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The Balkans : A Region in Transition
Les Balkans en mutation

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Doubly Outsiders: Pre-war Greek-Australian
Migrants and their Socialist Ideals

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The Balkans: A Region in Transition

Stephanos Constantinides*

Essentially the Balkans remain under Western military control as the Europeans and Americans exercise a decisive political influence on the overall region. States like Kosovo, FYROM and Bosnia-Herzegovina have been spared the pain of war thanks to the presence of American and European troops while Yugoslavia, what remains of it, has almost imploded again. Moreover, if Montenegro is forced by the European Union to maintain a link to Serbia, the Yugoslav Federation will no longer exist for this link will really be a confederate one. Of course Serbia remains a tattered state after the war NATO led against it because of Kosovo. To make matters worse, Milosevic's arrest and his trial at The Hague have not helped Serbia get the economic aid expected. While retaining political influence on the region, the Americans are trying to disengage militarily but especially financially from the Balkans so that the Europeans can take over this responsibility.

In the current climate of poverty and social crisis, two movements have flourished: nationalism and organized crime. Not surprisingly, the societal structures continue disintegrating, especially in the breakaway republics of the former Yugoslavia but also in Albania. The situation is far more stable in Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia; however, as long as instability persists in neighbouring regions, these countries suffer indirectly. Even Greece, a member of the European Union, has not been completely spared from this unstable situation.

In this issue of *Etudes helléniques-Hellenic Studies*, we present a special Balkans Feature comprised of four articles highlighting different problems in the region.

In the first article, George Stubos outlines the turbulent economic transition which the Balkans experienced after the Soviet Bloc

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disintegrated (1989-2002). The shift from a planned, centralized economy to a liberal or free market one was interrupted by the military conflicts arising when Yugoslavia broke up. The success of this transition remains uncertain and the litmus test will be the integration of several Balkan countries into the European Union.

Haralambos Kondonis describes the efforts of what is known as the Civil Society in the stabilization of the region and creation of various NGOs with the help of the Stability Pact. Greece has already participated in these efforts and is trying to help in the multilateral project referred to as the Stability Pact.

Jean Catsiapis analyses French policy on the Balkans throughout the twentieth century. Whereas Paris backed a large and powerful Serbia at the beginning of the century to counterbalance the German and Austro-Hungarian influence, within the last decade of this century, France had to resign itself to a disintegrating Yugoslavia and would exercise in Greece, once the second pillar of its policy in the Balkans, only limited influence.

Spyridon Sfetas details the political development of the FYROM after the recent bloody conflicts which shook the foundations of this country. His article describes essentially a mini-civil war between Albanians and Slavo-Macedonians.

Now, one could ask the question: Where is Greece in all that? Greece stands out as an oasis in a region jolted by a brutal process of economic change and democratization. As the only EU- and NATO-member, Greece could contribute to the stabilization, as well as the political and socio-economic development of the Balkans. However, when the socialist countries of the region crumbled, Athens was ill prepared to confront the situation and adapted to the new reality of the region with some difficulty. Obviously tense relations with Turkey and a redistribution in the balance of power among the major Western countries left Greece with a limited margin of manoeuvre when drafting a Balkan policy adapted to current circumstances. What made matters worse were the Macedonian issue regarding the name of

the country and the Albanian issue related to human rights violations among the Greek minority in Albania. Even today, despite normalized relations with all its Balkan neighbours, the prickly Macedonian name issue remains unresolved.

Although Greece could take this opportunity to provide an active presence in the Balkan countries and help in the reconstruction of the region, its presence remains rather modest. On top of some missteps in its regional policy, Athens is also lacking the economic means to take action. However, the main problem in Greek policy has been a lack of any overview of the region. Consequently, no coherent, balanced policy statement has ever been developed. Only lately has Greek foreign policy begun to overcome its structural weaknesses and attempted to adopt a broader view of the Balkans that might lead to more tangible results than in the past.

Right now, the Balkans region is in a stage of full-blown development. Their future depends on the dynamic spirit of the people, the wisdom with which they behave politically in order to overcome divisiveness and sterile conflicts, as well as the European Union's behaviour towards this region. As long as the Europeans can not define a truly united European policy for the Balkan region and continue to play the national interest card, as in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, they will play second fiddle in an American imperial orchestra. The Balkans, whether one likes it or not, are part of Europe. The only way to avoid problems or conflicts from spilling over the borders of this region is European integration.

Les Balkans en pleine mutation

Stephanos Constantinides*

Les Balkans demeurent en grande partie sous contrôle militaire des Etats Unis et de l'Union européenne, qui exercent aussi une influence décisive sur l'ensemble de la région. Le Kosovo, la FYROM et la Bosnie Herzégovine ne sont épargnées de la guerre que grâce à la présence sur leur territoire de troupes américaines et européennes. La Yougoslavie - ce qu'il en est resté après sa désintégration - a pratiquement de nouveau éclaté. Si le Montenegro a été contraint par l'UE de garder un lien avec la Serbie, force est de constater que la Fédération Yougoslave n'existe plus car ce lien n'est pas fédéral mais confédéral. La Serbie se trouve en situation de desarroi depuis la guerre que l'OTAN a mené contre elle en raison de sa politique au Kosovo. L'arrestation de Milosevic et le procès de lui-ci à la Haye n'ont pas entraîné l'octroi à ce pays de l'aide économique escomptée. Les Américains, tout en gardant une influence politique sur l'ensemble des Balkans tentent de s'en dégager militairement et surtout financièrement et d'obtenir des Européens qu'ils assument à leur place de telles obligations.

Dans le contexte de pauvreté et de crise sociale, qui caractérise cette région, on observe l'apparition de deux phénomènes, le nationalisme et le crime organisé, qui sont notables plus en Albanie et dans la plupart des pays issus de l'ancienne Yougoslavie qu'en Bulgarie, Roumanie et Slovénie. Il est évident que ces trois Etats ne sont pas à l'abri de ces phénomènes, tant et aussi longtemps que l'instabilité demeure à leurs frontières. Même la Grèce, pourtant membre de l'UE, peut être amenée à connaître les effets de la situation d'instabilité de ses voisins balkaniques.

Dans ce numéro d'*Etudes helléniques-Hellenic Studies* nous avons essayé de présenter un dossier sur les Balkans et cerner quelquesuns de leurs problèmes.

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George Stubos dans un article succinct nous présente les turbulences de la transition économique (1989-2002) après l'effondrement du bloc soviétique. Le passage d'une économie planifiée et centralisée au libéralisme du marché a été en plus perturbé par les conflits militaires qui ont résulté de l'éclatement de la Yougoslavie. Le succès de cette transition reste incertain et son ultime test sera l'intégration des différents pays balkaniques à l'Union Européenne.

Haralambos Kondonis présente les efforts de la société civile d'aider à la stabilisation de la région et la mise en place de différents ONG par l'entremise du Pacte de stabilité. La Grèce participe à ces efforts et tente d'apporter son concours à ce projet multilatéral qu'est le Pacte de stabilité.

Jean Catsiapis analyse la politique balkanique de la France tout au long du XX^{ème} siècle. Alors qu'au début de cette période Paris avait misé sur une Serbie grande et forte pour contrebalancer l'influence de l'Autriche-Hongrie et de l'Allemagne, dans la dernière decennie de ce même siècle a dû se résigner à la désintégration de la Yougoslavie et n'exerce plus en Grèce - autrefois deuxième pilier de sa politique balkanique - qu'une influence limitée.

Spyridon Sfetas présente l'évolution politique de la FYROM après les événements sanglants qui ont secoué ce pays, une mini-guerre civile entre Albanais et Slavo-macédoniens.

On pourrait évidemment se poser la question : et la Grèce dans tout cela? La Grèce reste une oasis de paix dans ces Balkans secoués par une transformation économique brutale et un difficile apprentissage de la démocratie . Seul pays membre à la fois de l'OTAN et de l'Union Européenne elle est en mesure de contribuer à la stabilisation de la région et à son évolution économique sociale et politique. Cependant Athènes n'a pas été préparée à faire face à l'effondrement des pays socialistes balkaniques et a eu du mal à s'adapter à la nouvelle réalité politique de la région. D'autant plus que ses relations difficiles avec la Turquie et la redistribution des cartes d'influence entre les grandes puissances lui laissaient une place limitée pour l'exercice d'une politique balkanique adaptée aux circonstances. A cela se sont ajoutés les difficultés avec l'Albanie dûes au non respect de droits de la

minorité grecque de ce pays et surtout la question Macédonienne. Encore aujourd'hui malgré la normalisation de ses relations avec l'ensemble de ses voisins balkaniques l'épineuse question du nom de la FYROM n'a pas été encore résolue.

Même si les occasions ne manquent pas pour que la Grèce ait une présence active dans les pays balkaniques afin d'aider à leur reconstruction force est de constater que cette présence reste relativement modeste. Outre les maladresses de sa politique balkanique, les moyens économiques font aussi défaut à la Grèce. Néanmoins le problème majeur de la politique balkanique grecque est le manque d'une vision d'ensemble de la région ce qui a empêché l'élaboration par ses dirigeants d'une politique cohérente et équilibrée. C'est seulement ces derniers temps que la politique hellénique commence à dépasser ses faiblesses structurelles qu'elle profite d'une vision globale de la région qui pourrait aboutir à des résultats plus tangibles que par le passé.

Les Balkans à l'heure actuelle sont en pleine évolution et leur destin dépend non seulement du dynamisme de leurs peuples et de la sagesse avec laquelle ils vont se comporter sur le plan politique pour dépasser les divisions et les conflits stériles mais aussi du comportement envers cette région de l'Union Européenne. Tant et aussi longtemps que les Européens n'arriveront pas à définir une véritable politique européenne d'ensemble pour la région au lieu de jouer chacun la carte de ses intérêts nationaux comme cela se faisait tout au long du 19^e et du 20^e siècle, ils seront seconds violons de l'orchestre au service de l'empire américain. Les Balkans, qu'on le veuille ou non, font partie de l'Europe. Et la seule voie possible pour éviter les débordements dans cette région est celle qui conduit à son intégration européenne.

Balkan Transition (1989-2002)

Turbulent Past, Promising Future

George Stubos*

RÉSUMÉ

Le présent article porte sur la conjoncture économique des Balkans. Après une brève présentation historique sont exposées les données les plus récentes, qui permettent d'éclairer l'évolution de la Roumanie, la Bulgarie, l'Albanie, la Bosnie-Herzégovine, l'ex-Yougoslavie et la FYROM (ancienne République yougoslave de Macédoine).

ABSTRACT

This article deals with the current economic situation in the Balkans region. Some background and the most recent data are provided to highlight the evolution of Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Former Republic of Yugoslavia, and FYROM (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

Introduction

The watershed events of 1989 marked the eclipse of the centralized planned model in the Balkans, Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the beginning of a transitional course toward market-based economies and societies. The present study describes and assesses economic and financial developments in the Balkan countries during the period 1989-2002.

The Balkan economies started their transition course from highly disadvantaged and distorted economic structures that grew out of arbitrary central-planning decisions devoid of market criteria. The opening-up of these economies to international competition found them ill-prepared and vulnerable. During the Communist era, and for different reasons, they remained isolated from the European and international markets. Albania's subsistence socialism and Romania's

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self-contained economic experiment discouraged contact with the outside world. Whereas Bulgaria's interdependence with the Soviet industry and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) countries kept self-sustaining growth in abeyance. Even Yugoslavia, which had forsaken the economic mold of the rest of the socialist economies, managed to stage only a meteoric appearance in Western markets in the 1970s. However, penetration, of these markets was short-lived, demonstrating the non-competitive nature of its products.

In addition to the challenge of transition which these countries have faced since 1989, the region has also experienced protracted geopolitical turmoil as a result of Yugoslavia's break-up. The Croatian, Bosnian and Kosovo military conflicts have inflicted direct or indirect consequences on the whole region. War expenditures and the consequent destruction of the economic infrastructure and productive capacity have created additional budgetary burdens and have frequently derailed fiscal and monetary policies. Economic conditions in the region were aggravated further by UN sanctions on Yugoslavia, which held in effect for most of the 1990s, the UN sanctions on Croatia in 1994, and the Greek embargo on FYR Macedonia in 1995-96. Yugoslavia, at the epicentre of all military conflicts, was affected more than any other country. Policies identifiable with the initial phase of transition were introduced in 2001 after the demise of the Milosevic régime. Even countries non-involved directly in military conflicts, like Albania, Bulgaria and Romania, have suffered indirect negative consequences due to the interruption of regional and international trade routes. The heavily trade-based and landlocked economy of the FYR Macedonia, or FYROM, has suffered greater harm than the other more diversified economies. In addition, protracted regional instability has deterred the flow of direct foreign investment into the region. Foreign firms have opted instead for the more stable central European economies like Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

Before proceeding with our analysis, a word of caution is necessary. The transition policies introduced in the Balkan countries were

neither uniformly planned in terms of timing and content nor were they similar in terms of their outcome. In each and every country, governments, institutions and people reacted differently to internal and external challenges. As has been already mentioned, to varying degrees all countries in the region have experienced political turmoil, ethnic tension, population dislocation and, in some cases, military conflict. These factors affected not only the economic conditions, the scope and nature of reforms but also the social fabric of these countries. Beyond these contingencies, there were other unavoidable obstacles that acted as constraints to the pace of transformation. The geographic disadvantage of the region in relation to European markets, the inherited economic distortions and their undeveloped internal market, created objective limits to what could be done. Despite these obstacles, the transition process in all countries has moved forward, confirming their commitment to the initial objectives to transform their economy and society to a market model, albeit, with different degree of speed, depth and continuity.

Reform and Restructuration

In all Balkan countries the first phase of reform was characterised by two main policies: privatization and price liberalization. It was expected that the introduction of market logic would in itself be sufficient to solve systemic distortions and inefficiencies in the spheres of production, consumption and distribution. It was also assumed that private ownership would create the kind of rational behaviour and practices observed in mature markets. It was thought that through these two policies, transition economies would swiftly restructure their production base with a moderate and manageable social cost. In the process, the economic and social consequences of these two policies proved much more severe and long-lasting than initially predicted. Their implementation often resulted in considerable destruction and social dislocation. Production assets became idle which left a very substantial part of the active work-force unemployed. These conditions were compounded further because in the uncharted

waters of reform, untested fiscal and monetary policies were introduced as a remedy to the problem. Unfortunately they generated high budget deficits, high inflation rates, negative trade and current account balances and a significant rise in public debt. The initial experience of all Balkan economies was a harbinger of the complexity of the transition project.

The range of policies on privatization introduced in the Balkan countries, varied from an attempted swift transfer of ownership from the public to the private sector to more elaborate schemes requiring first a restructuring and often downsizing of State industries before transference to the private sector. In practice, most governments, after facing serious difficulties in applying these policies, and after repeated delays, opted for a compromise solution which involved the public offering of shares to managers and employees of the companies themselves. This method of privatization hardly met the initial objective of distributing public property 'widely and fairly'. Moreover, it failed to provide a sound base and fertile environment for the creation of viable, efficient and competitive enterprises. At best, the privatization policies implemented were ambivalent and were, more often than not, carried out without the proper transparency.

The first years of the transition process were marked by severe economic regression, shown clearly in the output decline figures. Albania's GDP dropped 27% in a single year (1991). At the time, Albania was experiencing a crisis of governmentability against a background of social chaos and conditions of economic anarchy. The FYROM faced a similar drop in GDP (21.1%) a year later, in 1992, when mining and trade contracted severely following the country's severance from the Yugoslav Federation. The country most implicated in direct military conflict, Yugoslavia, has suffered the deepest decline for the longest period. Military conflicts resulted in the disruption of transportation and supply routes, the interruption of production and, in some cases, the destruction of productive capacity. The UN-imposed sanctions compounded an already severe output problem. Bulgaria and Romania also experienced an annual decline in GDP in excess of 13% between the period 1990 to 1992. These two countries

were not directly implicated in any military conflict, but policy ambivalence, internal labour strife and hesitant implementation of transition measures caused them the output contraction recorded.

In most Balkan countries, output decline was checked within three to five years. The pace by which this decline stopped and the pace by which recovery started, depended on each country's economic characteristics, its commitment to reform policies, the nature of its political institutions and the contribution of the international community in providing investment funds and financial aid. The years 1993-94 mark a turning point in terms of output. During that period, positive output figures were recorded in all but two countries: FYR Macedonia and Yugoslavia. Albania led this trend with a GDP growth of 9.6%, Romania posted a more moderate output growth of 1.5%, while Bulgaria had to wait for another year to register its first post-socialist GDP increase of 1.8% in 1994.

One important reason for the 1993-4 improvement in economic conditions was the involvement of international institutions. All Balkan countries, except Yugoslavia, entered into membership status agreements with the World Bank and the IMF in the 1991-92 period (Bosnia did so in 1995). These two international financial institutions negotiated a series of Systemic Transformation Facilities, Stand-by Agreements and Extended Fund Facilities with the Balkan countries, conditional on minimum monetary and fiscal requirements and the introduction of austerity and restructuring programmes. In order to gain accessibility to funding, these countries had to pursue more effective privatisation policies, wage and price controls as well as banking and financial reforms. These measures seemed to work, leading to output growth, resumption of trade and the cautious appearance of foreign investment, albeit, at very moderate levels.

The upward output trend, which began in 1993, receded temporarily in 1997-8 in most countries, due to a combination of internal and external factors. The largest declines occurred in Albania (-8%), Bulgaria (-7.4%) and Romania (-7.3%). FYROM posted a slight output increase (1%). The collapse of the pyramid schemes in

Albania and the banking and financial crises in Bulgaria and Romania, which were either triggered, or aggravated further, by the global financial turmoil initiated in Asia and Russia, were the main causes for this decline in output. The Balkan economies also found themselves affected by the decrease in global demand, the collapse of world prices for basic commercial and intermediate goods and the worsening of the global trade situation.

