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**The Nationalism of Greek Language:
The two Faces of Janus in the early 20th Century**

The language issue in Greece provoked by the propagators of the ‘purist’ language (*katharevousa*) and those of demotic (vernacular or common Greek), created confusion and various dichotomies for almost two centuries in the political, social and education life of the country.

Most of the studies identify an ethnocentric perspective of the language only with the supporters of the classical education as well as of the ‘purist’ language. They are oblivious of the different readings of demoticism, representing two different intellectual and ideological traits, which co-existed in the demoticist movement. They disregard the fact that in the demoticist movement there were not only supporters of the social or class-dividing role of the language, but also of its national meaning.

This study will attempt to analyse the nationalism of the supporters of the Greek vernacular and that of the ‘purists’ as well as the differences and the overlapping between them. It will investigate how the fulfilment or failure of the militant aspect of the Great Idea from the late nineteenth century until the arrival of the Asia Minor refugees in Greece, formulated in the expansionist ideology of a state of two continents and five seas failed (Great Idea), promoted these two different readings of linguistic nationalism inherent in the language issue of Greece. As John Edwards notices, “although language can be extremely important feature of identity, we cannot endorse the view that a given language is essential for identity maintenance”.¹ From this perspective it is also interesting to

¹ J. Edwards, *Language, Society and Identity*, Oxford, 1985, p. 22.

examine which was the type of identities and national ideals promoted by the specific types of language promoted by the supporters of demotic and ‘purist’ Greek.

The paper is divided in two parts: firstly, it traces the origins of linguistic dichotomy provoked by the propagators of the ‘purist’ language and those of vernacular, and explores the language or education ideals that were put forward by both sides and the policy-makers of the education reforms of the 1910s. Secondly it investigates the same perspectives of the language issue, when Greece was called upon to settle and integrate foreign-speaking populations who were included in her territory after the expansion of her frontiers in the Balkan wars as well as more than million refugees who fled to Greece from Asia Minor after the end of the Greek-Turkish war in 1923.

Different readings of linguistic nationalism and language issue in Greece

The Greek ‘purist’ language was institutionalised from the establishment of the Greek state. It was perhaps not surprising that this language became the preferred means of intellectual communication and triumphed as the official language of the education system, the Parliament, the legislation, the press, the Church, and the university, from the establishment of the Greek state until the 1980s. This language was the creation of a romantic epoch, when scholars influenced by the values of the French Enlightenment and Revolution conceptualised the dissemination of Greek culture as a prerequisite for the political independence of Greece and the revival of a Greek sense of common memory and ethnicity.² To cultivate a cultural affinity with the ancient past, scholars undertook the task of “transforming the modern Greeks into beings worthy of Pericles and Socrates”³ and of purifying and “approximating the language as much as possible to ancient Greek”.⁴ The linguist Ada-

² A.D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, USA 1986, pp. 114-115.

³ E. Kedourie, *Nationalism in Asia and Africa*, New York 1970, p. 40.

⁴ F. Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics*, London 1945, p. 92.

mantios Korais, saw language in terms similar to Fichte⁵ as a tool for the manifestation of national character. Being committed to classical civilisation, he devised an artificial language (later known as *katharevousa*) which aimed at ‘debarbarising’ and purifying the ‘vulgar’ popular tongue and approximating it as closely as possible to the ancient Greek. By codifying the language in this way, he was able to promote the national ideal since it «reminded the Greeks of their great ancient past and their own link with it».⁶

However, as Hobsbawm stresses, Korais was neither Luther nor Dante and the language he devised, though prestigious, “was ill-suited to become a national one”.⁷ Its manufacture implied regression, reversing linguistic development for the sake of reviving the glory of classical.⁸ The result was what Cambell described as “one of the by-products of the Hellenic myth in modern Greece [which] has been an ever-worsening confusion of language”.⁹ But the purist language continued to be protected by all those who identified themselves with the prestige, social stratification or the racial kinship with ancient and Christian Greece. It acquired deep roots in the administrative and professional elite of the country (particularly among lawyers), which identified itself with its use. As Mavrogordatos accurately points out:

generations of government officials, university professors, and lesser educators, typically of humble peasant background, have been the most rabid defenders of the official language, against the popular language. Com-

⁵ “Fichte took Herder’s general (and neutral) ideas about the nature of language further, pronouncing value-laden judgements on specific languages in a nationalistic manner which would be unacceptable today”, quoted from Ch. Hofmann, *An Introduction to Bilingualism*, New York 1991, p. 203.

⁶ J.P.C. Clark–A.G. Carey, *The Web of Modern Greek Politics*, New York 1968, p. 49.

⁷ E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1870. Programme, myth, reality*, Cambridge 1990, p. 60.

⁸ R. Browning, *Medieval and Modern Greek*, Cambridge 1983, pp. 100–118.

⁹ J. Campbell–Ph. Sherrard, *Modern Greece*, London 1968, p. 243.

*mand of the official language was precisely the mark of their hard-won status.*¹⁰

In this context, *katharevousa* remained what Hobsbawm described as “the official or culture-language of rulers and elite” as well as “the official language of Greek state *via* public secondary or higher education and other administrative mechanisms”.¹¹

On the other hand, one may suggest that the Greek vernacular language, fulfilled all the terms of “a language which has not been standardised and which does not have official status”.¹² Until the establishment of an independent Greek State (1830) the term ‘Greek’ had covered both the vernacular language usually known as ‘Romaic’, as well as ‘Greek’, which referred to the ancient language. This division was to be a source of confusion.¹³ Campbell points out that the vernacular language itself was what the people spoke “as a natural development from the Greek of the Byzantine period, very much as modern English is a natural and organic development from Chaucerian English”.¹⁴

In the event, the codification of the demotic language took a lot of time. As a written language it prevailed primarily in folk stories and poetry.¹⁵ It was only in 1888, that Psycharis –an expatriate philologist who taught linguistics at the Sorbonne– launched a demoticist crusade and attempted to devise a grammar in order to standardise the demotic language.¹⁶ He also declared the unity of Byzantine history with the other history of Hellenism along with

¹⁰ G.Th. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922-1936*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 1983, p. 170.

¹¹ Hobsbawm, *op.cit.*, p. 62.

¹² J. Holmes, *Learning about language. An introduction to sociolinguistics*, London 1992, p. 80.

¹³ P. Mackridge, *The Modern Greek Language: A Descriptive Analysis of Standard Modern Greek*, Oxford 1985, p. 7.

¹⁴ Campbell–Sherrard, *op.cit.*, p. 242.

¹⁵ H. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: an inquiry into the origins of nations and the politics of nationalism*, London 1977, p. 114.

¹⁶ M. Vitti, *Ιστορία της Νεοελληνικής Λογοτεχνίας* (History of Neo-hellenic Literature), Athens 1987, p. 289.

the ‘psycho synthesis of Romios’ and “opposed to the Latin elements of culture or the archaic language of *katharevousa* which he considered responsible for the disregard of the ‘Romios’ cognates”.¹⁷ His efforts reflected new currents of thought that were developing in Greek society during the 1880s, which opposed the dominance of romanticism and the prevailing archaic cultural viewpoint. The failure of Greek ‘irredentist’ policy, the activation of Balkan nationalism, the economic bankruptcy of 1893, and the Greek defeat in the Greek-Turkish conflict of 1897, all brought about a profound crisis in Greek society. For many, such events made imperative the need for an ideological transformation on the grounds that the traditional nation’s values had led the country to bankruptcy, defeat and humiliation in every aspect of social life.¹⁸

According to Beaton:

*from about 1880, alongside the discovery of folklore, as a repository for ancient customs and beliefs surviving in modern times, comes and interest in the traditional life and particularly in the language of the economically backward peasants.*¹⁹

Although the political ideal of the Great Idea still remained powerful, a new nationalism, which placed greater emphasis on the Greek world, both temporal and physical, and on the acceptance of demoticism, was emerging.

