis or have they a racial experience which gives them a better perspective on the comparative blessings of government?

Have we spent too much time looking at the "dust and the cracks on the floor of the temple" and forgotten to look upward to its glory? . . .

Perhaps some of the rest of us might well organize to study and master the art of becoming better citizens, and to learn to be as unself-conscious about it as these men of Hellenic forbears who see it simply.

Editorial, The Lexington Leader, Lexington, Kentucky, April 16, 1931.⁷

There is every reason to believe that America's citizens of Greek extraction have a sincere appreciation of the ideals and traditions of their adopted land. . . . Lexingtonians do not have to go far from home to gain a realization that the Greek is a good citizen in all that the word implies. He is industrious, thrifty, law-abiding and has no axe to grind. All he asks is a chance to become an American. In exchange, he is quite willing to give more than he receives.

Editorial, Morning Call, Patterson, New Jersey, April 16, 1931.⁸

Very seldom are citizens of Greek origin or aliens from that country arrested. The great majority are earnest, ambitious individuals seeking to get along in their adopted country and working hard to establish themselves in a business of their own. They are anxious to become Americanized, learn our language rapidly, indulge in athletics and other worthwhile recreation and in every way possible conduct themselves in a manner that is admirable. They are among the best types of Europeans coming to this country to become citizens.

⁷ Ibid., 5:11 (June, 1931).

⁸ Ibid., 5:11 (June, 1931).

Editorial, Evening News, Port Angeles, Washington, February 20, 1931.⁹

As a group the men of Greek birth in Port Angeles have made good citizens. Law-abiding, patriotic, progressive, they have taken part in commercial and fraternity life. Their charities are many. They support the Chamber of Commerce. They pay their bills.

Letter to The Ahepan from Governor Harry H. Woodring of the State of Kansas, Topeka, July 3, 1931.¹⁰

. . . I am justly proud of my friends of Greek origin and I am proud to inform you that many of my best friends in the Commonwealth of Kansas belong to this race. Their actions and accomplishments have never given us cause to regret our social and business associations. . . .

Letter to The Ahepan from J. B. Snyder, Congressman from the State of Pennsylvania.¹¹

I have a number of Greeks in my district. As a high school principal I had Greeks in my school and always found them to be not only good students but outright, fiery, honest American citizens.

Letter to The Ahepan from Mayor D. W. Worrell of Durham, N. C.¹²

As mayor I had an opportunity to learn and understand the true attitude of the Hellenes in our city toward our civic, social, political and commercial life and true and abiding loyalty to American traditions and institutions. . . . Their places of business are usually found in good locations and always have high ratings given them by the local health department. Cleanliness and orderliness are evidenced on every hand and the general observance of law and order is commendable. It is gratifying that your people here have become property owners and are at all times willing to pay their rightful share of the expenses of government. . . .

Letter to The Ahepan from the Chief of Police of the City of Durham, N. C.¹³

Through my long association with the Greeks in my capacity as Chief of the Police Department, I am

⁹ Ibid., 5: 11 (June, 1931). ¹⁰ Ibid., 5:21 (July, 1931).
¹¹ Ibid., 14:31 (March-April, 1940). ¹² Ibid., 6:25 (January, 1932).
¹³ Ibid., 6:26 (January, 1932).

happy to count many friends among them whom I have come to appreciate heartily because they have proven to me their worth as honest merchants and law-abiding and obeying all the laws and ordinances of the city and cooperating with the Police Department willingly. In the civic and political affairs of Durham they take an active part and contribute their share to its welfare and progress. I cannot remember, within my experience as a member of the police force for thirty-two years, any one of your race arrested for any serious crime. But to the contrary, they enjoy the reputation for being peaceful in public life and home-loving in their private life.

Address by the Governor of Illinois, Louis L. Emerson.¹⁴

"The Sons of Greece in Illinois"

Illinois is fortunate in the sons of Greece which it has attracted to its doors. Seldom has one been found wanting in answering the call of service. When the nation sounded the cry of danger in the World War, thousands of Greek parentage answered. Some were left on the field of battle. Others more fortunate returned.

An address by the Governor of Kentucky, Flem D. Samson.¹⁵

Here in Kentucky we are proud of the 64,000 Greeks who enlisted in the United States Army. In word and in truth they are real Americans. . . . They are good Americans, because they respect the law, respect the flag. Peace and order, that is what these citizens want, and here in our own city and state, thousands upon thousands of them are good, useful citizens.

Address by the Governor of Massachusetts, William S. Youngman.¹⁶

. . . I have visited probably every town and city in the state during the past year, and I want to tell you wherever I go, and I find our citizens of Greek origin anticipating whether they will take a chance

¹⁴ Ibid., 6:24 (January, 1932).

¹⁵ Ibid., 5:21 (May, 1931).

¹⁶ Ibid., 4:16 (November, 1930).

to start a little store or start some enterprise, and they are appealed to by the local chambers of commerce and what not, you find them as ready to go ahead and take the risk as was that famous hero, George Dilboy.

Message by Governor J. Garland Pollard of Virginia.¹⁷

Many citizens of Greece have become residents of our state and it is with great pleasure that I, as Governor, testify to the fact that they have been a good, law-abiding people who have endeared themselves to Virginians. I desire to thank the people of Greece for their contribution to the upbuilding of our State. . . .

Address by C. O. Kuester of the Chamber of Commerce, Charlotte, N. C.¹⁸

True Greeks never shun their responsibility. They also believe in a program of live and let live and so we of Charlotte think a great deal of our Greek citizens. The average Greek citizen of our city is making his contribution toward society. Our Greeks in Charlotte are very thrifty people. Those that are married make good husbands, fathers and splendid neighbors--as above stated, we believe them to be good citizens in every respect. They take their citizenship seriously, and we rarely ever find any of our Greek citizens in politics for personal gain, but always trying to help Charlotte to a finer and greater city. At the beginning of the World War they answered the call by enlisting in the United States Army. They bought liberally of our bonds and donated liberally to various organizations that were assisting in the war activities at that time. . . .

They make good merchants and the businesses which they own in Charlotte are carried along in a most high-toned manner, and they enjoy the respect of our citizens 100 per cent.

Finally, we are glad to have this group with us, and as manager of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, I know that they have never failed a single time to answer any of the calls we have made upon them toward the building of a greater city and greater commonwealth.

Article by an American clergyman, Rev. Thomas J. Lacey.¹⁹

For the past 25 years the Greeks have entered into

¹⁷ Ibid., 5:15 (March, 1931). ¹⁸ Ibid., 6:13 (April, 1932).

¹⁹ Thomas J. Lacey, "The Romance of Greek Immigration to the United States," The Ahepan, 6:24 (June, 1932). 32).

¹⁹ Thomas J. Lacey, "The Romance of Greek Immigration to the United States," The Ahepan, 6:24 (June, 1932).

predisposed to the best ideals of our country. Their historic love of statesmanship, democratic spirit, initiative, self-reliance and thrift make them a desirable asset in any locality. They participate actively in civic affairs. They are public spirited and adjust themselves easily to our ways. As a representative of the older American stock, I say to these sons of Hellas, welcome.