At the end of the 1990s, output in most countries (Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia, Romania, Bosnia) was still below 80% of the 1989 level, while in Yugoslavia it was estimated at 50%. Albania's output in 1998 approached 90% of its 1989 level. In addition, the end of the decade found these economies with an output composition different from that in the beginning of the decade. The prevailing forms of activity had shifted from mining, elementary manufacturing and raw material production to trade, services and agriculture. Both production and consumption trends were now driven more by market requirements than by state directives. In this sense, the transition process had accomplished an important implicit goal: the logic of the market was now becoming the key determinant of economic life.

Growth performance in all Balkan transition economies over the last three years has been very strong and future growth prospects look very promising. The GDP growth rate in 2000 and 2001 in most economies stood between 4.5% and 7.8%. The only exceptions were Romania, which recorded a rate of 1.8% in 2000; Bosnia/Herzegovina, which recorded a rate of 2.3% in 2001; and the FYR Macedonia, which recorded a negative growth rate of 4.1% the same year because of internal civil strife. The year 2002 is expected to be excellent with growth rates maintained at the same high level. Only Bosnia/Herzegovina and FYROM are expected to grow by around 3%. It has become apparent that the Balkan economies have shown strong resilience to the initial global slowdown after September 11, the significant fluctuations in the first three quarters of 2002 and the financial instability in some emerging markets. According to projections by the major international financial institutions and those

made by national governments, growth prospects for all Balkan economies are very strong for the next three years at least. These growth projections are supported by an increasing flow of foreign direct investment and strong increases in public and private spending, all of which contribute to a rise in productive capacity and a constantly growing domestic demand.

Unemployment

The severe economic contraction following the socialist breakdown withered away a key assumption shared by most people in the Balkans: lifetime employment. The pursuit of transition policies shut out a great number of people from the labour force. The unemployment rates experienced by most Balkan countries since 1989 have surpassed all levels experienced by Western economies during this century.

Unemployment fluctuations in each country differed in magnitude and timing. Albania's unemployment rate reached its highest level of 27% in 1992. For the next four years, the country continued to decline, reaching 12.3% in 1996. The initial surge was partly a result of the destruction of manufacturing capacity and the significant movement of an agrarian population to urban centres. The anarchy and chaos prevalent in the countryside left peasants with no other options. The drop in the unemployment rate after 1992 can be explained by the gradual economic recovery, particularly in the service and retail sectors, and by the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Albanian migrants, mainly to Greece and Italy. During the past four years (1998-2002), the unemployment rate has remained around 18%. The collapse of the pyramid schemes and the temporary stall of the economy contributed initially to this increase. It also appears that unemployment has been kept at this level, in part, due to a gradual rationalization of the labour market.

In Romania and, less so, in Bulgaria, unemployment rates have been more moderate. Three years into the transition, the rates stood at 11%

and 17% respectively, and have been fluctuating at these levels up to the present. In the case of Romania, the slow pace of reform and a strong labour movement have been considered as the key factors in protecting employment much longer than in the other transition economies. Yugoslavia, FYR Macedonia, and Bosnia have been experiencing structural unemployment problems of abysmal proportions, with rates exceeding 30% during the whole transition period. These unemployment conditions reflect the massive destruction of production assets, labour dislocation and internal (refugee) migration. Fundamental changes are needed for this trend to reverse itself.

The high levels of unemployment in most Balkan countries have deprived a very large number of people of a subsistence level of income. In addition, inflationary conditions and currency devaluation have wiped out savings and have caused pension incomes to shrink. Bankruptcies of financial institutions have had a similar effect for uninsured depositors. Furthermore, the lack of a social safety net prevents even the barest minimum income generation for those most in need. The average *per capita* income in the Balkan transition economies, relative to the EU average, dropped from over 30% in 1990 to near 20% in 1998.

Restructuring imperatives have also led a very high percentage of unemployed people into conditions of permanent marginalization. A growing number of people have dropped out of the economy altogether. The institutional inability of most governments to retrain dislocated workers has turned them into an obsolete labour force. Even if labour market demand increases, it will be virtually impossible for these workers with eroding skills to perform tasks required by the new economy. There is a definite shift away from manufacturing labour toward services and trade where different kinds of skills are needed. Marginalization is indeed becoming an abiding feature of the Balkan transition economies that has to be addressed very seriously.

Another challenge faced by most Balkan economies is the perennial scourge known as the underground economy. It remains the

consequence of institutional and public corruption compounded by the absence of an efficient tax collection structure. During the early critical and vulnerable transition years, it may have constituted a lifeline for the economy and a necessary survival strategy; however, in a growing and maturing market, this sort of activity becomes an institutional hindrance to sustainable growth. The magnitude of this problem becomes clear when we realize that income generated by underground activity, in most countries, is estimated to be above 30% of the GDP.

Unemployment, marginalization, poverty and the existence of a large underground economy are more than manifestations of passing economic conditions. They could potentially undermine the completion of the reform process itself because, altogether, they constitute a serious challenge to social stability. This kind of problem seems more acute in Albania, Yugoslavia, FYROM and Bosnia/Herzegovina.

Inflation

Inflationary and hyperinflationary conditions have been common features of all South-Eastern European transition economies. The countries stemming from the Yugoslav Federation carried into the first phase of their transition hyperinflation conditions of the Federation itself. In two of these countries hyperinflation reached around 1500%, in FYROM in 1992 and in Croatia in 1993, while Slovenia's rate reached its highest level, around 200% in 1992. Bosnia's hyperinflation rate in 1992-3 ranged between 30,000% to 60,000%. Bulgaria in 1991 and Romania in 1993 also experienced high inflation rates reaching 300% and 200% respectively.

Another common characteristic shared by all Balkan countries is the speed with which inflation was contained. By 1995, two countries, Albania and Bosnia, had rates below 10%. FYR Macedonia had reduced inflation to around 16%. Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia

had inflation rates dropped at a slower pace ranging between 40% and 70%. Inflation containment during this period was attributed to three main factors. Governments' commitment to deflationary monetary and fiscal policies, price stabilization through subsidies and effective support of national currencies. These policies were introduced after 1992 in all countries, except Yugoslavia, in collaboration with the IMF and the World Bank. Their successful implementation was a precondition for gaining access to foreign loan facilities and financial assistance for specific projects. It also carried the promise of foreign direct investment.

After 1995, inflation moved upward again in some countries, reaching in 1997 a level of 33% in Albania, 155% in Romania and around 1,100% in Bulgaria. The upward surge in Albania was caused mainly by the pyramid crisis while in the other two cases, it was brought about by acute financial crises related to the failure of the banking system in those countries. The concurrent turbulence in the international financial markets aggravated conditions even more. The inflation rate in Romania in 1998 started a downward trend. It was achieved through a high interest rate policy pursued by the central bank. This policy was not without ill effects. It affected negatively output, production costs and the competitiveness of Romanian exports. The inflation reduction objective, however, is gradually being reached. For the first time since 1990, inflation is expected to be below 20% at the end of 2002. Bulgaria posted an impressive deceleration of inflation from 1,082.6% in 1997 to 22.2% in 1998. This was accomplished by currency board policies, introduced in mid-1997. Price stability, however, was achieved at the cost of serious suppression of aggregate demand, which affected particularly the production of industrial goods. In Albania, exchange policies played a key role in the disinflation process. During the last two years, inflation rates in the above-mentioned three countries have been reduced to levels below 5% with further reductions expected in 2003.

Banking and Financial Reform

A key indicator of successful transition is the reform and development of a banking and financial sector appropriate to a market economy. This was truly the road less travelled in the region. The banking sector in the Balkan countries before 1989 was weak, undeveloped and undercapitalized in comparison to other sectors of the economy, which were inefficient, in general wasting resources and capital. All countries, except Yugoslavia, emerged from the Communist era with the legacy of a single-bank system which performed central bank functions and limited commercial transactions. A first step in banking reform was the creation of a two-level banking system, separating commercial from central banking functions. Most countries introduced a legal and regulatory framework that followed BIS standards and procedures.

Reform of the financial sector in its initial phase proceeded more in terms of quantity rather than quality. The first priority was the creation of a two-tier system. The number of financial institutions quickly multiplied through the privatization of state banks. In some countries the sector was immediately opened up to foreign institutions as well. The nascent banking system was faced with what, at times, seemed to be insurmountable problems. First, financial institutions were reformed with insufficient regulation and unclear focus. Frequently, expansion was associated with improprieties, scandals and fraudulent schemes. Second, the dubious reputation and unreliability of the new financial institutions limited their ability to attract deposits and prevented the growth of their loan portfolios. It was difficult, therefore, to develop extensive client networks. Third, state banks were compelled to carry a high number of none-performing loans, which had been accumulated by the government subsidisation programs to state run enterprises.

The initial phase of reform was marked by numerous bank failures, scandals and transactional irregularities, which questioned the very basis and viability of the emerging system. The emergence of too many private banks compelled most countries to quickly engage in

bank consolidation, in restructuring of loan portfolios and in seeking sufficient recapitalization in order to meet minimum international standards. After a few stormy years, all countries took significant steps to once again reform the financial sector through extensive privatisation and foreign ownership participation. Some countries have gone further than others in modernizing their banking and financial systems, more often in concert with their corresponding transition pace.

Banking reform in Albania started at a slow pace. In the early 1990s, the country was characterized by very low financial intermediation, an inadequate legal framework for banking operations and an extensive money-laundering problem. The system allowed for the proliferation of unsound speculator investment schemes promising excessive returns on deposits. These investment practices become very widespread between 1994-96 leading to an acute crisis manifested itself at the end of this period. The shock waves caused by the collapse of the pyramid schemes in 1997 led to a gradual and systematic restructuring of the banking sector. Successive pieces of legislation introduced following the crisis strengthened the banking regulation and supervision frameworks significantly. Capital adequacy reached very high levels, 35% in 2001, compared to the required 12%. In a more recent measure, deposit insurance was introduced, guaranteeing deposits of up to US\$ 5,000, which covers about 60% of all depositors. In terms of structure and ownership, the Albanian banking system consists of 13 banks of which only one, the Saving Bank (SB) is entirely state owned. There are two banks in which the state has a 40% share, while the remaining ten are privately owned. This description, however, is misleading if one considers that the SB, in 2001, accounted for 59% of the total banking assets, while its share of deposits was 64%. Two recent attempts to privatize the SB, in 2001 and 2002, have failed. The Albanian government is determined to proceed with SB's privatization in an effort to modernize the sector, increase financial intermediation and stimulate investment in the private sector.

In Bulgaria, new legislation introduced in January 1991, permitted the creation of new financial institutions with private domestic or foreign capital. Within two years after the liberalisation of the banking sector, 80 commercial banks were organised as self-managing joint-stock companies. The activities and lending practices of these new banks quickly became identified with serious irregularities and illicit financing. The lack of effective regulatory scrutiny allowed the problem to spread. During the same period, state-owned banks continued, under government pressure, to extend loan facilities to money-losing enterprises. It is estimated that in 1995 alone total losses amounted to 15% of the GDP. By the end of that year the system was insolvent. Many banks faced liquidity problems, temporarily alleviated through massive central bank refinancing. The consequent money creation affected the foreign exchange market, shook confidence in the national currency and led to devaluation from 10 *lev* to 1 US\$ in December 1995, to 3200 *lev* to 1 US\$ in February 1996. The annual inflation rate climbed to over 1000%. By January 1997, one out of every four banks was in receivership.

Following the advice of the IMF, the Bulgarian government introduced a currency board accompanied by a package of structural reforms. This package included strict control and financial supervision of money losing state enterprises, the liberalization of trade and a more rigorous privatization policy. In July 1997, the board linked the *lev* to the Deutschmark, took measures to restrict government expenditures and the activities of the central bank, which was permitted to provide only three-month loans to commercial banks. The board was equally effective in containing inflation, which was reduced to 1% monthly by the end of the year. The policy of the board, however, did not come without cost. Bulgaria experienced a severe depression in aggregate demand, which manifested itself in GDP contraction. The GDP declined in 1997 by 7.4%, only to reverse itself with a 4.5% increase in 1998.

After four years of systematic restructuring, the banking sector in Bulgaria is well regulated and supervised; moreover, the credibility of its institutions has been improved through a series of mergers and

consolidations. At present, 35 banks are operating in the country, 2 of which are publicly owned; the rest, private. Foreign investors control 21 banks and some 76% of total banking assets. Overall, the banking sector is fairly liquid, quite profitable and adequately capitalized. Banking intermediation, however, remains low in comparison not only to Western European countries but also to the other central European transition countries.

The banking sector reform in the FYROM was based on a policy of rehabilitation and privatization of existing entities. Banking institutions came under the supervision and guidance of the 'Government Sanction Agency', which became responsible for clearing their balance sheets and securing adequate capitalization. At the same time, the national bank made a consistent effort to create a regulatory and supervisory framework for the establishment of a viable banking sector. Strict capitalization requirements were introduced, money laundering was checked and measures for expanding credit to small and medium enterprises were implemented. New legislation introduced in 2000 and 2001 has created the legal framework for modernising and consolidating the banking sector along the lines of the European Union banking directives and international standards. At present, the banking system of the country consists of 21 commercial banks and 17 'saving houses'. There is only one state-owned bank. The sector is predominantly privately owned (84%), while the share of foreign ownership has increased to over 40%. Overall, the system is well regulated and supervised, while liquidity and capitalization conditions are adequate. Still, however, financial intermediation is low, and there are clear signs of high concentration with two banks controlling 50% of total banking assets.

The banking sector in Yugoslavia had to wait until 2001 for its own reform. Like all other sectors of the economy, it has suffered from the reluctance of the Milosevic regime in the 1990s to proceed with privatization and restructuring. Banking institutions remained effectively under state control and operated under soft budget constraints, mostly supporting money-losing enterprises. With an artificially maintained fixed exchange rate and official reserves

estimated to be at very low levels, banking and financial conditions in Yugoslavia remained difficult until the democratic transformation in 2000.

The banking sector, which emerged from the Milosevic era, was deeply insolvent. In fact, it was also in the throes of a severe liquidity crisis. The National Bank of Yugoslavia (NBY), in collaboration with the World Bank and the IMF, embarked on an ambitious restructuring policy in May 2001. The proposed objective of this policy was to complete by March 2003, all necessary liquidation procedures for insolvent institutions and privatize the remaining banks, most of which were severely undercapitalized. The implementation of this policy is still under way. Initially, all banking institutions were categorized in three groups: healthy, solvent but undercapitalized, and insolvent. At present, 28 banks have been declared insolvent and have been closed, including four of the largest banks. The remaining 43 banks (including five foreign owned) have been declared as healthy. Some, however, are still facing serious capitalization problems. Concurrently, emphasis is placed on bank privatization, strengthening of banking supervision and enforcement of prudential rules and regulations. The intention of the NBY is to increase the minimum capital requirement to US\$ 10 million by 2003, introduce new asset classification, improve internal auditing, control and credit policies and establish International Accounting Standards (IAS).

In Romania, the privatization and reform in the banking sector proceeded more slowly than in the rest of the region. For almost ten years (1990-1999) after the transition started, the level of intermediation was very low, the degree of concentration was very high (the largest four banks controlling more than 65% of total banking assets) and the problem of non-performing loans to state banks remained outstanding. Bold reform steps were taken after 1999 with the closure of a large state bank, Bancorex, the restructuring, recapitalization and eventual privatization of the Bank Agricola and the clearance of a substantial part of the non-performing loans. This year, the government is proceeding with the privatization of the largest

of the three remaining state banks, the Banca Comerciala Romana, which holds a 30% share of the total banking assets. At present, another thirty private banking institutions are in operation, of which twenty have a majority foreign ownership.

Banking supervision and the legal and regulatory framework have also been strengthened in recent years. At the beginning of 2002, new regulations were governing the operations of saving cooperatives and the administration of the secondary treasury bills and money markets. After a decade of delays the banking sector in Romania is quickly catching up with the progress made in the other Balkan countries.

Public Finances

One critical challenge which all transition economies confronted was the establishment of adequate fiscal policies and institutions. The simple socialist tax model, based on easily collectible high tax revenues, was swept away and replaced by a more complex tax system with a wider tax base. This held true both for corporate and personal tax policy. This change, however, necessitated the founding of new legal and administrative structures and needed time to be implemented. It was also assumed that privatisation would create a key source of tax revenue because it would create private taxable assets. However, the way privatisation was implemented, mainly through the issuance of shares and vouchers, it failed to constitute such a tax base because the change in ownership proved to be rather formalistic. During the first phase of privatization, very few state-owned assets were sold for cash to the private sector. Tax revenue targets, therefore, were never met. This revenue shortfall was compounded further by the inability of public policy to shift away from a socialist habit identified with high levels of public spending relative to GDP. This socialist technique was used as a subsidy mechanism to offset ailing and inefficient state enterprises, and, in the name of ideological imperatives, to support universal social policies, often of dubious quality, beyond the means of the real economy. In addition, three

other factors made state budgets inelastic. First, the new governments inherited an inflated and inefficient bureaucracy. Cutting the fat in the context of other radical structural changes would have led to even higher unemployment, thus aggravating an already serious problem. It must be noted, however, that for most new administrations, the support and maintenance of the state bureaucracy helped to strengthen their staying power and longevity. Second, the statecraft associated with independence and the institutional transformation associated with the economic transition, imposed additional fiscal demands. The establishment of new institutions and reorganisation of old ones, as well as, the assumption, in some cases, of military and policing expenditures, absorbed a considerable part of state budgets. Third, countries like Yugoslavia, Croatia and Bosnia were burdened with the additional cost of military conflict and the inherent damages.

Albania's public finances mirror the volatility and instability of its transition experience. It is estimated that in 1991 government expenditure equaled 60% of GDP and the deficit stood at 30% of GDP. The fiscal situation was better controlled after 1992. Price controls were maintained for transportation and utilities services, while the government and the trade unions agreed to index-linked salary increases. This reduced government expenditures quite significantly. At the same time, the privatization of land and dwellings provided the initial base for personal and property tax collection. The gradual improvement in Albania's fiscal position came to an abrupt end with the outbreak of the pyramid crisis. The collapse affected at least 75% of the population, which lost some 95% of its investment. The fallout from this collapse was widespread. Damage alone inflicted from civic unrest, looting and ravaging amounted to about US\$ 1 billion. Fiscal deficits for the next three years increased to over 10% of GDP.