From then on, *katharevousa* and the supremacy of classical Greece were rejected as exponents of national culture and the demoticist movement acquired a more combative spirit. Authors and playwrights, such as Nikolaos Politis, Dragoumis, Palamas, Giannopoulos, and others, supported the demoticist movement enthusiastically and “argued that they could not write about everyday

¹⁷ D. Tziovas, *The nationism of the demoticists and the impact on their literary theory (1888-1930): An analysis based on their literary criticism and essays*, Amsterdam 1986, p. 82.

¹⁸ G.B. Leonardaritis, «Εθνισμός και Διεθνισμός: Πολιτική ιδεολογία» (Nationalism and Internationalism: Political Ideology), in D.G. Tsalousis (ed.), *Ελληνισμός Ελληνικότητα* (Hellenism Greekness), Athens 1983, p. 28.

¹⁹ R. Beaton, “Romanticism in Greece”, in R. Porter–M. Teich, *Romanticism in National Context*, Cambridge 1988, p. 97.

Greek life when most of the vocabulary associated with that life was excluded".²⁰ Their writings eloquently expressed their concern about the creative forces of the Hellenic civilisation, and took the form of a critical, if not negative, attitude towards the western pattern of development.²¹ It should be noticed that the importance of tradition and classicism for the propagators of classical education and *katharevousa* remained unshakeable even at the most crucial points of national humiliation and disappointment for the country. Even when the shock of financial bankruptcy and the defeat in the Greek-Turkish war for the liberation of Crete, which generated an extensive criticism of the Greek social and political system, did not bring a real change in the outlook of the propagators of the purist language. Instead, they kept on having faith in the values of the classical model of education and fighting for the validity of their national or class values. Thus in 1899 the poet Georgios Drosines founded an organisation (the Society for the Spread of Useful Books) which endeavoured to supply reading materials –written in *katharevousa*– for the enlightenment of the people in the countryside.²²

However, the castles of ‘purist’ language were very strong in the Greek state.²³ Despite its dynamism, the demoticist movement was denounced as being involved in a Russian plot to take over Greece. In 1901, the publication of a translation of the New Testament into the popular tongue in the Athenian newspaper *Acropolis* set off riots and provoked bloodshed. The incident, known as *Evangelikiaka*, resulted in the fall of the government. Because Queen Olga, who had asked for the translation, was of Russian origin, there were accusations of Russian ‘roubles’ levelled against the propagators of demoticism. The latter were considered as instigators of a pan-

²⁰ Mackridge, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

²¹ K. Vergopoulos, *Εθνισμός και οικονομική ανάπτυξη. Η Ελλάδα στο Μεσοπόλεμο* (Nationalism and economic development, Greece in the inter-war period), Athens 1978, p. 110.

²² G. Augustinos, *Consciousness and History: National Critics of Greek Society, 1897-1914*, New York 1977, p. 31.

²³ Ch. Lefas, *Ιστορία της εκπαίδευσης* (History of Education, Athens 1942, pp. 448-449).

slavist influence in favour of the Slavs of Macedonia.²⁴ In this context, *katharevousa* was perceived as the touchstone of patriotism and the Greek State attempted to prohibit the corruption of its 'purist' official language and the degradation of its traditions. In 1903 the performance of an Aeschylus' ancient Greek tragedy (*Orestia*) in Athens' Royal Theatre, in a translation that did not respect the norms of 'purist' language, ended up with fighting between the supporters of *katharevousa* and the police. Two dead and seven wounded confirmed that language issue continued to stir nationalist emotions in Greek society. In his inflammatory speech Professor G. Mistriotis accused the supporters of demotic as atheists who undermined religion and language.²⁵

During that period, the director of the Schools of Girls in Volos, Alexandros Delmouzos, who had introduced the teaching of Greek vernacular, considered as member of masonry and atheist. The Archbishop of Dimitriada who visited the school noticed that the staff did not kiss his hand and there was no pray in the morning. Within this context, the demoticist ideals were considered to be anti-patriotic and anti-religious and the school to be transformed into German or Frankish.²⁶ Norms for the protection of *katharevousa* as the official state language were introduced into the Constitution of 1911, which also designated any attempt to change its status as a punishable offence. Once more, the demoticists were accused of functioning as Russian agents of pan-slavist propaganda by the conservative and 'purist' commentators. In actual fact, whenever the royalists –who had historically benefited from a system of social stratification based on the command of the 'purist' language– were in power, the demoticists were dismissed from the government offices they held and all demotic reforms were abolished. Thus, the propagators of demoticism were to become subject to a defamatory campaign by the conservative spokesmen and

²⁴ Augoustinos, *op.cit.*, p. 31.

²⁵ Al. Dimaras (ed.), *Η μεταρρύθμιση που δεν έγινε* (The reformation which was not brought about), vol. I, Athens 1974, vol. II, Athens 1987, p. 307.

²⁶ Dimaras, *op.cit.*, pp. 86-88.

Press. Their education establishments (i.e. Marasleios School) were identified with centres of immorality.²⁷

Later on, the Russian Revolution “only served to make such accusations all more emotive”.²⁸ After the Russian Revolution a climate of anti-Communism also prevailed in Greek society. After that, the language issue became even more a political problem. Accusations were levelled at demoticists by the press, the ‘purist’ men of letters and the anti-Venizelist or conservative spokesmen in general. Demoticists were also characterised as ‘vulgarists’ and ‘*maliaro-communists*’ (long-hair communists), their way of speaking being denigrated as non-intellectual and uncultured. At that time many demoticist hopes were deferred. Every attempt to advocate the vernacular language, even in the social life of Greece, gave rise to vertical social divisions and sometimes threatened political stability. It was seen as an attempt to create political anarchism in Greek society. As a result, the demoticist educators Glinos and Delmouzos lost their posts in the Ministry of Education and legal actions were taken against them.²⁹ As the Minister of Education of the Royalist government, Th. Zaimes, put it “the government should refrain from obeying the linguistic instincts of the masses since the adoption of that ‘vulgar’ type of popular language by the Greek schools would lead to barbarity”.³⁰ As Psomas singles out, “when the Royalists, however, came to power in 1920, they burned the text-books, which had been written in that form of language, and introduced *katharevousa*”.³¹

Paradoxically, it was also along nationalist ideals that supporters of demotic “rejected the use of the *katharevousa*, the supremacy of classical Greece and the emulation of the West in favour of a na-

²⁷ A. Fragoudaki, *Εκπαιδευτική μεταρρύθμιση και φιλελεύθεροι διανοούμενοι* (Education Reform and Liberal Intellectuals), Athens 1977, p. 74.

²⁸ Mackridge, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

²⁹ M. Tsirimokos, «Ιστορία του Εκπαιδευτικού Ομίλου» (History of the Educational Society), *Nea Estia* 2 (1-8-1927), 476.

³⁰ *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων* (Gazette of the Debates), 58th Session, 8-7-1921, pp. 934, 959.

³¹ A.I. Psomas, *The Nation, the State and the International System: The Case of Modern Greece*, Athens 1977, pp. 193-195.

tionism that included less reliance on Europe as standard”.³² Those who espoused demotic language constituted a heterogeneous group of intellectuals with political orientations. Their common ideal, however, was the propagation of the ‘living popular language’ and the battle against ‘bilingualism’.³³ Within this framework, demoticists felt the necessity of putting more efforts in the organising aspect of their movement so that to have a real impact on Greek society. They were deeply concerned with education matters and the main outlet for their views was the periodical *O Noumas* (published in 1903). Their first organisation –the Society of National Language– which was founded in 1905, lasted only three months.³⁴ Its members constituted a heterogeneous group of intellectuals with various political orientations that varied from nationalism to socialism.³⁵

Nonetheless, for the nationalists or ethnocentrists supporters of the Greek vernacular language, as Tziovas calls them, the emphasis of the indigenous demotic literature had to be upon the portrayal of the locality and the distinctiveness of their country.³⁶ For the socialist language was to be the means of shaping the social consciousness of people. Different ideological traits could be also detected in the demoticist movement in the following years and in the subsequent forms of their organisation.

These different traits were encapsulated in the most powerful demoticist lobby. That was the *Ekpedeftikos Omilos* (Educational Society). It was founded in 1910, with the ideal of propagation of the popular language and the dissemination of progressive ideas and the reorientation of education towards the practical, ‘secular’, non-romantic needs of the state and civil society. This new attitude towards education and culture was conceived as a synonym to de-

³² Augoustinos, *op.cit.*, p. 39.

³³ G. Kordatos, *Ιστορία του γλωσσικού ζητήματος* (History of Our Language Question), Athens 1973, 2nd ed., p. 159.

³⁴ M. Tsirimokos, «Ιστορία του Εκπαιδευτικού Ομίλου» (History of the Educational Society), *Nea Estia* 7 (15-7-1927), 403.

³⁵ Tsirimokos, *op.cit.*

³⁶ Tziovas, *op.cit.*, p. 403.

moticism by the anti-Venizelist political and social strata.³⁷ Its members were closely associated with the Ministry of Education when the Venizelist governments came to power. Demotic became the language of the primary schooling system in 1913 for the first time, and again in the period between 1917 and 1920. In actual fact, demotic language was introduced in 1917 as part of the educational reforms instituted by the Venizelos government. For the first time in Greek history, demotic texts were introduced in the primary education system for a short period of time in 1913 and between 1917 and 1920. At that time, the members of the EO took up ministerial post several times. Moreover, they worked closely with Tsirimokos, Venizelos' Minister of Education, for the education reform of 1913. The outcome of this collaboration was that many people thought that the EO was the secret adviser of the Venizelist governments.³⁸

As in the case of the Society of National Language, the founders of the EO included an entire ideological range, from pure nationalists like Mavilis, Karkavitsas, Ramas, Ion Dragoumis, Petrokokkinos, Soteriadis and Pasagiannis, who endorsed the use of demotic language as an 'evolutionist' approach to the progressive ideas of their time;³⁹ romantic demoticists like Tsirimokos, Triantafyllides, Delmouzos, etc., who constructed a Herderian romantic perception of ethnocentric idealism and shared an organic theory of language as a determinant or exponent of the original national soul; and Marxists or socialists (Demetrios Glinos, Georgios Skleros, Kostas Hatzopoulos, Nicos Kazantzakis, etc.) who maintained that the purpose of a progressive education policy was to shape the consciousness of the people. Among the Marxist members of the EO, Glinos (who came from Asia Minor) inspired all the demoticists who espoused his ideas that an education reform in a class-divided society was inseparable from the cultivation of social and political consciousness, as well as that demotic language was a synonym for

³⁷ Vergopoulos, *op.cit.*, p. 114.

³⁸ M. Tsirimokos, «Ιστορία του Εκπαιδευτικού Ομίλου» (History of the Educational Society), *Nea Estia* 8 (August 1927), 469.

³⁹ Tsirimokos, *op.cit.*, 7 (15-7-1927), 405.

‘light’ and ‘eyes’ for the suppressed classes.⁴⁰ He regarded demotocist education as the means of social and ideological transformation. On the other hand, the bourgeois approach –as it was called by Glinos’ group– envisioned demotocist education as the vehicle to instil patriotism in children and to push forward moral values and national ideals at the social forum.⁴¹ Alexandros Delmouzos, who became the opposite intellectual pole to Marxism in the EO, argued on a Herderian pattern of thinking that the qualities of modern Greek culture were to be found in Greek nature and folk culture and mainly in the vernacular language. He endorsed the romantic, a-political principles of an ethnocentric idealism in the educational role of the EO. He also claimed that any reform in the education system had to foster a self-aware patriotism and a collective self-knowledge of Greece and its history, which could materialise the vision of national self-preservation as well as that of a “universal humanism”.⁴²

It is worth of noting that since the 1910s Greece, itself, was not a homogeneous country in terms of language. A variety of dialects or languages were spoken by the indigenous population. According to the first census in 1838, Greece covered only 47,516 square kilometres and her population was 752,077. When the Greek state was enlarged from 1863 onwards with the incorporation of Ionian Islands, Thessaly, Crete, Epirus, Thrace and Macedonia, it had to cope with an amalgamation either of languages spoken by minorities (Slavs, Albanians, Spanish-speaking Jews, Vlachs, etc.) –who had lived in these areas since the times of the Ottoman or even the Byzantine Empire– or local dialects and idioms (Chiots, Epirots, Cretans, etc.). As Petsalis-Diomides noted in 1881, “well over five million Greeks still dwelt beyond the Greek borders (...) Nearly all of them were Turkish citizens: Greek was not always their lan-

⁴⁰ G.Chr. Soulis, *Δημήτριος Γληνός 1882-1946* (Dimitrios Glinos 1882-1946), Athens 1946, p. 6.

⁴¹ P. Delta, «Στοχασμοί περί της ανατροφής των παιδιών μας» (Thoughts on the Education of Our Children), *Δελτίον του Εκπαιδευτικού Ομίλου* (Bulletin of the Educational Society) 1 (1911), 80; quoted from Augoustinos, *op.cit.*, p. 36.

⁴² A. Delmouzos, *Δημοτικισμός και παιδεία* (Demotocism and Education), Athens 1926, pp. 12-34, 142-177.

guage”.⁴³ Despite the fact that the Balkan Wars and the First World War brought about the exodus of many Muslims to Turkey or of Slav-speakers to Serbia and Bulgaria enough of those populations remained in northern Greece. Thus, in 1912 Slav-speakers formed the majority in some areas of the north-west Macedonia, “while in Salonica the Greek-speaking Orthodox population constituted only the third largest group after the Jewish and Muslim communities”.⁴⁴

Since the turn of the century, the ethnocentric supporters of demotic had considered the Greek vernacular as the *Volk* of their nation and as serving the integration of linguistic minorities in Greece. The importance of Greek vernacular education had been particularly appreciated as a tool for the assimilation of foreign speaking populations, who populated mainly the northern areas of the country. A leaflet of the ‘National Language’ Society published an article by Manolis Triantaphyllides –a propagator of demoticism and the future editor of the first grammar of demotic language– under the title “Our language in the schools of Macedonia”. His article underlined the need to teach in the spoken ‘demotic’ language, particularly in these the northern areas:

the big weapon of the nation in Macedonia is the school. Yet, these who love the truth, tell straight out to that this weapon would have been extremely dangerous to the enemies, if the Greek children of Macedonia had learned their mother tongue at school, and had not struggled against the grammar. [...] In the kinder-gardens of Macedonia the Bulgarian-speaking Greek children till the year 1900 did not learn even a word in Greek, since the teachers made them to read texts of katharevousa or ancient attic language [...]. The same thing does happen with the Bulgarian speaking or Vlach speaking Greeks of Macedonia.