The pyramid crisis, in many respects, was a cathartic experience. After the crisis, the government implemented a restructuring program in close accordance with the IMF. The foundation was thus laid for a more viable and efficient fiscal control and management system. The expenditure needs of the Albanian government still exceed its revenues

but since 2000, fiscal deficits have been declining, expected to be 8.6% this year and 7.6% of GDP in 2003.

Romania's public finances have been characterized by chronic tension with the IMF. The large trade and current account deficits of the early period forced Romanian governments to comply, very reluctantly, with IMF conditions. In November 1991, the government announced a strict fiscal policy and introduced internal convertibility of the *leu*, a necessary measure enabling companies to have access to foreign currency. This policy was abandoned in May 1992, which provoked the suspension of IMF assistance. However, later that same year, IMF conditions were once again met and measures were implemented to promote macroeconomic stability, restructure financial institutions and eliminate subsidies. The lack of real commitment by the government to advance such measures within a specific time period increased friction with IMF, which once again suspended its stand-by agreement with Romania in early 1996.

By late 1996, however, the Romanian government was once again in consultation with the IMF. This time it was pursuing a disciplined fiscal course. Its policies included the elimination of soft credits by the central bank to agriculture and industry, lifting of price controls, liberalization of the foreign exchange market and removal of trade controls. Again in 1997 and 1998 the protracted tension between Romania and the IMF manifested itself, this time over the manner in which privatization was proceeding, the delays in shutting down money-losing businesses and the unacceptably generous lay-off agreements negotiated between the government and the unions. These government actions jeopardized the macroeconomic stabilisation program which the government had agreed to pursue; hence, the IMF suspended its assistance program. Over the past few years, the fiscal stance of Romania has improved as a result of a systematic government effort to proceed with reforms. Since 2000, the fiscal deficit has been contained to 3% of GDP annually — the best performance in ten years.

Bosnia's public finances are unlike those of any other country in the Balkans. According to the Dayton and Paris Agreements, the governments of the two entities, the Muslim Croat federation and the Serb federation, have full control over fiscal matters within their respective territories. The central government is entirely dependent upon transfer payments from the two entities, with no direct revenue of its own. Only in 1998 was significant progress made in creating the conditions for the future fiscal sustainability of the central government. A new law on customs and tariffs which guarantees the central government a steady stream of revenue was introduced.

For the period up to 1998, the international community covered Bosnia's budget deficit, which exceeded 30% of the country's GDP annually. After that year, the IMF made international financial assistance conditional upon budgetary restrictions. These restrictions were applied to fiscal deficit policy in the public sector, as well as the ability to maintain monetary stability. The IMF specifically requested the implementation of a fixed exchanged rate for the *dinar* (1 DM = 100 BHD or *dinar*) and the creation of a currency board. The IMF also imposed limits on central bank credits to the commercial banking sector and strongly recommended the prevention of any significant accumulation of new domestic arrears. Since then Bosnia has managed to maintain its monetary stability and improve its fiscal stance. Its fiscal deficits have been dramatically contained in recent years reaching 13% of GDP in 2001. This year the deficit is expected to be below 5% of GDP — the lowest it has ever been.

The FYROM has managed to maintain budgetary balance and price stability far better than most other transition Balkan economies. It has achieved this delicate state in adverse conditions. The FYROM emerged as one of the poorest new states in the region, heavily dependent upon foreign trade and its interaction with Serbia. In addition, it suffered indirectly the consequences of the UN embargo on Serbia and directly the Greek embargo directed at the FYROM during the 1994-5 period. Despite this, the country maintained its fiscal stance at a satisfactory level. The International Community has responded positively to FYROM's cautious fiscal and monetary policy.

Its membership in the IMF and the World Bank since 1992, its co-operation with the EBRD, and its inclusion in the EU's PHARE program have enabled former Macedonia to receive extensive financial assistance. Initially, most of the funds were channelled to infrastructure projects, and only in recent years has that assistance been provided for the development of economic activity within the private sector. These changes improved the country's fiscal position, which showed a surplus in 2000. The following year, however, the fiscal deficit returned rather large at 6% of the GDP. The deficit was caused by the protracted internal turmoil following the uprising of the Albanian minority. In 2002, the fiscal deficit is expected to be approximately 3% of the country's GDP.

The disintegration of the old Yugoslav federation through armed conflict led to a dramatic collapse of production, hyperinflation, high unemployment and large trade and current account deficits. Measuring these magnitudes with accuracy is a real problem, given the secrecy with which the Milosevic regime was treating its public finances and given the exclusion of the Federation from the IMF and the World Bank. The fiscal situation of Yugoslavia up to 2000 was a reflection of the broader economic picture of the country. The effective halt of privatization, the general drop in economic activity plus the absence of a credible and reliable taxation system must have minimized state revenue. The very same conditions had given rise to an underground economy, which has been estimated to account for 50% of all economic activity. The Kosovo conflict, in addition to the physical destruction of Yugoslavia's infrastructure, also caused further economic deterioration. The democratic transformation has reversed this trend. The fiscal deficit in 2001 was less than 2% of the GDP. In the current year, and as the restructuring effort is getting under way, the fiscal deficit is expected to increase, reaching 6% of GDP, which is considered moderate in light of the task ahead.

Trade and Current Account Conditions

Most of the countries under consideration have experienced trade and current account deficits throughout the transition period. The opening up of their markets after a long period of suppressed domestic demand gave a tremendous boost to the importation of foreign products of superior quality. The slow restructuring pace of domestic manufacturing units would not allow domestic production to respond to this sudden surge in demand, nor could the slowly changing production structure match the quality of imported products. Exports of manufacturing goods and agricultural produce were further curtailed when price liberalization was introduced. The comparative advantage such commodities enjoyed mainly due to subsidized prices, disappeared, as was the case with the network exporting goods to the other former Eastern bloc countries. Exports of raw materials and intermediate goods continued as long as stock supply lasted. Replenishment could not keep up with demand, because of generally deteriorating labour conditions and the many forms of interruption caused by conflict, population transfers, lack of machinery repairs and lack of innovation. Countries like Albania, Yugoslavia, Bosnia and FYROM were particularly affected by these conditions.

Albania's trade deficit between 1989 and 1992 increased by almost six times. From that point onward, fluctuations were much more moderate, in the range of 10% to 20% annually. There is one anomalous year, however, 1997, when trade deficit increased by almost 60% from the previous year to reach the highest lever ever. It is interesting to note that in the same year output contracted by 8% due to the general economic crisis caused by the pyramid scheme collapse. Since 1998 and up to the present, trade deficits amount to over 20% of GDP per year, a clear sign that in spite of a relative fiscal and monetary stability, the production capacity of the country has not been adequately revitalized. During the whole transition period, the current account deficits have been much smaller amounting to less than 40 % of the trade deficit of the corresponding year. The principal cause for this is the inflow of remittances from the large number of

Albanian workers who had immigrated after 1992 mainly to neighbouring countries Italy and Greece. Any improvement in Albania's trade and current account balances in the future will depend on development of its unexploited mineral resource sector. Albania is rich in chromate (with the world's fourth largest deposits), copper, iron, nickel, bauxite and an array of other minerals. After the crisis of 1997, privatization reform and investment in the mining and quarrying sectors has started again. In recent years, foreign investors have shown a keen interest for creating joint-ventures with state-owned operators.

Until 1989, trade in Bulgaria was monopolized by the state through a series of specialized foreign trade organisations. Compared to all other Eastern bloc countries, Bulgaria had the largest proportion of trade conducted with COMECON countries and particularly with the Soviet Union. The collapse of this trading bloc affected Bulgaria more than any other country in the region. For this reason, the current account balances were very erratic, particularly until 1993. After an adjustment period, Bulgaria's trade and current account deficits were dramatically reduced, recording small surpluses in 1997 and 1998, despite the country's financial crisis during that same year. After 1998, trade interaction has increased steadily particularly between the Russian Federation, Germany, Italy and Greece. Trade deficits during the last four years range between 9% and 12% of the GDP per year, while the current account deficit for each of the corresponding years is almost half that.

Romania started its transition posting trade deficits between 1990 and 1993, exceeding 4% of the GDP per year. The current account deficit followed a very similar trend. This was an expected development given that a debt repayment policy had been put into place before the collapse of the Ceausescu régime, thus suppressing consumption, restricting imports and promoting exports of food and energy. The new, democratic government reversed this policy. It allowed for import increases to satisfy urgent needs. In 1994, both trade and current account deficits were reduced to very moderate levels reaching 2.5% and 1.2% of the GDP respectively. The trend

changed again after 1995, when both deficits reached the levels of the earlier period and quickly moved higher. During the last four years, the trade deficit ranges between 5% and 7.5% of GDP while the current account deficit ranges between 3.8% and 5.7% of GDP per annum.

Bosnia, due to special circumstances, has experienced very high trade and current account deficits. From 1995 to 1998 they, exceeded 30% of GDP per year. After 1999, deficits have steadily decreased and dropped below 20% of the GDP in 2001. These deficits have been financed mainly by foreign aid and, to a lesser degree, by remittances.

Despite the trade and current account deficits recorded by the Balkan transition economies since 1989, they are still considered low to moderately indebted countries. By 2001, Romania, Albania and the FYROM had an external debt that was 40% of their respective GDP, which is low by international standards. Bulgaria and Yugoslavia (adjusted after the democratic transformation), had an external debt under 70% of their respective GDP, which places them on the moderate scale of indebted nations.

Conclusions

The initial phase of the transition project was characterised by price liberalisation and the introduction of privatization policies. It gradually gave way to stabilisation programs supported by the IMF and the World Bank. Fiscal and monetary stability concerns dominated the economic agenda of all Balkan governments leading eventually to very positive results during the last few years, particularly after 1998. Current account deficits on average are smaller than trade deficits. This trend is expected to continue, mainly because immigrant remittances are becoming very stable sources of foreign currency. Countries like Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia are expecting to further increase their revenues from tourism and transportation payments.

The key focus of transition has now shifted to institution-building changes and the implementation of appropriate market practices in the name of efficiency, profit maximization and market rationalization. Efforts are also made for the enhancement of capital formation from domestic and foreign investors. At times, however, concern about the stabilization programs and commitment to fiscal or monetary discipline seem to hide another reality, which is more relevant to people's lives. The *per capita* income in the Balkan transition countries is less than 30% of the average *per capita* income in the European Union. An additional fact not to be overlooked is that in spite of improvements in the fundamental economic indicators, the economies of these countries remain fragile. Not only are they susceptible to international monetary crises and vulnerable to internal political instability but, in some cases, they are also still exposed to the dangers of ethnic conflict.

Notwithstanding progress, in all areas of economic activity weaknesses exist and demand immediate attention. The financial system in all the countries mentioned remains underdeveloped in comparison to Western standards. This leads to very low financial intermediation and limited credit facilities. The investment climate remains poor and unable to attract much-needed foreign direct investment at the desired level. The Balkan economies have the lowest *per capita* foreign direct investment (FDI) in comparison to all other transition economies.

Public finances also remain in a precarious state. The tax base and tax collection mechanisms still require reform while the size and magnitude of the underground economy, which by definition escapes taxation, remains very large. A tax revenue policy that has been applied with considerable success is the introduction of a Value Added Tax (VAT) ranging from 8% to 18% in all Balkan economies.

The uneven but nevertheless large trade deficits of the Balkan economies reflect their limited capacity to respond quickly enough to the needs of a market economy. Most of these economies are experiencing serious difficulties in creating new products at

competitive prices and comparable quality. They also face similar problems in reorienting their exports to new markets which are much more demanding than those of former Eastern bloc countries, their previous traditional trade partners. Obviously, their economies must become more productive and more competitive as they move toward European integration.

The transition process has also resulted in the severe dislocation of people. Income inequalities have widened more than in the EU countries and even in the transition countries of central Europe. Four main factors have contributed to this widening gap:

- First, the large number of unemployed people without any social assistance;
- Second, the increasing disparities in salary between the private and public sector;
- Third, the size of pension incomes compared to the average income of labour market participants;
- Fourth, disparities created by unequal access to new property-generated income.

While income inequality widens, the problem becomes more acute, because access to basic social goods is scarce and costly. Therefore, the transition process has created a pattern of social marginalization and conditions of sustainable, acute income inequality. These are issues which must be addressed effectively by all Balkan governments. In other words, real conversion, in addition to nominal, should become a priority on the economic agenda. The growth rates recorded during the last few years, which are much higher than the EU average growth rates for the corresponding period, give us the best indicator that the Balkan transition project is moving forward, completing its restructuring agenda and creating viable conditions for sustainable growth and development.

The completion of the main transition objectives and challenges that lie ahead still depend, to a great extent, on the state. The role of

the state and that of governments, at this stage, need to be redefined. Not only the market has to be protected from excesses, abuses and improprieties, but also its corporate and individual participants. This protection can only be provided by the reinforcement of rules and regulations within an economic environment that fosters private initiative and serves the broader economic and social objectives of the nation. The viability of the economic project will depend on governments' ability to develop a comprehensive, cost efficient, manageable social safety net.

From now on, the ultimate measure of success for the transitional Balkan economies will be their competitive participation in the international markets and their degree of integration with the European Union. Bulgaria and Romania are accession countries expected to join the EU in 2007. It is assumed that other Balkan countries will soon thereafter follow the same path. Of course this path presents new challenges and new opportunities, which all Balkan economies will be obliged to confront. Their experience during the last decade or so, gained while transforming their economies and societies, will be a very useful asset in facing these challenges successfully and hopefully seizing opportunities.

APPENDIX

BANK OF GREECE
ECONOMIC RESEARCH DEPARTMENT
Section of International Economic Developments

BALKAN ECONOMIES:													
Current Account Balance (% of GDP)													
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001*	2002*
ALBANIA	-	-	-	-30,1	-14,4	-7,2	-9,1	-12,1	-6,1	-7,2	-6,9	-7,4	-6,0
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	-	-	-	-	-14,1	-10,3	-27,3	-31,0	-18,9	-21,4	-20,9	-17,9	-18,3
BULGARIA	-8,2	-1,0	-4,2	-10,1	-0,3	-0,2	0,2	4,2	-0,5	-7,5	-7,4	-10,2	-12,6
FR YUGOSLAVIA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-11,6	-7,7	-4,2	-7,5	-7,4	-10,2	-12,6
FYR MACEDONIA	-9,1	-5,5	-0,8	0,6	-5,3	-5,0	-6,5	-7,7	-10,1	-3,4	-3,1	-9,9	-9,0
ROMANIA	-9,6	-3,5	-8,0	-4,5	-1,4	-5,0	-7,3	-6,1	-7,0	-3,7	-3,7	-6,1	-6,1

* Data for 2001 are preliminary actuals, mostly official government estimates. Data for 2002 are EBRD projections.
Source: EBRD, *Transition Report Update*, May 2002.

BANK OF GREECE
ECONOMIC RESEARCH DEPARTMENT
Section of International Economic Developments

BALKAN ECONOMIES:

Real GDP growth

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001*	2002*
ALBANIA	9,8	-10,0	-28,0	-7,2	9,6	9,4	-0,9	19,8	-7,0	8,0	7,3	7,8	6,5	6,0
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	-	-23,2	-12,1	-30,0	-40,0	-40,0	32,4	85,8	39,9	10,0	10,0	4,5	2,3	2,3
BULGARIA	0,5	-9,1	-11,7	-7,3	-1,5	-3,5	-1,8	-8,0	-5,6	4,0	2,3	5,4	4,0	4,0
FR YUGOSLAVIA	1,2	-7,9	-11,6	-27,9	-30,8	2,5	6,1	7,8	10,1	1,9	-15,7	5,0	5,5	5,0
FYR MACEDONIA	0,9	-9,9	-7,0	-8,0	-9,1	-1,8	-1,1	1,2	1,4	3,4	4,3	4,5	-4,1	2,5
ROMANIA	-5,8	-5,6	-12,9	-8,8	1,5	3,9	7,3	3,9	-6,1	-4,8	-1,2	1,8	5,3	4,3

* Data for 2001 are preliminary actuals, and data for 2002 represent IMF projections.

Sources: EBRD, *Transition Report Update*, May 2002 and IMF, *World Economic Outlook*, Sept. 2002.

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BALKAN ECONOMIES:

Unemployment (% of labor force)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001*	2002*
ALBANIA	9,5	8,9	27,9	28,9	16,1	13,9	9,3	14,9	17,8	18,0	16,8	19,0	
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37,0	38,0	40,0	40,1		
BULGARIA	1,7	11,1	15,3	16,4	12,8	11,1	12,5	13,7	12,2	16,0	17,9	17,4	
FR YUGOSLAVIA	-	21,0	24,6	24,0	23,1	24,6	25,8	25,8	25,1	26,5	27,3		
FYR MACEDONIA	18,5	19,2	27,8	28,3	31,4	37,7	31,9	36,0	34,6	32,4	32,1	30,5	
ROMANIA	-	3,0	8,2	10,4	10,9	9,5	6,6	8,9	10,3	11,8	10,5	8,6	

* Data for 2001 estimates and for 2002 projections.

Source: EBRD, *Transition Report Update*, May 2002.