⁴³ N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Confernece (1919)*, Thessaloniki 1978, p. 1.

⁴⁴ P. Mackridge–El. Yiannakis, *Ourseleves and Others. The development of a Greek Macedonia; Cultural identity since 1912*, Oxford 1997, p. 6.

*Even these people are lost by the Greek nation, because the school is not able to transform them into Greek-speaking, for it teaches them a 'dead' language. The Bulgarian, however, school can make them Bulgarian-speaking, since the language of the Bulgarian teacher, the language of the Bulgarian textbooks is the same with the language of the society where he lives and works.*⁴⁵

On similar lines, Manolis Triantafyllides maintained that “the Greek state has failed in the issue of hellenization of non-native speakers”, stressing the point that without teaching in the demotic “linguistic assimilation cannot be implemented in the schools of Macedonia and anywhere that foreign speakers exist”.⁴⁶ The point was made strongly that in order not to condemn the non-Greek speaking refugees to double illiteracy by teaching them with two forms of Greek, *katharevousa* should not be taught in the foreign-speaking villages, “since it is a type of language that they do not hear on their daily basis”.⁴⁷

The Marxist reading of demoticism did not express any view on the use of language as tool of national integration. At intellectual level, the linguistic crisis was escalated by the break-away of the most important demoticist organisation (EO) in 1927. The disagreement was to become more apparent in the General Assembly of 1927, which led to the split of the EO. In the General Assembly of 1927 the opposed views became apparently and irreversibly polarised.⁴⁸ Fragoudaki conceived the polarisation of these two demoticist attitudes not only as a dichotomy of education between

⁴⁵ M. Triantafyllides, «Η γλώσσα μας στα σχολεία της Μακεδονίας» (Our language at the schools of Macedonia), *Δελτίο του Εκπαιδευτικού Ομίλου* (Bulletin of Ekpedeftikos Omilos) 5 (1915), 32-33, quoted from: A. Fragoudaki, *The Education Demoticism and the Linguistic Reconciliation of 1911*, Ioannina 1977, p. 68.

⁴⁶ Triantafyllides, *op.cit.*, quoted in Dimitris Tziouvas, “Heteroglossia and the defeat of regionalism”, *Cambos* (Cambridge Papers in Modern Greek) 2 (1994), 111.

⁴⁷ Triantafyllides, *op.cit.*

⁴⁸ Dimaras, *op.cit.*, pp. 151-153.

liberal and intellectuals, but also as a clear negative response of Delmouzos, at a social and cultural level, to the rise of leftist political and intellectual trends in the transitional social phase that entered the whole of Greek society after the rise of Communist ideology and the Asia Minor defeat.⁴⁹

In the event, it is interesting to examine how the obligatory exchange of religious minorities between Turkey and Greece after the end of the Asia Minor war changed the linguistic balances in the Greek state.

Katharevousa versus demotic after the exchange of populations

Far more important than all the settlements of the Lausanne Treaty that ended the war, was the convention that called for the first obligatory exchange of populations in the world's history based exclusively on the criteria of religion.⁵⁰ By April 1923, some 355,000⁵¹ of the Muslim population of Greece had been removed from Greece to Turkey. The Muslim population of Western Thrace along with the Greek population of Constantinople (Istanbul) and that of the islands Imvros and Tenedos were exempted from the exchange. Finally, the census of 1928 recorded 1,221,555 refugees who were finally settled in Greece.⁵² As a result, Greece became responsible for handling the consequences of a sudden and sharp increase in demographic terms. Scholars seem to agree that as Hellenism contracted within the borders of the Greek State after 1923, that "Greece became one of the most ethnically homogene-

⁴⁹ Fragoudaki, *Εκπαιδευτική μεταρρύθμιση, op.cit.*, p. 120.

⁵⁰ "As from 1st May 1923, there shall take place a compulsory exchange of Turkish nationals of the Greek Orthodox religion established in Turkish territory and of Greek nationals of the Moslem religion established in Greek territory. These persons shall not return to live in Turkey or Greece respectively without the authorisation of the Turkish or the Greek government respectively". League of Nations, Treaty Series, Volume xxviii, 1925, Numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4, No. 807, p. 12.

⁵¹ H.J. Psomiades, *The Eastern Question, The Last Phase*, Thessaloniki 1968, p. 68.

⁵² *Statistical Annual of Greece*, Athens 1931, p. 31.

ous countries in the Balkans”.⁵³ However, since religion was the exclusive criterion of exchangeability, there were who “found themselves living in virtual exile among their co-religionists of alien speech”.⁵⁴

Some information about the cultural and educational background of the refugees in their country of origin is obviously significant, since these elements are always considered as “essential factors in the process of their integration”.⁵⁵

Particularly, from the middle of the nineteenth century, the Greek schooling system was extended all over the Ottoman Empire due to an enormous economic and structural reforming activity of the Ottoman Empire. During the 1860s, the Porte adopted both the principles of a centralised secular state and the conceptualisation of Europe as ‘the exemplar of modern civilisation’.⁵⁶ In literary terms, the demoticist movement flourished in the centres of the *diaspora* (Constantinople, Smyrna, Egypt, etc.) approximately in the same period (1900-1910) –perhaps five years later than its Athenian counterpart.⁵⁷

In real terms, the level of instruction in the Greek schools in Anatolia was in the ‘purist’ language, following the pattern laid down in Greece, since textbooks and teaching methods were the same and most of the lay-men teachers employed in Asia Minor schools had been educated in Athens.⁵⁸ Thus the whole system reproduced the environment of linguistic controversy in Greece and, any effort to advocate the vernacular language was seen as a degradation of the glorified ancient Greek culture and civilization.

⁵³ R. Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, Cambridge 1992, p. 106.

⁵⁴ G. Lewis, *History of Modern Turkey*, London 1965, pp. 75-78.

⁵⁵ B. Moldenhawer, “Discourses on Cultural Differences: The Case of Schooling”, in A. Alund–R. Granqvist (eds), *Negotiating Identities. Essays on Immigration and Culture in the Present-Day Europe*, Amsterdam-Atlanta G.A. 1995, p. 74.

⁵⁶ R. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876*, Princeton 1963, pp. 114-135.

⁵⁷ G. Kordatos, *Ιστορία του γλωσσικού μας ζητήματος* (History of our Linguistic Problem), Athens 1973, pp. 150-153.

⁵⁸ Charles de Scherzer, *Smyrna. Geographical, Financial and Cultural View*, Part I, Athens 1995, p. 142.