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BALKAN ECONOMIES:

General Government Balance (% of GDP)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001*	2002*
ALBANIA	-6,1	-20,7	-23,1	-15,5	-12,6	-10,1	-12,1	-12,6	-10,4	-11,4	-9,1	-9,2	-8,6
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	-	-	-	-	-	-0,3	-4,4	-0,5	-19,3	-22,0	-20,4	-12,8	-3,7
BULGARIA	-8,1	-4,5	-2,9	-8,7	-3,9	-5,7	-10,4	-2,1	0,9	-1,0	-1,1	-0,9	-0,8
FR YUGOSLAVIA	-	-	-	-	-	-4,3	-3,8	-7,6	-5,4	-	-0,8	-1,9	-5,6
FYR MACEDONIA	-	-4,5	-9,8	-13,4	-2,7	-1,0	-1,4	-0,4	-1,7	0,0	2,5	-6,0	-3,4
ROMANIA	-	-	-4,8	-0,4	-2,2	-2,5	-3,9	-4,6	-5,0	-3,5	-3,7	-3,5	-3,0

* Data for 2001 are preliminary actuals, mostly official government estimates. Data for 2002 are EBRD projections.

Source: EBRD, *Transition Report Update*, May 2002.

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BALKAN ECONOMIES:
Trade Balance (% of GDP)

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001*	2002*
ALBANIA	-23.7	-19.3	-25.7	-22.7	-20.4	-23.0	-21.6	-21.9	-22.4
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	-64.0	-49.6	-56.4	-51.4	-46.9	-40.8	-37.2	-31.3	-29.6
BULGARIA	-0.2	0.9	2.4	3.7	-3.1	-11.8	-12.4	-18.2	-23.2
FR YUGOSLAVIA	-	-	-15.7	-12.4	-12.6	-15.9	-22.1	-23.9	-22.4
FYR MACEDONIA	-5.5	-5.0	-7.1	-10.3	-11.7	-10.7	-15.5	-11.4	-11.1
ROMANIA	-1.3	-4.4	-7.0	-5.7	-6.3	-3.1	-4.6	-7.7	-7.4

* Data for 2001 are preliminary actuals, mostly official government estimates. Data for 2002 are EBRD projections.
Source: Bank of Greece's calculations based on data from EBRD, *Transition Report Update*, May 2002.

BANK OF GREECE
ECONOMIC RESEARCH DEPARTMENT
Section of International Economic Developments

BALKAN ECONOMIES:
Trade Balance (in millions of US dollars)

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001*	2002*
ALBANIA	-480	-475	-692	-518	-621	-846	-814	-912	-1 008
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	-803	-930	-1 546	-1 758	-1 959	-1 852	-1 616	-1 442	-1 550
BULGARIA	-17	121	188	380	-381	-1 081	-1 175	-1 566	-1 716
FR YUGOSLAVIA	-413	-1 135	-2 260	-2 070	-1 736	-1 619	-1 788	-2 517	-2 710
FYR MACEDONIA	-186	-221	-317	-386	-419	-392	-556	-397	-418
ROMANIA	-411	-1 577	-2 494	-1 980	-2 625	-1 092	-1 684	-2 989	-3 063

* Data for 2001 are preliminary actuals, mostly official government estimates. Data for 2002 are EBRD projections.
Source: EBRD, *Transition Report Update*, May 2002.

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BALKAN ECONOMIES:
Inflation (annual % change of CPI)

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002*
ALBANIA	0,0	0,0	35,5	226,0	85,0	22,6	7,8	12,7	32,1	20,9	0,4	0,0	3,1	5,3
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA	-	-	-	-	-	-	0,2	-13,7	9,5	0,8	3,2	5,6	3,3	2,3
BULGARIA	6,4	26,3	333,5	82,0	73,0	96,0	62,1	123,0	1061,2	18,8	2,6	10,4	7,5	6,4
FR YUGOSLAVIA	-	593,0	121,0	9237,0	11,7xE+13	3,3	78,6	94,3	21,3	29,5	37,1	60,4	91,3	24,2
FYR MACEDONIA	1 246,0	608,4	114,9	1 664,4	338,4	126,4	15,8	2,3	2,6	-0,1	-0,7	5,8	5,3	3,5
ROMANIA	1,1	5,1	170,0	210,0	256,0	136,7	32,3	38,8	154,8	59,1	45,8	45,7	34,5	24,2

* Data for 2002 represent IMF projections.
Sources: EBRD, *Transition Report Update*, May 2002 and IMF, *World Economic Outlook*, Sept. 2002.

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Civil Society in South-Eastern Europe and the Role of Greece in the Stability Pact

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RÉSUMÉ

Le Pacte pour la stabilité dans l'Europe du sud-est, signé à Cologne le 10 juin 1999, a eu différents effets sur les Balkans. La question posée dans cet article est de savoir comment une région, qui n'a pas une grande expérience d'une société civile, peut parvenir à se développer, en particulier grâce à la place des organisations non gouvernementales. L'auteur examine la possibilité pour la Grèce de jouer avec ses ONGs un rôle majeur.

ABSTRACT

Signed on June 10, 1999, in Cologne as a European Union initiative, the Stability Pact for S/E Europe has had various effects on the Balkans. What remains to be seen is how a region with little experience in civil society will manage. Especially interesting will be the role of the NGO. In fact, the author discusses how Greece and Greek NGOs could play an important role in the Balkans.

Introduction

Regional initiatives have always been a challenge for the countries of South-Eastern Europe. Since the inner-war period (Balkan Pact-1934) and during the Cold War (Balkan Pact-1954), Balkan countries have tried to enforce regional cooperation, promoting initiatives either on specific issues, or generally at the level of low politics. Regional cooperation has flourished through the Inter-Balkan Cooperation, especially during the "golden period of 1987-1991".¹ During that limited period, when perestroika had made the Iron Curtain thinner, the countries of the region found the space to develop more flexible and cooperative foreign policies.²

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On the other hand, all regional initiatives were depended on the policies of super or great powers in the region. Regional multilateral models were in fact dictated and promoted by interests far away from the region. The post-Cold War period proved to be a painful and bloody experience for the Balkans. The war in former Yugoslavia extinguished any cooperative policy until 1995. It is worth noting that all treaties of friendship and cooperation signed during the above-mentioned period were in fact more an indication of the existence of competitive alliances and axes in the region, rather than genuine efforts towards strengthening cooperation and development.

The importance of the Stability Pact

The Stability Pact for S/E Europe was signed on June 10, 1999, in Cologne as a European Union initiative, under the auspices of the OSCE. If we consider the Stability Pact members, it is noticeable that multi-collectivism is one of the basic characteristics of this Pact. Beyond its core, which is the recipient countries of South/Eastern Europe,³ there is an amalgam of states, international organisations and regional inter-state initiatives with significant differences.⁴

Obviously the main differentiation within the Stability Pact structure is that of donor countries and international organisations, on one hand, and recipient South-East European countries on the other. Whatever the final results and the sometimes justifiable criticism regarding the effectiveness, delays and transparency of the Stability Pact structure, no one can deny that the Stability Pact is a unique and unprecedented example of multilateral cooperation model, and this may be said for the following reasons:

- The International Community has a determined “regional approach” to the reconstruction issues in S/E Europe.
- Both International Organisations with significant political gravity and International Financial Institutions with the appropriate financial mechanisms participate actively in the SP structure and activities.

- The existence of the three Working Tables (WTs) is an effort to combine economic reconstruction and the introduction of stable democratic institutions in a secure social and international environment, while creating the necessary preconditions for a sustainable development in the region.
- The priorities of development policy are defined by both the donor and the recipient countries, and through the creation of the necessary mechanisms and a combined structure for the selection, there are control and evaluation processes for the proposed projects.
- The significance not only of International Organisations and member-states of the SP, but also of the private sector, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and all forms of the Civil Society is emphasized.⁵

More than ten years after the end of the Cold War, development and eventual integration of transition countries into the European structures need a balanced economic and social development in a secure environment.

The Role of Civil Society in South-Eastern Europe

After 45 years of communism, the Civil Society sector in S/E Europe is lacking experience, economic funds, know-how, and the appropriate mechanisms. The meaning of Civil Society plus the need, role and function of truly independent NGOs are difficult to define.

It is characteristic of the influence of the communist régime on the Civil Society sector, that the only country that has an active, experienced and well-structured NGO mechanism, except liberal Greece, is the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia-Montenegro), where the authoritarian regime for decades was not openly against civil activities.

Similarly, NGOs in the region still function in a transition society, with some remaining undemocratic structures and attitudes,⁶ such as

the violation of human rights, marginalisation of social groups, undemocratic state behaviour, etc. NGOs have the difficult task of instilling the values of civil rights into societies lacking real democratic education and practice.

Furthermore, NGOs in S/E Europe have to function in an environment full of uncertainty and interethnic conflicts. Nationalism, irredentism, ethnic hatred and lack of tolerance and understanding still devastate the region. Sound economic development is undermined by numerous illegal activities, corruption, trafficking in human beings, etc. The difficulties that the NGOs must overcome in trying to address all these problems are obvious. Moreover, in many cases NGO activists face discrimination and persecution from the state, extremist groups, or even 'mafias', whose interests can be jeopardized by a democratic and just society.

Given the unfriendly societal climate and many obstacles in accessing international funds, the ineffective mechanisms, and lack of experience, regional NGOs are looking for international partners and sponsors. As a result, regional cooperation within the civil society level remains limited, and local NGOs tend to be dependent upon powerful and well-organised international NGOs.

On the other hand, the international community has recognized the need to create regional networks and to promote regional and trans-boundary cooperation. One of the criteria for project funding is that the proposing programme must promote and include civil society actors from more than two S/E European countries, underlining the regional approach of the Stability Pact.

At the same time, we must point out that dependency and consequent control from international NGOs can create many problems in the sound development of the NGO sector within the region. On a long-term basis, the possible creation of a huge NGO international "industry" with regional branches could prove fatal for the significant role that civil society should play in the democratic development of this region.

Within the framework of the pact, local NGOs are very active in education and youth, media, and good governance task forces. In fact, in the Human Rights and Minorities Task Force, South-East European NGOs implement 11.28% of the project funds, while for Gender issues almost 10%.

Table: Participation of South-East European NGOs in the Working Table I on Democratization and Human Rights

COUNTRY OR PROVINCE OF IMPLEMENTING NGO	PROJECTS IN EUROS	%
ROUMANIA	868,642	15.7
SLOVENIA	842,600	15.3
MONTENEGRO	694,700	12.6
GREECE	680,000	12.3
KOSOVO	645,100	11.7
ALBANIA	511,250	9.3
FYROM	408,950	7.4
REGIONAL PROJ.	400,000	7.2
BULGARIA	231,000	4.2
CROATIA	131,500	2.4
SERBIA	111,100	2.0
TOTAL	5,524,842	100.00

Source: Office of the Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact (OSCSP), Quick Start Package, Working Table I, Progress Report, March 2001

Typically, even on the regional level, NGOs from Greece and Slovenia, which in fact are donor countries within the Stability Pact, implement 27.6% (1.5 mil. euros) of the total project funds for the local NGOs. This statistic indicates that donor countries tend to fund their own NGOs.

Greek initiatives within the framework of the Working Table I (Democratisation and Human Rights) of Stability Pact focused mainly on issues of human rights and minorities, education, the institution of an Ombudsman, inter-religious cooperation, media, parliamentary cooperation and refugee issues. In addition, Greece funded projects of Working Table II (Economic Reconstruction, Development and Cooperation) mainly on investments, supported the Business Advisory Council and the Initiative for Social Cohesion. Regarding Working Table III (Security Issues and Home Affairs), Greece funded projects on anti-mining, anti-corruption initiatives and judicial reforms. Greece pledged a total of 10.8 million euros for Stability Pact projects on the above-mentioned issues in March 2000 during the Donors Conference in Brussels, within the framework of the "Quick Start Package".

At the same time, Greece decided that issues of reconstruction and development (Working Table II) must be promoted on a bilateral basis within the framework of the Hellenic Plan for the Reconstruction of the Balkans. The latter is a half-million-euro five-year reconstruction and development plan, designed to promote investment and infrastructure projects in the neighbouring Balkan countries. It should be noted that Greek bilateral development assistance for the period 2000-2001 was 82 million euros.

Since then, Greece has focussed support on: local democracy and cross-border cooperation, reconciliation issues, small arms and light weapons, anti-corruption initiative, fight against organised crime, migration and asylum, trafficking in human beings. Greece will likely fund projects on the above topics and has already supported actions on disaster preparedness and prevention.

Problems and Limitations

Despite the high expectations the pact created, the latter has to overcome a significant number of structural problems and limitations regarding the current situation in South-Eastern Europe. First, the multi-collectivism regarding the membership of the Stability Pact provoked a complex bureaucratic structure, which is not only inflexible but also incapable of facing the region's fast political - economic changes and overcoming its own structural weaknesses. As a result, it is extremely difficult for the Secretariat to coordinate numerous members, Working Tables and Sub-Tables, and their respective chairmanships. Conflicting interests and visions regarding cooperation and development in South-Eastern Europe, different needs and priorities are functioning ineffectively.

In addition, the staffing and functional structure of the Secretariat, as well as the offices of the National Coordinators, remain problematic, with a considerable lack of coordination and long-term development strategy. This situation is typical; i.e., the lack of political will on the part of member states and organisations to staff and support departments and directorates, which are responsible for the Stability Pact.

Undeniably, at the outset the donor countries and a significant number of the recipient countries simply lacked the appropriate mechanisms to coordinate actions and initiatives to plan the whole structure for the selection, control and evaluation of the proposed programmes. The difficulty in defining specific priorities for each country on the basis of regional development is still obvious.

Moreover, in South-Eastern Europe, including Greece, the state attitude has frequently been negative to NGO involvement in the planning and implementation of a long-term development strategy. Because of the authoritarian régimes in Eastern Europe during the Cold War, the NGO sector was either underdeveloped or totally controlled. Similarly, on the west side of the Iron Curtain in the Balkans, countries like Greece and Turkey influenced by the Cold-

War climate, long used to authoritarian social structures, had a negative approach to Civil Society. Any NGO involvement and activity used to be the object of state scepticism.

In Greece, cooperation between State and Civil Society has improved significantly over the last five years, as financial support has increased dramatically, especially for projects in the Balkans. On the other hand, specific shortcomings persist. For example, the state development agencies and ministries of South-East European countries are inexperienced, have small budgets and ineffective mechanisms, thus they are unable to exploit the NGOs' activity and knowledge.

In addition, there is a lack of specific criteria for the approval and final funding of programs. Member states, including Greece and the SP itself, have failed to inform not only NGOs, but also the private sector, about the priorities, criteria, and process of an SP project. Since there is no defined process, it remains unclear who really is responsible for the approval and final evaluation of a proposed project. Is it the Secretariat, the donor country or the chair of the sub-table / task force?

Without a doubt, both the Secretariat and the National Coordinators have failed to inform in an appropriate way the private sector and Civil Society actors interested in playing an active role in the reconstruction and democratisation process. As a result, Stability Pact projects are approachable only by few private companies and NGOs, mainly with good connections, both in the donor and recipient countries. The exclusion of the majority of the Civil Society and Private Sector in some cases from Stability Pact projects, mainly because of lack of an information campaign, jeopardizes the whole philosophy of the Stability Pact and Civil Society.

As mentioned above, the multi-collectivism of the Stability Pact created a rough polyphony and imported the competition among states and organisations within its structure. As a sad consequence, competition and conflicting interests slowed down or completely

cancelled some development projects. This phenomenon has occurred both at the level of donor countries regarding their control and influence in areas and sectors of specific interest, and at the level of recipient countries, regarding their competition for a "slice" of international development aid.

The Need for Direct Action

The above-mentioned limitations and problems in the operation and efficiency of the Stability Pact do not reduce its significance. It provides an unprecedented and important multilateral cooperation model for development and security in South-Eastern Europe. Moreover, most of the problems have been created by all the members involved. In the end, what is required now is the definition and materialization of the direct actions, plus the political will to take full advantage of the many positive sides of the Stability Pact. We should remember that both donor and recipient countries have nonetheless improved their mechanisms in order to carry out the proposed and funded projects. Since the establishment of the Stability Pact, all parties involved have gained considerable experience in coordinating their respective mechanisms and structures.

However, for greater effectiveness and for more active involvement on the part of Greece, direct action is needed, as follows:

The Secretariat and the Greek National Coordinator must launch an educational campaign in order to inform the public and all parties involved regarding the structure, mechanisms and goals of the Stability Pact. People must be informed about how long it takes for a program to be funded and implemented in order to avoid misunderstandings and unjustified high expectations. In addition, recipient countries must be made aware that they are responsible for the creation of the necessary mechanisms to set the priorities and to implement the projects within their borders.

Furthermore, improved communication between the Greek State and NGOs will strengthen the transparency of the administrative and legislative process, thus increasing citizens' confidence in the activities of public institutions and eliminating bureaucratic sources of corruption and access to funds limited to only a few groups and NGOs.

In addition, Greece must encourage and support the creation of regional networks and enforce regional cooperation within the private sector.

Furthermore, a State-Civil Society partnership should definitely be promoted, and an engagement and consultation mechanism must be institutionalised on a sustained and systematic basis in areas where NGOs have the experience. Such mechanisms will respect the diversity of opinions on both sides, ensure open communication, and follow agreed ground rules of engagement. In a developed democratic country, like Greece, the State itself has to facilitate and promote NGO activities and ensure that the Civil Society's involvement remains unrestricted, creating a receptive environment for NGOs.⁷

In addition, the funding process must be accelerated. As it stands, both recipient and donor countries and NGOs do not have the appropriate mechanisms and sometimes the legislation for the quick funding of projects. In fact, Greek projects are usually postponed or face considerable delays, since the whole process is very slow starting from the approval of a project until the moment that the recipient party gets the money. All parties have acquired some experience in this area, but the mechanisms must be improved, while always in line with the relative national legislation.

We have noticed, however, that many sectors and problems can not be handled only by specific working tables or task forces. A horizontal approach plus some flexibility regarding cross-table projects is needed involving different working tables and task forces. Cases such as the anti-corruption initiative, gender issues, education, new technologies, some of the Greek priority areas, need cooperation and coordination among the chairpersons and relative mechanisms of the various

sectors. NGOs and the private sector can help since they have the necessary understanding of complex social and economic issues and the flexibility to move and act on different social levels. The SP Secretariat has to supervise and to prevent duplication and potential competitive tendencies.