In 1903, for instance, the records of the community council –summoned under the chairmanship the pontifical churchwarden of St. Kyzikou (N. Papadopoulou)– inform us that it was decided unanimously to relieve I. Alanthithes of his teaching duties,

*due to his abrupt manners and his persistent disobedience to the orders of the school-board as well as due to his tenacity of his wrong ideas about the demotic language, which were preached by him at the school and the coffee-shops, despite the exhortations of those in charge of the studies.*⁵⁹

Moreover, in 1920, the director of the boy’s school in Panormos, threatened to resign in the middle of the school year, because the teaching of Greek lessons in the last two grades of the school was about to be given to a newly employed demoticist teacher. The director actually took legal action against the school board, maintaining that his skills were based on the excellent teaching he had received when studying in Athens.⁶⁰ He also levelled accusations of inadequacy at the demoticist teacher, whose teaching he criticised as “being consumed in ‘sterile’ rules of grammar”. On the basis of these allegations he then demanded that he be appointed as the only instructor of Modern Greek in the advanced grades of the school and so be entitled to teach “the marvellous, beneficial and crystallised language introduced in the past years, rather than the *mal-liarist* linguistic idiom”.⁶¹ He also claimed that he did not want to teach in demotic language, since he wished to “keep his reputation free from all slurs”.⁶² However, the head of the committee argued that he personally approved the system of the demoticist teacher, since he realised that his pupils gained a deeper knowledge of syntax and grammar and were better acquainted with the newly-intro-

⁵⁹ General Archives of the Greek State (GAK), Prefecture of Kolonias, Niko-poleos, Community: Argyroupoleos (Gioumounochane) in Pontus, Manuscript file: No. 462. 5 July 1903, (Translated from Greek), p. 101

⁶⁰ GAK, Community of Panormos, Manuscript file: No. 453, Prefecture of Panormos, District of Kyzikos, Protocol number: 7360, Meeting: IA, 16 September 1920, (Translated from Greek), pp. 269-270.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

duced books than those of the ‘purist’ teacher. However, the school board finally yielded to the legal action taken by the ‘purist’ teacher, on the pragmatic grounds that “it did not want to create a chaos during the school year”.⁶³

Within this framework, the Greek language was further disseminated through the proliferating schooling system that was encouraged by the prosperous Greek bourgeois, supported by their respective communities. Apart from foreign languages, all school subjects were taught in Greek. Indeed, no Turkish was taught in the Greek schools until 1895, when the Ottoman government issued new regulations that made the teaching of the Turkish language in non-Muslim schools obligatory.⁶⁴ As Dieterich remarked:

*these schools were established for the study of the Greek and not the Turkish language, the latter tongue being taught as a foreign language, occupying the same place in the curriculum of the Greek schools as the foreign languages hold in European or American schools.*⁶⁵

In fact, studies of the early twentieth century concluded that the linguistic configuration of Asia Minor presented an analogy to that in the Greek State, where, according to the data of the census of 1928, the dark picture of illiteracy and deprivation in the rural districts was somewhat offset by the educational activity of the cities, and mainly of the Athenian centre.⁶⁶ In many ways, the highly urbanised and flourishing commercial centre of Smyrna (Izmir) gave the impression of a Greek cultural capital in Asia Minor: “Smyrna and its environs (Tsesmes, Phocaea, Vourla, Scala Nuova, etc.) spoke a language very close to the pure literary Greek language [...], and the numerous schools in the *villayet* of Smyrna ‘purify’

⁶³ Ibid., p. 453.

⁶⁴ A.M. Kazamias, *Education and Quest for Modernity in Turkey*, London 1966, p. 95.

⁶⁵ K. Dieterich, *Hellenism in Asia Minor*, New York 1918, p. 15.

⁶⁶ Mavrogordatos, *op.cit.*, p. 291.

daily the language from its idioms”.⁶⁷ Izmir functioned as the metropolis of linguistic standardisation and purification of language in Asia Minor, whereas the periphery was full of local idioms, accents, Greek dialects, or even Turkish-speaking Christian populations. In fact, “the more we move away from the city of Izmir (Smyrna) the more the number of Turkish-speaking villages increases sharply”.⁶⁸

In the event, a number of Greek dialects, “apparently native to Asia, or have at least been settled there since pre-Turkish times”,⁶⁹ were spoken by the Greek-Orthodox residents throughout the area. An article in the refugee newspaper *Prosfygikos Cosmos* (Refugee World), similarly drew the attention of its readers to the fact that:

*The great majority of the inhabitants of Asia Minor, particularly in its interior, were Turkish-speaking. However, the education movement, which set off in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and promoted extensively since then, had contributed to the learning of the Greek language by younger generations. Yet the Turkish language was still used in conversations. The ignorance of Greek language by older generations made a necessity the issue of newspapers in simple Turkish written with Greek characters (karamanlidika) in special printing-houses of Constantinople. These publications were distributed all over Anatolia in a smaller scale than the editions in Greek.*⁷⁰

⁶⁷ St. Antonopoulos, *Η Μικρά Ασία* (Asia Minor), Athens 1907, p. 160, quoted in S. Anagnostopoulou, *Μικρά Ασία 19ος αι.-1919. Οι ελληνορθόδοξες κοινότητες, από το μιλλέτ των Ρωμιών στο ελληνικό έθνος* (Asia Minor 19th c.-1919. The Greek-Orthodox Communities, From the Millet of Romios to the Greek Nation], Athens 1977, p. 195.

⁶⁸ *Op.cit.*, p. 195.

⁶⁹ R.M. Dawkins, *Modern Greek in Asia Minor: A Study of the Dialects of Silli, Cappadocia and Pharsa with Grammar, Texts, Translations and Glossary*, Cambridge 1916, p. 5.

⁷⁰ *Προσφυγικός κόσμος* (Refugee World, Athens) 203 (Sunday 5-2-1933), p. 5.

In 1923, since the reconstitution of the uprooted communities took place in what was already a linguistic amalgam, the Asia Minor refugees brought their dialects into contact with either a variety of Greek idiomatic vernaculars or the foreign languages of the indigenous population (Turkish, Greek, Judaeo-Spanish, various Slavonic dialects, Albanian-speakers etc.).⁷¹

In some cases, the myth of brotherhood as well as of the homogenized Greek state after the settlement of refugees was challenged by the lack of communication in the official or even in the vernacular Greek language. In this respect, the refugee Ioannis Mousaeloglou from the village Caragoren of Caesaria –that was inhabited by 45 Turkish-speaking Greek-Orthodox families– recalls that when the boat brought them to the island of Corfu, they lived in the army barracks for nine months and were supported by the Red Cross. However, they were not allowed to go into the town. Once they were left to go shopping in the market and he notes that:

*We entered a grocer's shop. The grocer asked "What do you want?" We did not understand. He asked again: "What's your name?" I thought he was asking us for a woman, some Helen! I went mad. I attacked him and bit him up! A police officer came. We could not communicate. The officer told me: "Write down your name! I wrote: Ioannis Mousaeloglou". "Wow, he said, you are Greek!"*⁷²

According to the census of 1928 almost 627,000 people came from Asia Minor. It can be safely assumed that they were not all from the urban areas of Smyrna with its standardized Greek. The second biggest refugee group (of 256,635 people) came from Eastern Thrace. According to the League of Nations officers they were all agricultural workers.⁷³ Keeping in mind that the percentage of

⁷¹ Mackridge–Yiannakis, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

⁷² G. Mourellos (ed.), *Η έξοδος: Μαρτυρίες από τις επαρχίες της Κεντρικής και Νότιας Μικρασίας* (Exodus: Evidences from the Provinces of the Central and South Asia Minor), Athens 1982, vol. B, p. 81.

⁷³ LNA, R 1761, 48/24722/24337, report by Dr. Nansen on the refugee situation in Greece, part II, 28-11-1922, p. 9.

the Anatolian populations who spoke Greek was related to levels of urbanization, one can gather that the majority of this rural population had limited or no education whatsoever.