Beyond its very structure, the Secretariat must define and present a specific list of regional criteria. This will be very helpful to task force leaders and national coordinators in their cooperation both with the Secretariat and the actors either from the private sector or the Civil Society. As a result, specific directions and principles based on a long-term development strategy will define the priorities and the projects needed in the near future.

NGOs must line up with principles and propose projects which meet those specific criteria, such as the “regional dimension”. Actually, this regional dimension characterizes the whole philosophy of the Stability Pact, involving civil society actors from as many countries as possible in the region. In addition, the criterion of “added value” is set, meaning that a project, even after the end of the initial funding, must find a way of creating its follow-up process, a productive action either in economic or social terms. The continuation of the program, possibly with an alternative funding and partners even in similar or different sectors, proves its viability and must become a basic selection criterion for SP programmes. Similar to the above-mentioned criterion of “added value” is the criterion of “regional transferability”. A project must have “regional inclusiveness”; i.e., the ability to transform itself from local or inter-boundary to regional, thus creating a network in all South-East European countries. This last ability would make any project coherent with the fundamental logic of the Stability Pact.

Furthermore, both task forces and sub-working tables, and donor countries like Greece, must focus on specific sectors and projects, while gaining visibility and increasing program efficiency, if not control of the whole process.

Conclusions

The civil society and private sector, in a receptive environment, encouraged by the State, and armed with a long-term strategy, must be prepared to propose specific projects, receive funds, implement programs, and finally accept the control and evaluation of their action by their sponsors, in this case the Stability Pact mechanisms, but most of all by the people who can directly judge the effectiveness, usefulness and durability of the implemented project.

Unfortunately, neither the civil society in South-Eastern Europe and Greece, nor the Stability Pact as a multilateral cooperative model are adequately experienced and effective to achieve this ideal scenario. Greek NGOs, with some exceptions, remain rather embryonic. Without know-how, funding, professional mechanisms and long-term strategy, they struggle to find their way in a region characterized by ethnic conflicts and competing national interests, where the culture of civil society is still underdeveloped. Furthermore, the Balkan states still understand the role of civil society as a tool to promote their own policy, not as something genuine which develops the society in a multi-level way, freeing productive and independent powers.

The Stability Pact came to promote economic development based on democratic structures in a secure environment, to coordinate actions and to strengthen regional cooperation. Bureaucratic mechanisms, lack of specific priorities and long-term development strategy, competition among the members created an inappropriate cooperative developmental model for fruitful participation of local NGOs and private sector. Civil Society in South-Eastern Europe participates in Stability Pact in a spasmodic and dependent way: dependent on both state policies and strong multinational / international NGOs.

Despite all this, the Stability Pact offers an unprecedented model of regional cooperation history. Fortunately, its shortcomings have been understood by all those involved. It remains to be seen if the political will from the International Community exists so that these problems

may be overcome and a balanced regional development process may be promoted.

In sum, Greece has to be active in all regional initiatives, such as the Stability Pact, the S/E European Cooperation Process (SEECp), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), activating not only the State structure, but also non-governmental factors, such as the civil society and the private sector. Despite certain limitations in multilateral cooperation, Greece has to maximize its relative regional advantages: an active and sound private sector, more experienced civil society and a State with stable and long-lasting democratic institutions.⁸

NOTES

1. The term was used for the first time by the author in a research study on Regional Cooperation at the University of Athens, in 1994.
2. More for regional cooperation in S/E Europe, see C. Jelavich-B. Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States 1904-1920*, Washington: University of Washington Press, 1977; T. I. Geshkoff, *Balkan Union: A Road to Peace in S/E Europe between the Wars*, New York, 1940; C. Svolopoulos, *Le Problème de la sécurité dans le Sud-Est Européen entre les deux Guerres*, *Balkan Studies*, No. 14, 1973, pp. 247-292, Z. Avramovski, *Balkanska Antanta 1934-1940*, Beograd, 1986; V. Jelavic, "Continuing Balkan Cooperation", *Review of International Affairs*, No 922, 1988; J. O. Iatrides, *Balkan Triangle*, The Hague: Mouton, 1968; H. Kondonis, "Prospects for Balkan Cooperation after the Disintegration of Yugoslavia", *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 32(3), 1998, pp. 377-394.
3. The recipient countries of this Stability Pact are: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Moldova.

4. It is not within the scope of this article to describe the structure of the Stability Pact. For a detailed view, visit on the internet the following site: www.stabilitypact.org
5. Stability Pact for S/E Europe, *Official Text*, Article III.10.
6. For the international principles of freedom of association, see: Article 11 of the *European Convention on Human Rights*, Article 22 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, Article 20 of the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*, and similar UN and OSCE Declarations.
7. Based on the *Stability Pact Declaration on NGO-Government Partnership in S/E Europe*, Bucharest, 27 October 2000.
8. Many thanks to Mrs. Despina Syrri for her valuable comments on this article.

La politique balkanique de la France au cours du XX^{ème} siècle

Jean Catsiapis*

ABSTRACT

Throughout the twentieth century, French policy in the Balkans was based on a large and strong Serbia in an effort to limit the influence of Austria and Hungary, ally of France's main enemy, Germany. Greece was the second pillar of the French policy. In fact the French had been 'monitoring' Greece since the Treaty of London, signed May 7, 1832. However, in the last decade of the twentieth century, Paris had to accept the disintegration of Yugoslavia plus the fact that France now exercised a mere economic rather than political influence on Greece. Moreover that influence depends on the overall economic climate.

RÉSUMÉ

Au début du XX^{ème} siècle la politique balkanique de la France se fonde sur une Serbie grande et forte afin de pouvoir limiter l'influence de l'Autriche-Hongrie, alliée de son principal ennemi, l'Allemagne. La Grèce est le second pilier de cette politique, les Français disposant d'un droit de contrôle et de surveillance sur ce pays depuis le traité de Londres du 7 mai 1832. La France dans la dernière décennie du XX^{ème} siècle a dû se résigner à la désintégration de la Yougoslavie et n'exerce plus en Grèce qu'une simple influence plus d'ordre économique que politique, et qui est soumise aux aléas de la conjoncture.

Y a-t-il une politique balkanique de la France ? La question mérite d'être posée puisque la France, géographiquement, n'appartient pas à l'Europe balkanique et ne possède d'intérêts spécifiques dans aucun des pays relevant de cet ensemble.

Le fait est qu'au début du XX^{ème} siècle, la France, qui était alors une grande puissance, présente sur de nombreux continents, ne pouvait se désintéresser de la situation dans les Balkans. La première guerre mondiale, dont la France est un acteur majeur, éclate, après l'assassinat à Sarajevo le 28 juin 1914, de l'archiduc héritier d'Autriche, François Ferdinand et de sa femme.

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Pour comprendre cet engagement de la France dans ce conflit il convient de rappeler brièvement, les grands axes de sa diplomatie au début du XX^{ème} siècle. Sortie considérablement affaiblie de la guerre de 1870 contre la Prusse, qui va lui faire perdre deux importantes provinces, l'Alsace et la Lorraine, la France va s'efforcer de rompre son isolement diplomatique par un rapprochement avec de grandes puissances. Elle va d'abord se lier avec la Russie, par une convention militaire du 17 août 1892, mise en vigueur en 1894. Puis est établie, après des siècles de rivalité avec la Grande Bretagne, l'entente cordiale franco-britannique. On parlera alors de Triple Entente pour désigner l'alliance non formelle de la France, de la Grande Bretagne et de la Russie. Enfin, en 1902 l'Italie, malgré son appartenance à la Triple Alliance ou Triplice, qui l'unit à l'Allemagne et l'Autriche, promet à la France sa neutralité en cas de guerre franco-allemande.

Il convient aussi d'indiquer que la France comme la Russie et la Grande Bretagne est « puissance protectrice » de la Grèce depuis que ce pays est devenu indépendant en 1830.

Au total la France se trouve impliquée dans les Balkans puisqu'elle possède des droits sur la Grèce et parce qu'elle est liée à la Russie, qui, elle même, à travers sa protection de la Serbie, affiche la volonté d'exercer une influence dans cette région. On doit aussi souligner le poids des intérêts économiques français en Grèce et en Serbie¹, qui explique la politique balkanique de la France au début du XX^{ème} siècle.

Si on veut tracer les grandes lignes de la politique balkanique de la France au XX^{ème} siècle, en la limitant principalement dans cette étude à la Yougoslavie et à la Grèce, on peut dire que Paris a eu pour ambition jusqu'au début des années quatre-vingt dix de favoriser l'unité yougoslave et de limiter, au contraire, par crainte d'un expansionnisme de l'hellénisme, les efforts d'Athènes à réunir sous son autorité tous les territoires dont la majorité de la population est d'origine grecque. C'est seulement durant la dernière décennie du XX^{ème} siècle, que la France, devenue puissance moyenne, a dû se résigner à la désintégration de la Yougoslavie et au renoncement de tout interventionnisme d'ordre politique dans les affaires de la Grèce.

I. Le soutien de la France à la « Grande Serbie » et à la Yougoslavie

1. La France et la politique de « Grande Serbie »

L'idée de « Grande Serbie » a été développée par Hija Garasanin (1812-1874) dans *l'Esquisse*, projet publié en 1844 et qui visait à permettre à la Serbie l'unification des Slaves du Sud par le contrôle de territoires formés aujourd'hui par le Monténégro, la Bosnie-Herzégovine, la Macédoine et le nord de l'Albanie. Puis le roi de Serbie, Pierre 1^{er}, développe en 1903 l'idée d'une « Grande Serbie », qui engloberait tous les Slaves du Sud, Bosniaques et Croates compris. L'Autriche-Hongrie, qui administre depuis le Congrès de Berlin de 1878 la Bosnie Herzégovine, décide l'annexion de ce territoire, en 1908, et entame contre la Serbie une guerre économique .

La France, lors de la crise bosniaque de 1908-1909 fait savoir qu'elle n'acceptera en aucun cas de se battre pour soutenir la politique panslave de la Russie et les ambitions nationales de la Serbie. Mais les guerres balkaniques de 1912-1913, au cours desquelles l'armée serbe utilise du matériel français, puis l'assassinat de l'archiduc François Ferdinand vont progressivement amener la France à soutenir la cause de la Serbie. Paris, en juillet 1914, à l'occasion de la visite du président Raymond Poincaré en Russie va ainsi décider d'épouser les positions de ce pays, qui par tradition et par intérêt ne peut laisser la Serbie se faire écraser par l'Autriche-Hongrie et admettre que cet Etat devienne la puissance prépondérante dans les Balkans. Le chef de l'Etat français, tout en conseillant la modération aux Russes, indique clairement que la France exécutera les obligations de son alliance avec St Petersburg.

Pour comprendre cette adhésion implicite de la France au projet de « Grande Serbie » il faut évoquer d'une part le soutien des intellectuels français à ce dessein et d'autre part l'intérêt de Paris à la constitution d'un puissant Etat serbe.

Les événements de Sarajevo de juin 1914 vont, en effet, donner à la France l'occasion de faire renaître la question d'Alsace-Lorraine et de se débarrasser du militarisme prussien. La communauté de destin de la France et de la « Grande Serbie » est ainsi évoquée par Albert Malet,

professeur au lycée Louis le Grand et ancien précepteur du prince Alexandre de Serbie :

« Les intérêts de la Serbie sont les nôtres parce qu'une « Grande Serbie » au sud de l'Autriche-Hongrie sera dans la paix comme dans la guerre un allié naturel ajoutant sa force et à celle de la Russie et de la France² ».

Ainsi la création d'un fort Etat serbe ne peut que servir les efforts français visant à contenir la puissance de l'Autriche-Hongrie, alliée de l'Allemagne.

L'entrée en guerre de la France aux côtés de la Serbie va être soutenue par nombre d'écrivains et d'universitaires. Entre 1914 et 1918 il y a eu de nombreuses publications en faveur de la Serbie. Dans son ouvrage « la Grande Serbie »³, Ernest Denis (1849-1921), grand spécialiste des études slaves en France écrit :

« Nous voudrions expliquer aux Français, qui aiment la Serbie sans savoir pourquoi, que leur affection ne se trompe pas et leur montrer les raisons des succès qui ont étonné le monde et de l'héroïsme qui a excité l'enthousiasme universel. La Serbie est le pays le plus francophile du monde ».

Comme on le dira plus loin le soutien de la France à la Serbie contraindra la Grèce à subir la violation de sa neutralité au début de la première guerre mondiale en acceptant d'accueillir sur son territoire, fin 1915, l'armée serbe en déroute, puis à s'engager, elle-même, en juin 1917, dans ce conflit.

2. La France et la création de la Yougoslavie

Le 1^{er} décembre 1918, le régent Alexandre, proclame la création du royaume des Serbes, des Croates et des Slovènes, (SHS), qui en 1929, après un coup d'Etat militaire fut baptisé royaume de Yougoslavie.

La France, lors de cette création a adopté une attitude ambiguë. Alors que Paris, tout au long de la guerre a accordé à la Serbie un

soutien militaire considérable, les Serbes trouvaient peu d'écho auprès des autorités françaises à leurs aspirations d'unification des Slaves du sud. A vrai dire il y avait au sein des diplomates français deux tendances. D'un côté, Louis Fontenay, ministre de France auprès du gouvernement serbe et de l'autre, au Quai d'Orsay, le ministre des affaires étrangères Pichon assisté de l'influent Philippe Berthelot, directeur des affaires politiques et commerciales⁴.

Fontenay, profondément germanophobe était un partisan résolu de l'unité des slaves du sud sous la direction de la Serbie. Il était ainsi partisan de la création d'une grande Yougoslavie dans laquelle l'élément serbe et l'armée serbe seraient dominants, ce qui permettrait, selon ses télégrammes adressés à Paris en septembre et octobre 1918, de faire du nouvel Etat un allié politique et militaire de la France pour barrer au « germanisme » le chemin des Balkans.

La direction du Quai d'Orsay, pour sa part ne souhaitait pas prendre position dans les querelles entre peuples yougoslaves et se prononcer avant la conclusion des travaux de la Conférence de la paix. Cette Conférence, qui s'ouvrit à Paris le 18 janvier 1919 mit quelque temps à s'intéresser aux questions yougoslaves, retenue par la gestation de la Société des nations et la préparation du traité avec l'Allemagne. Au mois d'avril c'est le Président Wilson, qui plaida lui-même pour la reconnaissance du royaume des Serbes, des Croates et des Slovènes, que son pays avait reconnu le premier dès le 16 février. Clemenceau et Lloyd George firent savoir qu'il fallait attendre en raison de l'absence des Italiens, qui avaient quitté la Conférence pour protester contre la proposition de Wilson. Finalement la Grande Bretagne reconnut le royaume le 1^{er} juin et la France fit de même le 5 juin.

La tardive reconnaissance par la France du royaume SHS montre simplement que les autorités françaises sont en faveur de l'unité yougoslave mais redoutent la toute puissance des Serbes sur les autres nations, qui forment le nouveau royaume. Les réticences françaises, vont être renforcées, quelques années plus tard, par « la politique de centralisation excessive, d'unitarisme maladroit et tracassier, qui ne respecte même pas la liberté religieuse », ainsi que l'écrit le 15 avril 1923, René Pinon, le chroniqueur diplomatique de la Revue des deux

Mondes. Celui-ci, dans son article, exprime son irritation à l'égard du comportement des Serbes depuis la fin de la guerre :

« Ceux qui, comme les Français, ont été, de tout temps, leurs amis et, pendant la Grande guerre, leurs alliés, ont le droit de leur dire, au moment où ils risquent de compromettre les résultats de la victoire, que le temps ne respecte que les œuvres auxquelles il collabore et que l'unité yougoslave n'a pas été faite seulement par la force des armes serbes, mais aussi par l'adhésion spontanée des peuples et par le concours des Alliés. »

La France, qui pensait avoir trouver dans l'entre deux guerres dans le royaume yougoslave un rôle de résistance à l'est de l'Allemagne susceptible de bloquer toute poussée de ce pays, sera fortement déçue par Belgrade dont la vision géopolitique est entièrement tournée vers les Balkans et n'éprouve qu'un intérêt mineur pour les problèmes d'Europe centrale. Les Français qui multiplient les traités d'amitié, d'assistance et d'arbitrage avec de nombreux pays balkaniques et d'Europe centrale, et notamment avec le royaume SHS, le 11 novembre 1927, afin de ceinturer l'Allemagne sont déçus par la Yougoslavie, qui poursuit une politique adriatique et balkanique, qui ne répond pas à leurs souhaits. Le pacte balkanique, signé à Athènes le 9 février 1934 entre la Yougoslavie, la Roumanie, la Grèce et la Turquie ne rentre pas directement dans le jeu de la France.

Au demeurant la politique menée par Paris n'est pas exempte d'incohérence. D'une part la France met en place une politique de défense de repliement, avec la ligne « Maginot » achevée en 1925, d'autre part elle mène une diplomatie active, qui supposait au contraire une politique de défense « offensive » afin de porter secours aux nombreux pays auxquels elle était liée par des accords d'assistance.

Loin d'être un pion de Paris face à Berlin, Belgrade va se tourner vers l'Allemagne pour y chercher un contrepoids à la pression qu'elle subit de Rome. La nomination en juin 1935, par le prince Paul, Régent du royaume yougoslave, de Milan Stojadinovic, partisan d'un rapprochement avec l'Allemagne et l'Italie, comme Président du

Conseil, marque une étape importante dans la dégradation des relations entre Paris et Belgrade.

La deuxième Yougoslavie, Etat socialiste, est proclamée le 29 novembre 1945. Cette Yougoslavie a été créée par Tito, d'origine croate, qui préconisait « une Yougoslavie forte avec une Serbie faible ». De Gaulle, ami de Mihajlovic, chef des Tcheniks, Serbes nationalistes, que fait abattre Tito, le 17 juillet 1946, ne pardonna pas à celui-ci cette exécution et ne se rendra jamais en Yougoslavie. La France ne sera donc pas dans son ensemble favorable, à l'origine, à cette nouvelle Yougoslavie, jugée comme trop proche de Moscou et qui, au début de la guerre civile grecque, servira de base aux forces rebelles au gouvernement d'Athènes.

Mais la rupture Staline-Tito en 1948 est accueillie favorablement à Paris, qui rejoindra Washington pour aider les Yougoslaves. La politique d'hostilité aux blocs pratiquée par Belgrade est aussi appréciée par Paris, qui toutefois va déplorer durant la guerre d'Algérie (1954-1962) le soutien affiché par Tito aux indépendantistes⁵. C'est seulement avec la visite en Yougoslavie, en décembre 1976, de V. Giscard d'Estaing, premier président de la République à se rendre en Yougoslavie, que sur le plan politique va se produire un véritable dégel des relations franco-yougoslaves. Sur le plan économique les relations entre les deux pays vont rester à un niveau faible, la primauté sur le marché yougoslave étant détenue par l'Allemagne.

A vrai dire l'image de marque de la Yougoslavie en France va durablement être constituée par la politique d'autogestion mise en place par Tito, qui a provoqué chez certains intellectuels parisiens et au sein d'une large frange de la classe politique française un enthousiasme certain. Ainsi Michel Rocard, dirigeant du PSU, préface, en 1973, le livre de Milojko Drulovic « L'autogestion à l'épreuve » où celui-là affirme que la réforme constitutionnelle yougoslave de 1963 consacre « le droit d'autogestion des travailleurs, droit fondamental, qui est la marque de cette dignité, de la possibilité, qui est reconnue à chacun de peser sur le destin, qui lui est fait »⁶.

II. L'interventionnisme de la France en Grèce

Les Grecs reconnaissent la part de la France dans la conquête de leur indépendance. Le philhellénisme, qui au début du XIX^{ème} siècle, imprègne les intellectuels et artistes français conduit Paris à soutenir la cause de la Grèce, qui souhaite se libérer du joug ottoman. La France participe notamment à la bataille navale de Navarin (20 octobre 1827), qui se termine par l'écrasement de la flotte turco-égyptienne.

L'indépendance de la Grèce, qui intervient en 1830, n'est pas toutefois totale, puisque celle-ci est soumise par le traité de Londres du 7 mai 1832 à « la protection » de trois puissances, la Grande Bretagne, la France et la Russie. Cette protection va se traduire par un véritable droit d'ingérence de ces puissances dans la vie politique intérieure grecque et aussi par un droit de contrôle et de surveillance de la politique étrangère de la Grèce.

La France va ainsi se comporter en véritable puissance tutélaire sur la Grèce jusque dans les années vingt du vingtième siècle. Puis elle se limitera à exercer seulement sur les Grecs une influence, principalement d'ordre économique dans la période postérieure à la première guerre mondiale et qui s'achève avec l'adhésion de la Grèce, le 1er janvier 1981 aux Communautés européennes.

1. La France, puissance tutélaire de la Grèce

La France, tout comme la Grande Bretagne et la Russie va directement intervenir au cours du XIX^{ème} siècle sur la scène politique grecque. Il y a ainsi à Athènes un « parti français », qui joue un rôle politique important, à côté d'un « parti anglais » et d'un « parti russe ». La politique étrangère de la Grèce est aussi entièrement dépendante des puissances protectrices. On peut ainsi citer l'occupation du Pirée par la France et la Grande Bretagne en 1854, qui prévient une intervention grecque dans la guerre de Crimée.

C'est toutefois au XX^{ème} siècle avec la première guerre mondiale que la France va de façon brutale imposer ses choix politiques et diplomatiques à la Grèce, comme si ce pays faisait partie de son empire colonial.

Paris va d'abord violer la neutralité proclamée par Athènes dans la guerre, qui oppose la Triple Entente à la Triple Alliance, puis prendra l'initiative de détrôner, en 1917, le roi Constantin et l'obligera à participer à la guerre. La France, enfin, en 1921 avec l'accord Franklin-Bouillon-Ataturk, va poignarder dans le dos les Grecs d'Asie mineure et contribuera ainsi à la disparition de l'hellénisme de Turquie, plusieurs fois centenaire, avec l'émigration en Grèce en 1922 d'un million et demi d'Hellènes de cette région fuyant les massacres commis par les nationalistes turcs.

La Grèce était sortie épuisée des guerres balkaniques de 1912 et de 1913. La première guerre lui avait permis de récupérer la Crète, les îles septentrionales et orientales de la mer Egée, une partie de la Macédoine avec Salonique et l'Épire. La seconde guerre, qui se termine par le traité de Bucarest va attribuer à la Grèce la majeure partie de la Macédoine, le sud de l'Épire et les îles de la mer Egée à l'exception du Dodécanèse et d'Imbros et Ténédos.

La violation en 1915 de la neutralité grecque

Au cours de l'année 1915 la France et ses alliés décidèrent d'ouvrir un front dans les Balkans. A Athènes le roi Constantin, beau frère de l'Empereur d'Allemagne Guillaume II, est partisan de la neutralité de son pays et se heurte au Premier ministre Eleuthérios Venizélos, qui préconise la participation de l'armée grecque aux côtés de l'Entente. Le 5 octobre le débarquement des troupes franco-britanniques à Thessalonique malgré l'opposition du roi de Grèce provoque la chute de Venizélos. Le comportement de la France fut dénoncé par les puissances centrales, qui accusèrent Paris de violation de la neutralité grecque mais aussi par une partie de la population hellène indignée des bavures commises par les militaires français⁷. L'armée de la Serbie,

alliée de la France en pleine déroute a été installée par celle-ci à Corfou en décembre 1915, contre la volonté d'Athènes.

Le refus de la Grèce de participer à la guerre entraîna en juin 1916 son blocus par les Anglais et les Français. Deux mois plus tard se forme à Thessalonique un « Comité grec de défense nationale », soutenu par le général français Sarrail⁸ et en octobre Venizélos débarque dans cette ville pour y former un gouvernement provisoire reconnu de facto par les Alliés.

La mission Jonnart et l'entrée en guerre de la Grèce de 1917

La pression de l'Entente sur la Grèce va s'accroître après l'entrée en guerre des Etats-Unis en avril 1917. La France a ainsi le projet de faire avaliser par la Grande Bretagne et la Russie son projet de faire abdiquer le roi Constantin et de faire revenir officiellement au pouvoir Venizélos. A vrai dire Paris arrache aux Anglais le principe de l'éloignement de Constantin, certains dirigeants politiques à Londres n'étant pas partisans d'une abdication de ce roi, compte tenu des liens de parenté entre les monarques de Grande Bretagne et de Grèce et obtient des Russes, secoués par leur Révolution de février plus une tolérance qu'un accord formel au projet d'un changement politique à Athènes. C'est Charles Jonnart, ancien ministre des affaires étrangères, qui sera chargé de mener à bien au nom des Puissances protectrices l'exécution de ce projet.

Arrivé à Athènes en juin 1917, Jonnart adresse un ultimatum au président du Conseil Zaïmis et exige de lui l'abdication du roi Constantin, non pas en faveur de son fils aîné, considéré comme germanophile, mais au bénéfice de son fils cadet Alexandre, plus proche de l'Entente. Cet ultimatum était assorti d'une menace, qui donne la mesure de la politique de la canonnière que Jonnart était prêt à appliquer :

« Arras, la capitale de mon pays d'origine, a été rasée par les Allemands, j'irais, s'il était besoin, jusqu'à faire d'Athènes une nouvelle Arras »⁹.

Le gouvernement Zaïmis se soumet à cet ultimatum et obtient l'abdication de Constantin, auquel succède effectivement Alexandre. Pour expliquer la brutalité de cette politique du Quai d'Orsay à l'égard de la Grèce, on peut supposer que Paris a estimé que le Protectorat de la France sur ce pays devait être considéré comme étant de la même nature que les Protectorats exercés par la République française sur le Maroc ou la Tunisie, deux Etats souverains mais soumis à une tutelle de type colonial. A cet égard il convient de rappeler que Jonnart avait exercé les fonctions de Gouverneur général de l'Algérie de 1900 à 1911 et avait l'expérience de l'exercice de l'autorité à l'égard des peuples soumis à la domination de la France.

Devenu le 27 juin chef du gouvernement d'Athènes, Venizélos déclare immédiatement la guerre aux puissances centrales. Il convient ici de rappeler que celui-ci, avant 1917, avait été financé tant par la France et l'Angleterre ainsi que par Sir Basile Zaharoff, financier et homme d'affaires d'origine grecque, ami de Lloyd George et de Clemenceau¹⁰.

La France, pour obtenir l'entrée en guerre de la Grèce avait installé à Athènes un service de propagande, qui comprenait notamment M. Fougères, le Directeur de l'Ecole archéologique française¹¹. Ce service travaillait en liaison avec Venizélos, en qui la France n'avait pas une confiance absolue. Ce qui explique que les services de renseignements français, pour connaître avec certitude les comportements de l'homme politique crétois avaient pris l'habitude d'ouvrir régulièrement la correspondance adressée par ses collaborateurs à des membres de leurs familles ou à leurs amis vivant en France. C'est ainsi que les lettres d'Antoine Vlasto, secrétaire de Venizélos adressées à son frère et à sa mère vivant à Marseille ou reçues par lui de ceux-ci ou de John Metaxas, préfet de Vedena, important Venizéliste, envoyées à son épouse demeurant également à Marseille étaient systématiquement ouvertes par la « Commission de contrôle postal »¹².

L'armée française avait le caractère d'une armée d'occupation, n'hésitant pas à piller des œuvres d'art ou objets précieux. C'est ainsi que pour satisfaire la Roumanie, le capitaine Six, commandant du

détachement franco-russe du Mont Athos s'est emparé par la force, le 8 mars 1917, du drapeau du prince roumain Etienne conservé au monastère bulgare de Zographe¹³. En 1931 le gouvernement grec a réclamé la restitution à la Roumanie de l'objet dérobé plongeant dans un profond embarras le gouvernement dont l'intervention était souhaitée par Athènes. Ce drapeau, conservé au Musée de l'armée à Bucarest n'a toujours pas été rendu à la Grèce.

L'effort grec à la guerre fut considérable puisque l'armée hellénique a été portée à quinze divisions, dont onze ont été engagées sur le front de Thessalonique, à côté de huit divisions françaises, six serbes, quatre anglaises et une italienne. Les forces armées grecques ont ainsi participé à l'offensive de l'armée d'Orient de l'automne 1918 et ont contribué à l'armistice bulgare du 29 septembre.

Le 11 novembre 1918 intervient l'armistice avec l'Allemagne. De fait les Grecs, en guerre presque ininterrompue depuis sept ans dans les Balkans ont eu quarante cinq mille tués et disposent en 1918 à la fin du conflit mondial d'une économie en ruine et ont connu la famine.

A la Conférence de la paix, en 1919, Venizélos a défendu avec brio les thèses de la Grèce. Mais il s'est heurté à la méfiance des Italiens, qui réclamaient pour eux une Albanie vassalisée l'Épire du nord, les îles du Dodécanèse et la région de Smyrne, qui leur avaient été promises par l'accord de St Jean de Maurienne en avril 1917. Il réussit à obtenir l'occupation de Smyrne et de sa région pour y protéger les populations helléniques menacées par les Turcs. Débarquées le 15 mai 1919 les troupes du Roi Alexandre sont accueillies avec enthousiasme par les neuf cent mille Grecs d'Asie mineure. Le traité de Sèvres du 10 août 1920, imposé à l'Empire ottoman a confirmé ces dispositions : la Grèce obtient la Thrace orientale, sauf Constantinople et la région de Smyrne qu'elle pourrait annexer au bout de cinq années si la population le désirait.

Mais l'application du traité de Sèvres ne fut pas mise en œuvre en raison de l'attitude de l'Italie et de la France. Les Italiens, sont mécontents d'avoir été lésés par ce traité car ils souhaitaient prendre

pied dans la région de Smyrne à la place des Grecs. Et les Français, en conflit avec les Anglais en Syrie et en Méditerranée orientale vont alors décider de retirer leurs troupes d'Anatolie dans des conditions telles que les Grecs vont payer très cher les conséquences de la piteuse retraite de ceux, qui les avaient obligé à s'engager à leurs côtés dans la première guerre mondiale.

L'accord franco-turc du 20 octobre 1921

Pour comprendre le désengagement français il faut d'abord souligner que la France est sortie exsangue de la première guerre mondiale au cours de laquelle elle a perdu un million et demi d'hommes. Combattre en Anatolie pour obtenir l'application du traité de Sèvres semblait pour Paris une mission impossible à réaliser. Il faut ensuite indiquer que les Français se sont sentis ridiculisés lorsqu'à la suite de la mort de son fils Alexandre, le 25 octobre 1920, l'ex roi Constantin est remonté sur le trône de Grèce, alors qu'il en avait été chassé, trois ans auparavant – on l'a dit plus haut – par Jonnart. L'exaspération de la France est telle que Raymond Poincaré, l'ancien Président de la République écrit le 15 janvier 1921, dans la Revue des deux Mondes que la France pourrait accepter ce retour de Constantin, à condition de récupérer « les droits spéciaux de contrôle et de surveillance » vis à vis de la Grèce auxquels elle avait renoncé, avec le traité de Sèvres, qui abolit le système des Puissances protectrices (voir Annexe 4).

A vrai dire cette exaspération de Poincaré n'est que pure hypocrisie dans la mesure où bien avant la mort d'Alexandre, la France avait décidé de prendre le parti de la Turquie et d'abandonner la Grèce à son triste sort. Il suffit pour s'en convaincre de lire le rapport, en date du 20 juillet 1919, du Lieutenant-Colonel Mougin, Chef de la liaison française près le Ministre de la Guerre ottoman¹⁴, dans lequel il est écrit de façon cynique : « Il est évident que nous n'avons pas le moyen d'empêcher les Grecs d'être jetés à la mer, ce qu'ils ont d'ailleurs bien mérité ». L'auteur de ce rapport explique ainsi que l'intérêt de la France est le maintien d'une grande Turquie, soulignant par exemple

que les Turcs sont « le peuple le plus sympathique dans les Balkans et certainement le plus propre au physique comme au moral ». Livrant le fond de sa pensée Mougin indique la véritable motivation qui l'amène à suggérer que la France se rapproche de la Turquie en énumérant dans le détail les intérêts économiques français dans ce pays. Ainsi la France selon lui pourrait profiter de la défaite de l'Allemagne pour s'imposer sur le marché turc :

« L'Allemagne avait vu juste en visant au renforcement de la Turquie, que, pour notre part, nous abandonnions ; elle y supplantait notre influence. L'Allemagne vaincue nous devons reprendre notre place, celle que nous n'aurions pas dû perdre, elle qui justifie les plus belles espérances ».

Ceci étant dit on peut donc maintenant comprendre la portée de l'accord franco-turc de 1921 conclu par Franklin Bouillon avec les autorités d'Ankara et qui constitue un acte peu glorieux de la diplomatie française.

Henry Franklin Bouillon (1870-1937) ancien Ministre d'Etat, et Président de la Chambre des députés de la République française en 1921 s'est rendu à deux reprises à Angora (Ankara) au cours de cette année-ci à la demande du Quai d'Orsay afin de conclure un accord mettant fin à l'état de guerre entre la France et la Turquie. Un premier accord conclu le 9 mars est rejeté par l'Assemblée parlementaire d'Angora. Un second accord signé le 20 octobre, qui sera finalement approuvé par les deux parties, met officiellement fin aux hostilités entre Turcs et Français, qui retirent leurs troupes de Cilicie et abandonnent à ceux-ci leurs armes et munitions .

Les conditions étranges de la conclusion de l'accord Franklin-Bouillon-Ataturk ont été dénoncées par l'Angleterre, qui par une lettre du 5 novembre 1921 de Lord Curzon, le chef du Foreign Office, à l'Ambassadeur de France à Londres déclare à propos de ce traité franco-turc:

« Il apparaît que l'arrangement implique une reconnaissance formelle par la France de la grande assemblée nationale d'Angora en qualité de puissance souveraine en Turquie. S'il en était ainsi une paix

conclue avec Angora serait contraire à l'accord franco-britannique du 4 septembre 1914 et au pacte de Londres de novembre 1919 »¹⁵.

En d'autres termes Londres reproche à la France d'avoir conclu une paix séparée avec la Turquie et de reconnaître unilatéralement le pouvoir kémaliste. Le Président du Conseil français, Aristide Briand répond le 15 novembre à cette protestation des Britanniques :

« L'accord d'Angora ne constitue pas un traité de paix. Ce n'est qu'un arrangement de portée locale conclu avec un pouvoir qui n'est reconnu ni *de jure* ni *de facto*, mais qui a manifesté une autorité, un patriotisme et une loyauté propres à le faire considérer comme capable de tenir et de faire exécuter les engagements qu'il a contractés. D'une manière générale, si l'arrangement d'Angora eut constitué un traité de paix, il aurait dû suivant la constitution être soumis à la ratification du Parlement. Or il a été simplement approuvé par le gouvernement français et aucune ratification parlementaire n'a été sollicitée. »

On doit donc observer que le gouvernement français en parfait tartuffe qualifie « d'arrangement de portée locale » la convention signée par Franklin Bouillon, dont les effets seront dramatiques pour la Grèce, qui non seulement est abandonnée par la France, mais encore combattra les Kémalistes équipés d'armements français abandonnés par les troupes retirées de Cilicie¹⁷.

Au demeurant les diplomates français ont parfaitement conscience que le traité franco-turc constitue un accord honteux, notamment en ce qui concerne l'abandon des minorités chrétiennes, qui sont livrées ainsi à la vindicte des nationalistes de Turquie. Commentant l'article VI de cet accord, Alexandre Millerand alors Président de la République écrit dans ses papiers privés :

« Le texte signé à Angora présente un recul sur celui qui était proposé par nous :

- 1) La protection des minorités ne résulte pas d'un engagement contractuel vis à vis de la France. Le gouvernement d'Angora déclare seulement qu'il confirmera lui-même les droits reconnus aux minorités par le Pacte national.