The third biggest refugee group was that from the Pontus; according to the census of 1928 almost 240,695 Pontic refugees from Russia (11,435), Anatolia (182,169) and Caucasus (47,091) were established in Greece.⁷⁴ Scholars who have analysed the Pontic dialect⁷⁵ have traced it back to the fourth century BC.⁷⁶ From this perspective, spoken Pontic Greek was far removed not only from the 'purist' language of the Greek schools, but also from the spoken language of the indigenous population of Greece. The group that came from Pontos was definitely characterised by its linguistic peculiarity. Of course, not all the Pontic Greeks had the chance to attend the prestigious educational institutions such as the Frontistirion in Trebizond. It has also to be considered that their settlement took place in areas where the problem of linguistic amalgamation was already acute. This linguistic confusion was neatly summed up by one Pontic refugee from Gole of Argyroupolis, Pantelis Vassiliades. Respecting his first settlement, he recalled that:

All the people of the village are not gathered together here. Most of the people are scattered in Athens and Verroea. But I don't know their addresses. I came with my three sisters to the Ptolemaida suburb. The former name of the village was Touroutlar. Turks and Slavophone people were living here. The Turks left but the Slavophones remained. Today there are 130 families in the suburb; half of them are refugees from the villages of Argyropolis, Pazpen, Sisa, Sarpika, Avliana, Stavrin and others. [...] Our language has not changed at all because we were all speaking the same language in Pontos. Our children, however, speak in Greek, but they certainly know the Pontos dialect because they speak it with us. Outside they speak all the time in

⁷⁴ *Statistical Annual of Greece*, National Printing-Office, Athens 1931, p. 31.

⁷⁵ Mackridge, *op.cit.*, pp. 335-339.

⁷⁶ Dieterich, *op.cit.*, p. 31.

*Greek with the children of the locals, who also speak in Slavic in their own houses, because that is their mother tongue.*⁷⁷

The oral evidence shows also how proudly the Pontic Greeks preserved their dialect. However, Pontic dialect provided a reason for discrimination against its speakers. The recollections of the refugee Abraham Elvanides from Pontus are indicative of the problems encountered with the native population of Pharsala in Thessaly:

*The time that we first came, the people didn't know Greek. The locals mocked us and called us "sons of Turks". They said that since we'd come their land had become overcrowded.*⁷⁸

In some cases, the use of a certain dialect or language implied a political division even amongst the refugee populations. In the event, the reports coming from foreign observers identified in an oversimplified way groups of dialect-speakers with certain political beliefs. For instance, a report of 1929 noted the increase of propaganda "among the refugees, whose miserable condition had been successfully exploited",⁷⁹ and it was outlined that "the whole lot of Pontos refugees had become Communists".⁸⁰ We should not forget, also, that there were a small percentage of Pontic Turkish-speakers, who were clearly distinguished not only from the indigenous population of Greece, but also from their compatriot refugees. This refugee group, according to scholars who studied their political behaviour, followed different patterns of political socialisation in a later period (1941-1944). In this respect, Koliopoulos, who surveyed this long-term pattern of the refugees' incorporation along the linguistic dichotomy of the same ethnic group, concluded that

⁷⁷ ΑΚΜΣ, Oral Evidences, File: Attica (From Aryroupolis, Goli), Researcher: ΑΙ. Ιοακίμίδης, 14-6-1959.

⁷⁸ Oral evidence of Abraham Elvanides, Researcher: Ermolaos Andreadis, 28-10-1958, in Giannakopoulos, *Refugee Greece*, p. 132.

⁷⁹ PRO (Public Record Office), FO 371/14391, C 5972/5972/19, Annual report on Greece for 1929, From Mr. Ramsay, Athens 16-7-1930, p. 37.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

there were two different competing perceptions of authentic Greekness by the Turkish-speaking and the Greek-speaking Pontic refugees. His analysis of Western Macedonia in the period 1941-1944 points out that the first had to ally themselves with religion and royalism in order to compensate for the unintelligibility of their language. Therefore, their most 'reactionary' faction sided with the German occupation forces. On the other hand, the Greek-speaking Pontic Greeks were massively recruited into the Communist resistance forces (ELAS) in Macedonia.⁸¹ For the Turkish-speakers, the atheist, Communist ideology which supported the idea of a separate Macedonian state, as well as the co-operation of ELAS with the British, "who were considered by them as responsible for the Asia Minor disaster",⁸² seemed incompatible with their royal, religious, 'patriotic' values. From this perspective, the use of a certain dialect or language became a clear-cut dichotomy even amongst the same ethnic refugee group. In political terms, every attempt to initiate reforms in the education system in favour of the vernacular language of the people (demotic) was conceived not only as degradation of the ancient glorified Greek culture, but also and anti-patriotic and communist action.

In cultural terms, the problem of linguistic amalgamation was exacerbated particularly in the northern provinces of the country, like Macedonia, where the census of populations in 1928 recorded that almost half (45.18 %) of her the inhabitants was of refugee origin.⁸³ In these northern areas also remained almost 82,000 Bulgarians,⁸⁴ the Muslims of Thrace that were exempted from the obligatory exchange, along with Spanish speaking Jews and Vlach or Albanian-speaking populations. All of them composed a new map of linguistic confusion after 1923. In the Parliament, it was stressed that:

⁸¹ I.S. Koliopoulos, *Ληλασία φρονημάτων. Το Μακεδονικό Ζήτημα στην κατεχόμενη Δυτική Μακεδονία 1941-1944* (Sack of Convictions: The Macedonian Question in Occupied Western Macedonia 1941-1944), Thessaloniki 1994, p. 91.

⁸² Koliopoulos, *op.cit.*, p. 101.

⁸³ *Statistical Annual of Greece*, 1931, p. 30.

⁸⁴ Pallis' Archive, File 10: A.A. Pallis, *Macedonia and the Macedonians. A Historical Study*, London 1949, p. 8.

*Even after the withdrawal of the Turks from Macedonia, the ethnological character has not been completely changed. During the process of re-establishment of refugees, it happens that Turkish-speaking refugees are settled in villages of Bulgarian-speaking populations; therefore, Greek residents of the Greek Kingdom learned two foreign languages (saying explicitly that these two were the Greek purist and the Bulgarian language), without knowing Greek, while Kyrkasians and Armenians have been settled at the border.*⁸⁵

If we add the numbers of those speaking a foreign language to the refugees who spoke a dialect, one may conclude almost one million of the Greek population, had a command of a language or a dialect almost unintelligible to the natives and, of course, far removed from the standards of the official ‘purist’ archaic language. Within this framework, the linguistic composition of the refugees exacerbated the problem of linguistic amalgamation in Greece. However, the supporters of demotic or ‘purist’ language interpreted the refugee settlement in very different way.

On the one hand, the supporters of *katharevousa* viewed the command of this language as the exemplar of national culture, if the Greek State attempted to prohibit the corruption of its culture and the degradation of its traditions. They stated emphatically that “after the Asia Minor disaster there is an urgent need to return to our ancestral and familiar virtues”.⁸⁶ The same values can be also deduced from the speech of a Greek parliamentarian (G. Athanasiades-Novas), who described the situation in Greece after the “Asia Minor Disaster” as follows:

All the small states –like Greece– which had recently gone through a dreadful national disaster ran the risk of subversive movements. The reaction to this danger has to be sought in the National School, in the encouragement and the enlightenment of the young generation. This lifting of spirit will come about with the re-

⁸⁵ *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων*, 68th Session, 28-6-1924, pp. 520-521.