2) La phrase finale suivante de l'article rédigé à Paris est supprimée : *de manière à assurer aux minorités une égalité absolue de droits de toute nature que possède la majorité de la population de l'empire ottoman.*

Il faut s'attendre à ce qu'on nous reproche ce recul, le texte auquel nous nous étions résignés étant bien loin de donner les garanties que l'Europe attend de nous »¹⁸.

Ce commentaire de Millerand était prophétique. En effet les Grecs au cours de l'été 1922 subirent de terribles défaites. Le 9 septembre 1922 Kemal entre à Smyrne. Des dizaines de milliers de Grecs et de nombreux Arméniens furent massacrés.

Le traité de Lausanne du 24 juillet 1923

Le traité de Lausanne, qui efface l'humiliation du Traité de Sèvres restitue à la Turquie la Thrace orientale avec Edirne, les îles de Imbros et Tenedos, et abolit le régime des Capitulations. Mais le plus grave est l'échange obligatoire des populations : un million trois cent mille Grecs doivent quitter la Turquie et quatre cent mille Turcs vivant en Grèce sont obligés de partir de ce pays. Lord Curzon a en vain plaidé à Lausanne le départ volontaire et non pas obligatoire de ces populations mais Ismet Pacha, dit İnönü fut intransigeant :

« C'est la leçon du siècle, la Turquie veut être épurée de tout élément étranger »¹⁹.

Ainsi celui, qui devait succéder à Kemal pour gouverner la Turquie, a été avec l'accord ou la tolérance des grandes puissances dont la France, le premier au XX^{ème} siècle à pratiquer l'épuration ethnique.

2. La France, puissance influente sur la Grèce

Les rapports franco-grecs dans l'entre deux guerres

La France après la première guerre mondiale est entrée sur le plan international comme interne dans une période de déclin²⁰. Privée de son pouvoir de puissance protectrice à l'égard de la Grèce elle exercera

seulement sur ce pays une influence certaine mais sans commune mesure avec celle qu'elle avait au XIX^{ème} siècle et durant les deux premières décennies du XX^{ème} siècle.

Il faut d'abord noter que les rapports franco-grecs vont être empoisonnés par les séquelles du traité de Lausanne, qui consacre, la désintégration de l'hellénisme d'Asie mineure, largement imputable selon les Grecs à l'attitude de la France de 1919 à 1922. Pendant longtemps Athènes va tenir rigueur de la surprenante campagne de haine à l'égard de Venizélos, développée dans les mois précédant la conclusion de ce traité par des journaux français comme *Le Matin* et *l'Homme Libre*, qui accusent celui-ci d'avoir mené une politique favorable à Berlin en autorisant le 6 août 1914 le ravitaillement de bateaux allemands au Pirée ou d'être un « soldat de Lloyd George », pour avoir suivi la politique anglaise en Asie mineure en 1920, qui devait aboutir à la catastrophe des Grecs en 1922²¹.

Des litiges d'ordre économique vont aussi se dresser entre la France et la Grèce, celle-ci ayant hérité de par le traité de Lausanne de contrats de concession accordées par la Turquie à des sociétés françaises dans des conditions qu'Athènes considère comme ne lui étant pas opposables²².

Durant l'entre-deux guerres c'est donc plus sur le plan économique que sur le plan politique ou diplomatique que la France peut jouer un rôle en Grèce. Mais ce rôle ne peut qu'être limité en raison de la faiblesse de l'économie française. On peut par exemple relever que les principales concessions sont accordées par Athènes à des groupes américains, anglais et belges, la France se heurtant à l'obstacle, ainsi que le relève en 1927 son Ambassadeur en Grèce, Clement-Simon²³, de sa propre réglementation sur la sortie de capitaux, handicapant ainsi les entreprises françaises désireuses d'investir dans ce pays.

Sur le plan diplomatique on doit relever la déclaration du 13 avril 1939 faite au nom du gouvernement français par Georges Bonnet, ministre des affaires étrangères, accordant l'assistance de la France en cas d'action menaçant l'indépendance de la Grèce²⁴. Cette déclaration de la France, complétée par une déclaration identique de la Grande Bretagne, n'a pas eu d'effet majeur à Athènes, compte tenu de

l'attitude défaitiste de ces deux pays face à Hitler que révèle l'accord de Munich de septembre 1938. Le fait est que la Grèce n'a pas eu l'opportunité de demander à Paris son assistance lorsqu'elle a été attaquée par l'Italie en octobre 1940 puisque la France, en pleine déroute, avait déjà elle-même conclu un armistice avec l'Allemagne, le 22 juin de cette même année.

La politique française à l'égard de la dictature militaire

La Grèce a connu un régime de dictature militaire du 21 avril 1967 au 23 juillet 1974. La politique française à l'égard de la Grèce pendant cette période n'a été ni celle de pays comme les Etats-Unis, qui manifestaient une bienveillance certaine envers un régime, farouchement anti-communiste, ni celle des états scandinaves ou des Pays-bas, ouvertement hostiles aux colonels grecs. Paris, durant les sept années de la dictature grecque a entretenu des rapports cordiaux avec Athènes tout en accordant l'hospitalité aux milliers de Grecs venus se réfugier en France pour ne pas avoir à subir un régime politique dirigé par une junte militaire.

Se référant à la doctrine diplomatique selon laquelle la France ne saurait s'ingérer dans les affaires intérieures d'un Etat et reconnaît les Etats mais pas les gouvernements, le gouvernement français dirigé par Georges Pompidou, sous la présidence du général de Gaulle, n'a pas eu à s'interroger sur les rapports qu'il devait avoir avec le régime issu du coup d'Etat du 21 avril 1967.

Le Quai d'Orsay, dans une note interne du 2 septembre 1974²⁵ résume ainsi l'attitude de Paris à l'égard d'Athènes pendant la dictature militaire :

« Il fallait concilier les réserves que nous inspirait « le régime des colonels » avec notre fidélité au principe de non-ingérence dans les affaires intérieures d'autrui et avec le souci de nos intérêts permanents ».

La visite du Colonel Nicolas Makarezos à Paris en juin 1969 et le voyage officiel du secrétaire d'Etat aux affaires étrangères, M. Jean de Lipkowski à Athènes en janvier 1972 permettent d'illustrer le

caractère de confiance mutuelle des relations franco-grecques pendant la période 1967-1974.

Ministre de la Coordination, le colonel Makarezos se rend à Paris, le 4 juin 1969, en particulier pour solliciter des Français l'achat de matériel de guerre français. Cette visite a suscité en France chez de nombreux démocrates français et exilés grecs de vives protestations, qui ont beaucoup inquiété les services français de sécurité. Dans une note du 6 juin 1969 du Ministre français de l'Intérieur adressée à son collègue des affaires étrangères il est indiqué dans le détail les mesures prises pour éviter tout incident à l'occasion de la venue en France de Makarezos. En particulier la police française redoute l'assassinat de celui-ci par un commando de militants grecs antifascistes, basés en Angleterre, et qui agirait sur ordre de l'ancien député de l'EDA, Antonios Brillakis²⁶.

Au cours de cette visite hautement appréciée par la presse grecque aux ordres de la junte militaire²⁷, Makarezos a rencontré le ministre des affaires étrangères, Maurice Schumann, qui lui a indiqué que la Grèce ne devait pas se hâter de se retirer du Conseil de l'Europe comme elle en avait l'intention. De fait la France s'est efforcée de mettre en échec les attaques dont Athènes faisait l'objet d'un nombre croissant de pays à l'Assemblée de Strasbourg. Finalement la Grèce, le 12 décembre 1969, a été contrainte de se retirer du Conseil de l'Europe pour éviter d'en être chassée.

Le voyage effectué à Athènes du 27 au 29 janvier 1972, par M. Jean de Lipkowski a revêtu une importance considérable dans l'évolution des relations franco-grecques. En effet la junte militaire, de plus en plus isolée, sur le plan international a accueilli avec faste un ministre d'un grand pays occidental. Cette visite a revêtu d'autant plus de valeur aux yeux du gouvernement grec, que M. de Lipkowski, gaulliste de gauche avait appartenu au groupe de parlementaires français, qui au printemps 1967, avaient désavoué le coup d'Etat des colonels.

Outre son caractère politique indéniable, la visite de M. de Lipkowski a permis de faire avancer des dossiers techniques, qui trouveront leur dénouement après la chute du régime des colonels.

C'est ainsi que sur le plan des relations bilatérales le secrétaire d'Etat français a plaidé pour l'adoption par la Grèce du système SECAM de télévision en couleurs, et la participation de la France au nouveau métro d'Athènes. De fait c'est au cours de la visite à Paris, en avril 1975 de Constantin Caramanlis, redevenu Premier ministre, que la Grèce acceptera le principe de l'adoption du procédé français SECAM. Des entreprises françaises participeront aussi effectivement à la construction, après de nombreuses et interminables études préalables, de la nouvelle ligne du métro d'Athènes, qui sera inaugurée le 28 janvier 2000.

La visite du secrétaire d'Etat, marquée par l'explosion de deux bombes près de l'Ambassade de France, a été désapprouvée par l'ensemble des hommes politiques grecs à la seule exception de Evangelos Averof-Tositsas, partisan de la politique dite « des ponts » entre la classe politique et le régime militaire et de Spiros Markezinis, qui deviendra pendant une courte période, en 1973, Premier ministre de la dictature. Eric Rouleau, dans *Le Monde*, résumera ainsi la portée du voyage de M. de Lipkowski :

« La morale internationale s'accommode de tout quand il s'agit de défendre ce que l'on considère comme étant les intérêts supérieurs de l'Etat ».

Le second volet de la politique française à l'égard d'Athènes pendant la période 1967-1974 a été constitué par un large accueil de réfugiés politiques ou d'opposants au régime de la dictature. Outre l'hospitalité accordée à Constantin Caramanlis, venu en exil à Paris, dès 1963, juste après sa défaite électorale, la France a accueilli plusieurs milliers de Grecs, intellectuels, journalistes, ou enseignants, qui ont pu sur son territoire développer dans une large mesure une action politique dirigée contre les colonels d'Athènes.

On peut citer parmi les enseignants les noms des Professeurs de droit, A.Manassis, G.Ténékidés, P.Vegleris, qui purent exercer leur métier dans différentes universités françaises. Chez les journalistes il faut distinguer Richard Soméritis, établi en France bien avant le coup d'Etat, et qui avec son père Stratis, réfugié à Paris et une équipe

d'exilés a créé « Athènes Presse Libre », une agence de presse, dont le rôle a été très important pour informer l'opinion publique française de la réalité de la politique menée par la junte d'Athènes. Il convient aussi de mentionner, le nom de Michel Stylianou, venu s'exiler à Paris et qui a dirigé jusqu'en juillet 1974 les remarquables émissions grecques de l'ORTF, c'est à dire de la radio d'Etat française. Ces émissions, qui, avaient une très large audience en Grèce, ont apporté pendant des années à leurs auditeurs grecs une information précise et objective, bien différente de celle diffusée par les médias d'Athènes, soumis à une stricte censure.

Sur le plan humanitaire de nombreux hommes politiques français et le Quai d'Orsay lui même sont intervenus auprès du gouvernement militaire en faveur des prisonniers politiques. C'est ainsi que Mikis Théodorakis a pu émigrer en France, grâce à Jean Jacques Servan Schreiber, journaliste et homme politique, qui, en visite à Athènes, a obtenu de Papadopoulos le droit de ramener à Paris ce grand compositeur.

Il faut dire ici que cette politique française de complaisance à l'égard de la dictature et aussi de large accueil des victimes de cette dictature a été pratiquée aussi à l'égard des régimes de Franco en Espagne et de Salazar au Portugal et a été, au total très efficace. En effet, la chute des régimes portugais et grec en 1974 et espagnol en 1975 a entraîné un maintien ou même un renforcement des positions de la France tant à Lisbonne, Athènes et Madrid, les anciens exilés, revenus au pouvoir, éprouvant une reconnaissance envers Paris pour l'hospitalité dont ils ont bénéficié, et oubliant délibérément les griefs qu'ils ont pu ressentir à son égard²⁸.

On doit toutefois regretter, que la France, patrie des droits de l'homme, ait cru devoir adopter une politique pour le moins ambiguë, à l'égard de régimes infâmes.

III. Le déclin de l'influence française dans les Balkans

La disparition de l'URSS, fin 1991, qui entraîne la chute des régimes communistes d'Europe centrale et orientale va bouleverser, au niveau mondial les rapports Est-Ouest. Les Etats-Unis n'ont plus de rival à leur mesure et apparaissent comme la seule super puissance capable d'imposer sa volonté aux autres Etats ainsi que l'a prouvé la guerre qu'ils ont menée dans le Golfe persique à la tête d'une coalition de nombreux pays.

Le maintien de l'existence d'une Yougoslavie dont les dirigeants sont toujours communistes apparaît alors aux yeux de Washington comme une aberration. Il faut donc pour les Américains faire éclater l'unité de ce pays et y favoriser les forces centrifuges. En Grèce où sévit un fort courant anti-américain de gauche comme de droite, nourri notamment par l'attitude des Etats-Unis à l'égard de la dictature militaire, la classe politique comprend qu'il convient désormais de ne plus tenter de s'opposer à ce grand allié. Andréas Papandréou, en particulier, revenu au pouvoir en octobre 1993, effectue un spectaculaire revirement diplomatique, qui l'amène à se rapprocher des autorités politiques américaines.

Dans ce nouveau contexte international, la France, dont la politique étrangère depuis le début de la V^{ème} République, en 1958, était fondée, tant sur la préservation de ses intérêts nationaux que sur la défense des peuples attachés à leur indépendance va se trouver contrainte d'aligner ses choix diplomatiques sur ceux décidés par les Etats-Unis.

En ce qui concerne les Balkans, la politique yougoslave de la France est de plus en plus subordonnée à celle des Etats-Unis et les relations franco-grecques sont mises à l'épreuve, en raison du rapprochement de Paris avec Ankara, provoqué par des raisons d'ordre commercial et aussi par l'influence de Washington sur le Quai d'Orsay.

1. La subordination à Washington de la politique yougoslave de la France

Mitterrand et la Yougoslavie

François Mitterrand, qui devient Président de la République en mai 1981, est un homme fidèle aux traditions diplomatiques de son pays, en particulier à l'attachement de Paris à une « Grande Serbie » et au maintien de l'unité de la Yougoslavie. Grand admirateur de Tito qu'il dépeint, en novembre 1973, de retour d'une visite à Belgrade en tant que Premier secrétaire du parti socialiste comme « le seul fédérateur d'un pays qu'écartèlent les forces centrifuges », il fera partie de la délégation française venue assister aux obsèques du fondateur de la République fédérative et populaire de Yougoslavie.

Hubert Védrine, décrit ainsi l'analyse de Mitterrand de la situation en Yougoslavie, lorsque ce pays connaît ses premières secousses en 1990-1991 :

« Il pense que l'existence d'une Fédération yougoslave est un bien inestimable mais fragile ; que l'idéal serait de la préserver en la transformant ; qu'en tout état de cause il n'y a pas de *bonne* solution de remplacement de la Yougoslavie, ni a fortiori pour la Bosnie, et surtout pas un découpage en plusieurs Etats. Ceux, qui veulent de bonne foi, comprendre les ressorts profonds de sa politique doivent avoir présent à l'esprit que, dans cette affaire, il cherche plus des solutions que des coupables »²⁹.

Le président français va s'efforcer de convaincre, au cours de l'été 1991, les Serbes et les Croates d'éviter de poursuivre leurs affrontements : le 28 août il reçoit Tudjman à qui il dit que les frontières de la Croatie seront reconnues par un acte international si les 12% de Serbes qui y vivent auront la garantie de leurs droits. Le lendemain c'est au tour de Milosevic d'être reçu à l'Elysée et à qui il rappelle que tous les peuples ont droit à l'autodétermination, le peuple serbe mais aussi les autres peuples formant la Yougoslavie.

Les efforts de Mitterrand pour sauver l'unité de la Yougoslavie seront voués à l'échec. Le 10 décembre 1991 au Conseil européen de

Maastricht, la France soumet à ses partenaires un texte subordonnant la reconnaissance diplomatique des Républiques souhaitant exercer leur droit à l'autodétermination à différentes conditions, en particulier à un engagement sur la protection des minorités. Ce texte est approuvé par les Douze pays formant alors l'Europe communautaire mais dès le 16 décembre l'Allemagne annonce qu'elle va reconnaître l'indépendance de la Slovénie et la Croatie, que la France à contrecœur reconnaîtra à son tour quelques semaines plus tard.

L'Europe va ainsi donner le feu vert à la désintégration de la Yougoslavie. Le 15 janvier 1992 avec lucidité Mitterrand dira au Conseil des ministres :

« Le démantèlement des empires ne profite qu'aux Etats-Unis et à l'Allemagne et pas à l'Europe³⁰ ».

La France et le conflit de Bosnie

Le conflit de Bosnie va durer de 1992 à 1995. C'est le référendum du 29 février 1992 sur l'indépendance de ce pays, organisé par les autorités politiques de Sarajevo, qui va déclencher une guerre civile très meurtrière et qui se terminera par les accords de Dayton le 21 novembre 1995.

Mitterrand, en raison de l'impuissance de l'Europe, va prendre des initiatives pour soulager les souffrances du peuple bosniaque. Ainsi le 26 juin 1992, à l'issue du Conseil européen de Lisbonne il décide de se rendre à Sarajevo afin de forcer le blocus imposé par les Serbes sur l'aéroport de cette ville. Milosevic à la suite de cet acte courageux du président français, qui prouve — contrairement à ce que disaient ses détracteurs — qu'il ne menait pas une politique systématiquement pro-serbe, fait libérer l'aéroport et donne son accord à l'envoi d'observateurs.