⁸⁶ *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων*, 16th Session, 7-12-1927, pp. 252, 260.

*surgence of religious and national spirit, and the enlightenment will be made by proving the truth that there is no other civilisation except the national one. There are many who question the right of the State to subjugate the school to its ends. However, the State has an indisputable right to found its culture on religion, on fatherland, on family and on ownership; elements on which was based and is based all the Greek history and great achievements.*⁸⁷

They argued that the only way by which the dangers created by the influx of the Asia Minor refugees for Greek culture and society could be overcome was by means of an educational model imbued with the values of the nation and its classical orientation.⁸⁸ It was the same opposition that rejected any demoticist reforms in the past and declared that those who were identified with the demoticist ideas were to be held responsible for the destruction of the link between the Greek nation and ancient Hellenism.⁸⁹ These conservative voices considered that Greece was in danger through the abolishment of *katharevousa* as a school language. They also anticipated that the result would be that almost 500,000 pupils would be subjugated to *pseudo-demoticism*, which was equivalent to *ma-liarism* and Communism.⁹⁰

In 1926, the officials of Pangalos' dictatorship strengthened the conservative position of defending the archaic language. They pursued a 'purist' education with the aim of "combating the enemies and corrupters of Religion, Language, Family, Property, Morality, National Consciousness and Fatherland".⁹¹ The dictator, himself, boasted that every artistic and intellectual pursuit was supported and motivated during his time, in the hope that the country, "will again give birth to new Feidias, Praxitelis, Aeschylus and other

⁸⁷ *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων*, 14th Session, 1-7-1929, p. 191.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων*, 44th Session, 21-3-1927, pp. 3, 11.

⁹⁰ *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων*, 16th Session, 7-12-1927, p. 205.

⁹¹ Dimaras, *op.cit.*, pp. 143-144.

semi-gods”.⁹² His ideas were overtly employed in the agenda of the parliamentary discussions even after the dictatorship had ended. In this content, the anti-Venizelist spokesman Georgios Athanasides-Novas made references to Plato and Fichte and claimed that “the renaissance of national education should be the basis and the keystone of every reformatory policy”.⁹³ In the course of the same discussion, the MP Constantinos Kalkanis explicitly stated that it was “well known that the EO was a Communist cell”.⁹⁴ In the course of another parliamentary discussion, the Venizelist Georgios Papandreou, speaking also as a member of the EO, noted that “concerning the Communist accusations against EO, only two of its members were found guilty, without being members of the Marxist faction, whose attitudes we do not share”.⁹⁵ Moreover, in 1927 the review of the Marxist intellectual Kordatos’ book on the history of demoticism was characterised as a simple propagandist product which confused Communism with science.⁹⁶ The MP Nicolaos Konstantopoulos denounced the existing education system on the ground that it was centralized on the ideal of Ancient Greece, when he pointed out that the Greek nation ‘for a period of 100 years stared at ancestral shadows’.⁹⁷

The fear of those involved in the inspection of the education system was that refugees and the speakers of alien languages were to be the main targets foreign propaganda particularly in the northern areas of the Greece, where her sovereignty was traditionally disputed by the neighbouring states. In the event, officers of the Ministry of Education depicted the situation in the refugee settlements as dangerous for the unity of the state. In 1927, the reports of inspector-generals for secondary schools in the district of Macedonia raised once more the issue of linguistic amalgamation in the area of Kilkis, which was made worse by the fact that the vast majority of the residents in his area were refugees from the Caucasus,

⁹² Pangalos’ Archive, Vol. 2, Athens, 1971, p. 167.

⁹³ *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων*, 14th Session, 5-12-1927, pp. 213, 215.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

⁹⁵ *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων*, 13th Session, 4-12-1927, p. 189.

⁹⁶ “Demoticism and Purism”, *Νέα Εστία* 1 (15 April-15 August 1927), 378.

⁹⁷ *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων*, 4th Session, 4-9 July 1929, p. 83.

Thrace, Bulgaria, Pontus, Asia Minor, and some “from the Servo-occupied part of Macedonia”.⁹⁸ The reports of the same school inspectors considered that refugee-teachers coming from these areas “were not the most suitable teaching-staff to teach the Greek children, who were, after all, the future guardians of the borderlands”. Nor, somewhat more surprisingly, did they find the refugees meeting the demands of a qualified instructor in terms of “fervent patriotism, which had to characterise every teacher who worked on the border areas”. This lack of patriotism was attributed to “their previous conditions of work until their descent to Greece: ‘these martyrs, much as though they are Greeks, had been living in conditions of slavery and had no education relevant to the teaching profession’”. The reports also stressed the need for them to be taught Greek “to develop a high national morale”.⁹⁹ They meant, of course, that the purist Greek should be taught at school, since it was felt that the Greek language and tradition were otherwise degraded. Since the *Evangelikiaka*, the propagators of demoticism were considered as instigators of a pan-Slavist movement that would benefit no one but the Slavs of Macedonia. Once more, classical education and ‘purist’ Greek were perceived as touchstones of patriotism. The ‘purists’ explicitly argued that the Greek State attempted to prohibit the corruption of its ‘purist’ official language and the degradation of its traditions either by introducing constitutional norms for the protection of the language or by persecuting the users of demotic at every level of social life.

However, the massive refugee settlement in the northern Greek provinces terrified not only the supporters of ‘purist’ Greek, but also those of demotic language. As has been said, they adopted a Herderian view of language that perceived the Greek vernacular as the *Volk* of the nation. As it happened after the territorial expansion of the Greek state in the Balkan wars, the settlement of non Greek

⁹⁸ I.A.Y.E. (Historical Archive of the Greek Foreign Office), File: 51.3, Protocol No. 10671. Report of the inspector-general (Ch. Loupa) for primary schools in the district of Kilikis addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thessaloniki 28 March 1927, (Translated from Greek), pp. 2-3.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

speaking refugees was perceived as a potential force of national disintegration and the teaching of vernacular in primary school as a powerful tool of national integration. In their view, demotic was not only to minimise the alleged foreign propaganda and indigenous population, but it was also to strengthen national sentiment among the refugees. Even the refugee press throughout the period of their settlement espoused the need for education in the demotic. The refugee newspaper *Prosfygikos Cosmos* (Refugee World), argued explicitly in favour of it. When it published the pro-purist linguistic attitudes of Simon Katakouzinis, the editor stressed that:

*Although the newspaper respected these views, which supported katharevousa, it did not share them. The newspaper is explicitly in favour of pure demotic language free from foreign words, idioms and extremities.*¹⁰⁰

The newspaper went on to declare that ‘the demotic language is considered to be the unique vehicle of nation’s expression. From this perspective, the demoticists shared the views expressed by Triantafyllides that linguistic communities which had no command of Greek might act as centrifugal forces to bring about the decomposition of the nation-state. In some cases, as communalism, the lack of linguistic unity could undermine unity of political constructions and end in the creation of linguistic sovereignties. For instance, in India “the Government was distressed by the linguistic rivalries and fissiparous tendencies, which might weaken the unity of India”.¹⁰¹ Alfred Cobban stresses that “empires or states that were not homogeneous in culture and language were undermined from within, or assaulted from without”.¹⁰² The ethnocentric part of the demoticists seemed to share the view that a ‘unique language’ is always re-

¹⁰⁰ Προσφυγικός κόσμος 230 (Athens 17-10-1933), 3.

¹⁰¹ P. Kodanda Rao, “Different languages—A threat to Indian unity?”, in Ivo D. Duchacek (ed.), *Conflict and Cooperation among Nations*, New York 1960, p. 99.

¹⁰² A. Gobban, “Nationalism and the international system”, in John Hutchinson—Anthony D. Smith (eds.), *Nationalism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford—New York 1994, p. 249.

garded as “necessary in order to facilitate internal communication, as well as to hinder external influences”.¹⁰³ The inability of communicating was justifiably considered as the main problem of somebody’s alienation and non-incorporation by scholars like Karl W. Deutsch. His approach to the emergence of national consciousness primarily focuses on the development of internal ‘social communication’ and ‘economic inter-discourse’ within states and among individuals, based on common language and interpersonal transactions of different kinds.¹⁰⁴

The ethnocentric part remained in the EO and continued their collaboration with the Liberal government of Eleftherios Venizelos. However, the demoticists lacked any political or cultural means to support the introduction of demotic in the primary education system of Greece until Eleftherios Venizelos coming into power and the subsequent education reform of 1929. Finally, the reformative bills of 1929 were shaped along the lines of these demoticists’ critique of the education system. The education reform changed a school system which had remained unchangeable for 72 years, but also in the establishment of new one, which was not to be transformed until 1964.¹⁰⁵ Above all, it set for instruction of the Greek vernacular in all the classes of primary schools providing for a integrating tool to all the Greek citizens. Among the ethnocentric demoticists we must single out Triantafyllides and Delmouzos, who represented the part that stayed in the EO after its split. The latter would adopt a utopian attitude to education along anticommunist, a-political and national patterns of thinking.¹⁰⁶ It could be argued that the ethnocentric views, espousing the Herderian theory of language and promulgating the principles of party and class neutrality for any education or cultural institutions which had to instil patriotism in children, were to be manipulated by the dictator Metaxas in order to materialise the education aspect of his vision of

¹⁰³ K.R. Minogue, *Nationalism*, London 1967, p. 119.

¹⁰⁴ K.W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, MIT Press, New York 1966.

¹⁰⁵ Fragoudaki, *Εκπαιδευτική μεταρρύθμιση, op.cit.*, p. 59.

¹⁰⁶ Fragoudaki, *Εκπαιδευτική μεταρρύθμιση, op.cit.*, p. 122.

the Third Hellenic Civilisation. During Metaxas' times, Triantafylides published the first grammar of demotic language, after being commissioned by the dictator himself.¹⁰⁷

The use of demotic was conceived as the most powerful integrating tool for all the populations included in the Greek frontiers from the end of the Balkan wars until the settlement of refugees. The exchange of populations functioned as a catalyst in the linguistic controversy within the limits of the Greek state. It made more urgent the need to deal with the necessity of integration and reconstruction of the national community in the new cultural amalgam that was created in the Greek state.

Considering also the function of myths as important components for the organisation of any new national community, one may argue that the use of common Greek served the same purpose as the recounting of some common origins between the indigenous and the incoming populations after 1923. In this respect, the Greek intellectual elite spoke about the Greeks who came from the land of Homer and the creation of an Aeolian or Ionian school of poetry. The refugees were characterised by Greek officials as “vehicles of Hellenic (Greek) culture”.¹⁰⁸ At a popular level, the refugee press accepted this identification and often spoke about the Greeks who fled from the ancient lands of Greek Ionia and Aeolia. In the political rhetoric of this period, the most inclusive financial, cultural and linguistic means to incorporate the refugees coming from the so-called Ionian and Homeric lands were adopted. The refugee MP Zervos noted in Parliament the historical links of these refugees with the Greek mainland by saying that

if you look at Greek history, you will see that there was an age when the Greek homeland was immortal: the age after the Persian Wars, when the glory and the civilisation of Greece rose at its apex. At that time, de-

¹⁰⁷ Mackridge, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

¹⁰⁸ Venizelos' Archive, File 104, Ministry of the Interior, Γενική έκθεση του Νομάρχου Κοζάνης (Γ. Παπαλεξανδρής) [A general account of the situation in the Kozani Prefecture, submitted by the Prefect of Kozani (G.Papalexandris)], pp. 1-3.

*mocracy emerged in all Greece, popular, powerful and glorious, when the refugees from Asia Minor, Pontos and Thrace who came here after shedding all the exhausted, the panic-stricken, the miserable, the dead brothers and children because of the hardships of war. They revitalised the country towards the superhuman and immortal words of the everlasting Classical Greece, through their stay with their brothers from Old Greece.*¹⁰⁹

Apparently the reference is made to the period of the Persian expansion in Asia Minor, when refugees fled to the ancient Greece and the islands of the Aegean Sea. It was then that for some purposes and in some contexts, “Ionians, Dorians, Aeolians and Boeotians felt themselves to be Hellenes, with specifically Hellenic myths, ties and institutions”.¹¹⁰ At that time, in Salamina, the united Greeks protected Europe against the expansionism of Persians. Fisher notes in his *History of Europe* that “Marathon, Salamis, Plataea have each accounted among the world’s decisive battles”, as well as the defence of Thermopylae, by a detachment whose “valour and unavailing sacrifice are among the immortal memories of Europe”.¹¹¹ This rhetoric along with the use of demotic not only facilitated the integration of the new-coming refugees, but also helped to reform the national myth on the basis of ‘continuity’ –in Anthony Smith’s view– between the past of refugees in the multi-ethnic and multi-lingual Ottoman Empire and their present as citizens of the Greek nation-state after 1923. The use of demotic language helped the new myth had to be addressed to the mass of refugees in a more inclusive and communicative way.

The contemporary approach of nationalism does not adopt the essentialist interpretation stemming from Romanticism and conceptualises nation as a natural creation that manifestates a sacred, even divine, essence. In the same context the present research does not accept the attitudes of Romantic nationalists –like Herder,

¹⁰⁹ *Εφημερίς των Συνζητήσεων*, Session 69th, 30-6-1924, p. 551.

¹¹⁰ A.D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, London 1998, p. 238

¹¹¹ H.A.L. Fisher, *A History of Europe*, Vol. I, Glasgow 1986, p. 39.

Fichte and the anthropologist Wilhem von Humboldt, who endorsed a strong interconnection between language and cultural or national peculiarity and argued that the formation of a nation-state is inextricably bound up with language, for it is viewed as a crucial factor in the formation of national identities or consciousness.¹¹² As John Edwards notices, “although language can be extremely important feature of identity, we cannot endorse the view that a given language is essential for identity maintenance”.¹¹³

However, in the early twentieth century Greece both the propagators of the ‘purist’ language (*katharevousa*) and those of demotic (vernacular or common Greek), made a different interpretation of the linguistic model that promoted national integration and patriotic values.

One is legitimate to conclude that for all these years, both demoticists and purists considered their version of spoken and written language as the *Volk* of the nation. Their nationalism inherent in the two versions of Greek language had two faces, like the Roman god Janus. The one presented by the supporters of the ‘purist’ Greek, was vengeful and reactionary looking towards an often faked up past of lost glory that excluded the overwhelming majority of the speakers of demotic, dialects or minority languages. The other of the supporters of demotic was modernizing looking forward to a future of productive work, socialization, integration and co-existence of all the Greek citizens in the process of reconstructing a national community after the territorial or demographic expansions of the state.

¹¹² N. Hans, *Comparative Education: A Study of Educational Factors and Traditions*, London 1949 (Reprinted 1964), pp. 9-11.

¹¹³ Edwards, *Language, Society and Identity*, p. 22.