La cohabitation en France, qui a lieu de mars 1993 à mai 1995 et qui fait coexister à la tête de l'Etat un président socialiste et un premier ministre de droite ne va pas affecter sensiblement la politique yougoslave de la France. Toutefois si Mitterrand ne souhaite pas la modification de cette politique, Balladur, lui, est favorable à un certain

retrait de la France, trop engagée militairement, selon lui, dans le conflit de Bosnie, à travers sa participation aux forces de l'ONU déployées dans ce pays :

« En mars 1993, notre politique en ex-Yougoslavie se caractérisait par un engagement en hommes toujours croissant – nous fournissions le contingent le plus important mis à la disposition des Nations Unies – sans que les conditions de leur mission aient été clairement définies. Nous étions quelque peu isolés, accusés de faire le jeu des Serbes, pris entre les Américains pro-bosniaques et qui préconisaient la levée de l'embargo sur les armes, et les Européens divisés ou absents »³¹.

Au cours des années 1994 et 1995 les forces aériennes de l'OTAN vont bombarder les forces serbes de Bosnie. La France participera avec ses alliés à ces bombardements tout en regrettant que les décisions prises dans le cadre de la mission de l'OTAN ne soient pas arrêtées, dans la pratique, par le commandement de cette organisation mais directement par les Etats-Unis.

Finalement ce sont les Etats-Unis, qui, après avoir réorganisé les forces croato-bosniaques, dont les succès militaires dans l'ouest de la Bosnie, en mai 1995, contre les Serbes seront très importants imposeront, quelques mois plus tard, un plan de paix par les accords de Dayton³². La signature de ces accords, peu après à Paris ne peut masquer la subordination de la France et de l'Europe aux choix diplomatiques de Washington concernant la Yougoslavie.

La France et le conflit du Kosovo

L'arrivée au pouvoir de Jacques Chirac en mai 1995 va accentuer la dérive de la politique yougoslave de la France, désormais délibérément hostile aux Serbes, notamment sous la pression des Américains.

La question du Kosovo constitue certainement le problème le plus épineux de la péninsule balkanique. Peuplée très majoritairement d'Albanais (82,2% selon le recensement de 1991) cette province de la Yougoslavie, dont l'autonomie a été supprimée en 1989, connaît à partir de 1996 des attentats meurtriers pratiqués contre les Serbes par

l'Armée de libération du Kosovo. La tension monte entre les activistes albanais et Belgrade, qui considère cette province comme le berceau de la nation serbe.

Pour fuir la très dure répression, qui les frappe, des milliers d'Albanais quittent le Kosovo. La communauté internationale dénonce cette répression et met en demeure Milosevic de mettre fin à sa « politique d'épuration ethnique ». Une conférence internationale sur le Kosovo se tient en France à Rambouillet du 6 au 23 février 1999. Les Etats-Unis, qui veulent en découdre avec le régime de Belgrade parviennent à faire échouer cette conférence par l'intermédiaire de Madeleine Albright, très sensible aux pressions albanaises en faveur d'une action armée contre la Serbie.

Le 24 mars l'OTAN commence ses bombardements contre la Serbie, effectués par les Etats-Unis et leurs alliés, comme la France, la Grèce, toutefois, refusant, pour sa part, toute participation à cette opération contre Belgrade. Cette attitude de la Grèce est dénoncée en France par la presse, notamment par *Le Monde*, dans un article de son correspondant à Athènes Didier Kunz intitulé « Athènes cherche une issue pour ses frères serbes »³³. Il est difficile de comprendre cette critique contre la Grèce, très affaiblie sur le plan économique par les conséquences de la crise yougoslave, et souhaitant éviter une guerre pour le moins contestable, de la part d'un quotidien sérieux d'un pays, qui le premier, on l'a dit plus haut, a soutenu l'idée de « Grande Serbie » et contraint la Grèce en 1915 à accueillir à Corfou l'armée serbe en déroute .

Le président Chirac, ancien ministre du général de Gaulle, a prouvé, à l'occasion de la crise du Kosovo qu'il avait abandonné la politique gaulliste d'indépendance nationale, qui, en 1966, avait conduit la France à sortir de l'OTAN, pour ne pas avoir à subir les diktats des Etats-Unis.

Certes, le président français a tenu à indiquer, pendant la période des frappes aériennes qui se termine le 24 juin, que la France n'avait pas accepté aveuglément tous les ordres de bombardements proposés par Washington et qu'en particulier il s'était opposé à la destruction des ponts de Belgrade³⁴.

Le fait est que la France, en 1999, a bombardé un pays, qui pendant des décennies avait été un allié fidèle et n'a pas eu les moyens d'imposer à l'Europe une solution moins brutale à la crise du Kosovo. Cette province a été placée sous l'administration de l'ONU par la résolution 1244 du 10 juin 1999 du Conseil de sécurité. Bernard Kouchner, sur proposition du président Chirac et du Premier ministre Jospin est nommé chef de la MINUK (Mission d'administration intérimaire des Nations Unies au Kosovo). Ainsi se trouve consacrée la doctrine du « droit d'ingérence », dont il est un des pères fondateurs, et, qui, sous prétexte de sauver un peuple de la dictature qu'il subit, peut masquer le droit d'une grande puissance d'imposer à un petit Etat une politique qu'il refuse.

Après l'épuration ethnique pratiquée par les Serbes contre les Albanais au Kosovo est intervenue dans cette région une autre épuration ethnique à partir de juin 1999, celle exercée par les Albanais contre les Serbes, sans que n'interviennent les forces de l'ONU, présentes sur place. Il n'est pas sûr, que l'influence de la France, dans ces conditions, puisse se renforcer dans l'ex-Yougoslavie.

2. Les aléas des rapports franco-grecs

La nouvelle amitié franco-grecque (1974-1981)

La période 1974-1981 coïncide exactement d'une part avec le septennat du président Giscard d'Estaing et d'autre part avec l'exercice des responsabilités de Constantin Caramanlis à la tête de la Grèce d'abord comme Premier ministre de 1974 à 1980 puis à partir de cette date comme président de la République³⁵. L'amitié franco-grecque renaît de ses cendres tant en raison des excellentes relations personnelles de ces deux hommes que de la politique de Paris de soutien au nouveau régime démocratique de la Grèce.

La chute du régime des colonels en juillet 1974, que provoque l'invasion de Chypre par l'armée turque, va entraîner une vague d'anti-américanisme à Athènes, qui va se traduire par le retrait de la Grèce de l'OTAN. La France, très habilement, profite de cette situation pour se tenir aux côtés de la Grèce et éviter ainsi une dérive

de ce pays en dehors du giron des démocraties occidentales. Le rôle de Paris va être très efficace sur deux dossiers importants pour le gouvernement Caramanlis : la question chypriote et les relations de la Grèce avec les Communautés européennes.

C'est grâce à la France que seront votées à l'ONU les résolutions les plus dures contre la Turquie, à qui il est demandé de retirer rapidement ses troupes de Chypre. Les relations entre Paris et Ankara vont alors devenir très difficiles alors qu'à l'inverse la France, qui développe avec la Grèce une coopération militaire avec l'achat par Athènes d'équipements français est considérée par le peuple grec comme son meilleur allié, à telle enseigne qu'est alors inventé par la presse hellénique le slogan « Grèce-France – Alliance ».

D'autre part c'est sous l'impulsion de Giscard d'Estaing que la France va soutenir d'abord la décision de normaliser fin 1974 les relations entre la Grèce et le Marché commun, gelées durant la dictature des colonels puis la candidature d'Athènes aux Communautés européennes. Le président français devra vaincre les réticences du Quai d'Orsay et de sa propre majorité politique pour faire admettre l'intégration de la Grèce dans l'Europe communautaire. Finalement, la Grèce deviendra, le 1er janvier 1981, le dixième membre des communautés européennes³⁶ juste après sa réintégration de l'OTAN, le 20 octobre 1980.

L'élection de François Mitterrand, en mai 1981, à la présidence de la République, puis peu après, en octobre, l'accession au poste de Premier ministre d'Andréas Papandréou, met un terme aux relations privilégiées entre Paris et Athènes.

La mise à l'épreuve des liens entre Paris et Athènes (1981-1995)

On aurait pu penser que la présence simultanée à Paris et Athènes d'un pouvoir socialiste allait favoriser les relations entre les deux pays. Le fait est que Mitterrand et Papandréou n'ont jamais entretenu de rapports personnels étroits, à la différence de leurs prédécesseurs respectifs. D'autre part, les rapports entre les partis socialiste et français ne seront pas très simples puisque le Pasok, jusqu'en 1993 va

avoir une orientation sur le plan international proche des pays du tiers monde et sur le plan européen va largement utiliser son droit de veto pour préserver les intérêts de la Grèce, alors que le PS, dès 1983 adopte une politique économique proche des libéraux sur le plan interne, et peu différente de celle des Etats-Unis et de ses partenaires européens sur le plan international.

La politique étrangère d'Andréas Papandréou³⁷ s'est heurtée dans de nombreux domaines aux orientations diplomatiques de la France. Affichant un pacifisme déterminé, qui surprend Paris, la Grèce adopte ainsi le 22 mai 1984 une déclaration avec cinq autres pays, l'Argentine, l'Inde, le Mexique, la Suède et la Tanzanie, appelant au gel de tous les armements nucléaires existant à cette date. S'agissant de l'OTAN dont se rapproche de plus en plus la France, Athènes, tout en ne remettant pas en cause sa réintégration dans cette organisation se désolidarise à plusieurs reprises des décisions prises par ses alliés, et refuse, à plusieurs reprises, de participer à des manœuvres communes organisées par ceux-ci.

C'est surtout par l'utilisation de son droit de veto au sein de l'Europe communautaire que la Grèce va irriter ses partenaires et notamment la France. Elle va ainsi bloquer en avril 1994 une aide de 35 millions d'Ecus à l'Albanie, en raison de l'arrestation de plusieurs Grecs vivant dans ce pays, et s'opposer périodiquement à toute aide financière communautaire à la Turquie. La fermeture des frontières grecques avec l'Ancienne République yougoslave de Macédoine va aussi entraîner en février 1994 un grave conflit entre Athènes et la Commission de Bruxelles.

Les relations franco-grecques vont aussi être mises à l'épreuve, en raison du rapprochement de Paris avec Ankara, que va inaugurer Mitterrand par un voyage en Turquie en avril 1992.

Si Mitterrand et Papandréou ont coopéré pour aider Yasser Arafat, en difficulté avec les Israéliens, à deux reprises en 1982 et 1983, la rencontre organisée en Crète, en novembre 1984, entre le colonel Kadhafi et le président français par le Premier ministre grec a été un échec, qui va laisser un goût amer à Paris comme à Athènes.

La détérioration des rapports franco-grecs (1995 –2002)

L'élection du Président Chirac, perçu en Grèce comme plus sensible aux thèses d'Ankara, a été accueillie avec une certaine inquiétude dans les milieux diplomatiques helléniques. De fait les relations économiques franco-turques vont connaître un essor spectaculaire³⁸. Dès le Conseil européen de Cannes (26-27 juin 1995) le président français critique le Premier ministre grec au sujet de sa politique à l'égard de la Turquie. A ce Conseil A. Papandréou est surpris d'entendre Chirac qualifier K.Gligorov, le président de la FYROM, d'ami personnel et lui recommander de lever l'embargo économique pratiqué par Athènes à l'égard de Skopje.

En février 1996 c'est au tour du nouveau Premier ministre grec, Costas Simitis à être fraîchement accueilli par Chirac, qui se montre insensible aux demandes grecques d'un soutien ferme à propos des incidents opposant Athènes à Ankara à propos d'Imia. Puis en avril 1998, à la suite d'un nouveau veto de la Grèce à l'octroi d'une aide européenne de 375 millions d'écus à la Turquie, Pierre Moscovici, le ministre français des affaires européennes déclare qu'il va falloir réfléchir au moyen de contourner le refus d'Athènes. Ces propos entraînent une très vive réaction de Théodore Pangalos, le ministre grec des affaires étrangères, qui ironise sur « la danse du ventre » pratiquée par Paris pour séduire Ankara. La France réplique par une protestation de son ambassadeur en Grèce³⁹.

La nouvelle politique de détente à l'égard de la Turquie que décide de mettre en œuvre à partir de 1999 Georges Papandréou, le ministre des affaires étrangères, est vivement appréciée à Paris. Toutefois, les relations franco-grecques, largement détériorées depuis 1995, ne sont pas encore revenues à un stade de grande confiance mutuelle.

En conclusion, on peut dire que la politique balkanique de la France à la fin du XX^{ème} siècle ne peut plus être autonome et ne s'exerce désormais qu'à travers la politique étrangère encore balbutiante de l'Union européenne. Paris, qui a beaucoup perdu de son influence politique et culturelle à Belgrade est aujourd'hui présente dans l'ex Yougoslavie essentiellement par ses forces militaires. En Grèce, les

entreprises françaises occupent une place non négligeable dans l'économie. Mais la Grèce, devenue la principale puissance de la péninsule balkanique tient à rester maîtresse de son destin et, tout en reconnaissant ce qu'elle doit à la France, ne saurait accepter de cet allié, comme de tout autre de ses partenaires de l'Union européenne ou de l'OTAN aucune atteinte à ses intérêts fondamentaux.

NOTES

1. En Grèce les capitaux français dominent la Banque d'Athènes, la Banque d'Orient, la Banque de Thessalonique et dans les transports. En Serbie les Français ont évincé les Allemands avec la Banque franco-serbe et la société franco-serbe d'entreprise industrielle et de travaux publics.
2. Voir M. Tacel *La France et le Monde au XX^{ème} siècle*, Paris, Masson, 1989, p. 89.
3. Voir J. Bariety, « La France et la naissance du Royaume des Serbes, Croates et Slovènes, 1914-1919 », *Relations Internationales*, n°103, automne 2000, pp. 307-327.
4. Voir J. Bariety, op. cit.
5. De Gaulle tiendra rigueur à Tito, qui avait reconnu le *Gouvernement provisoire de la république algérienne* « d'avoir enterré la souveraineté française en Afrique du nord avant que l'acte de décès ne soit dressé par qui de droit » ; Voir T. Schreiber, *La Yougoslavie de Tito* Paris, Presses de la Cité, 1977, p. 97.
6. M. Drulovic, *L'autogestion à l'épreuve* Paris, Fayard, 1973.
7. Le comportement peu correct à l'égard de la population grecque des militaires français, dont certains se livraient à des opérations commerciales est dénoncé par A. Vacalopoulos, *Histoire de la Grèce moderne* Paris 1993, Editions Horvath, p. 221.

8. Le général Sarrail est le commandant en chef de l'armée franco-anglaise d'Orient.

9. Voir J. Vavasseur-Desperriers, *République et Liberté, Charles Jonnart, une conscience républicaine 1857-1927*, Paris, Presses universitaires septentrion 1996.

10. Sur l'aide obtenue par Venizélos de Zaharoff, voir annexe 1. Sur le rôle joué par Zaharoff durant la première guerre mondiale voir D. Kitsikis, *Propagande et pressions internationales, la Grèce et ses revendications à la Conférence de la Paix (1919-1920)*, Paris, PUF, 1963, p. 349-367.

11. Voir Annexe 2. Propagande en Grèce. Compte rendu du 25 février 1916 du Colonel Braquet, Attaché militaire en Grèce, à M. Le Ministre de la Guerre.

12. Ministère des Affaires étrangères. Commission de contrôle postal de Marseille. Lettres d'Antoine Vlasto ou adressées à lui du 21 janvier, 1^{er} février et 17 février 1917 et lettre de John Metaxas du 22 juin 1917.

13. Voir Annexe 3. Procès verbal du 8 mars 1917 de remise au détachement franco-russe du Mont Athos du drapeau du prince roumain Etienne conservé au monastère de Zographé.

14. Voir Annexe 5 le rapport du lieutenant-Colonel Mougin.

15. Voir Ministère français des affaires étrangères, PA AP Millerand p. 41.

16. Op. cit. p. 53 et suite.

17. Voir G. Castellan, *Histoire des Balkans (XIV^e-XX^e siècle)*, Paris, Fayard, 1991, p. 408.

18. op. cit. à la note 15 p. 32.

19. Voir E. Driault et M. L'Héritier *Histoire diplomatique de la Grèce de 1821 à nos jours*, PUF 1926. Tome V, p. 424.

20. Voir le livre de J.B.Duroselle *La décadence* 1932-1939, Paris, Imprimerie nationale, 1979.

21. Voir *Le Matin* du 2 décembre 1922 et *L'Homme libre* du 14 juin 1923.

22. En 1924 la Grèce soulève la question des phares des côtes grecques, contestant la prorogation accordée le 1^{er} avril 1913 par la Turquie à la Société française, qui en avait obtenu la concession.

23. Lettre n°105 du 11 juin 1927 de M. Clement Simon Ambassadeur de France en Grèce à M. Briand, Ministre des affaires étrangères. Archives du Quai d'Orsay.

24. Voir Annexe 6.

25. Voir Annexe 7.

26. Voir Annexe 8.

27. Le quotidien *Nea Politeia* dans son édition du 6 juin 1969 se félicite du concours de la France à la junte d'Athènes en écrivant : « Le gouvernement français appartient par excellence à ceux qui sont toujours demeurés insensibles aux hurlements des compagnons de route internationaux du communisme. Il a toujours refusé de se livrer à une manifestation de réprobation du régime grec, même de forme. Le peuple grec apprécie profondément cette attitude irréprochable de la France à l'égard de notre pays ».

28. Constantin Caramanlis de retour à Athènes, après un exil parisien de 11 ans a exprimé en termes chaleureux sa reconnaissance envers la France. Voir Archives du Ministère français des Affaires étrangères la dépêche n° 260-264 du 31 juillet 1974 de l'Ambassadeur de France en Grèce, M. de Margerie.

29. Hubert Védrine, *Les mondes de François Mitterand*, Paris, Fayard, 1996, p. 603.

30. Voir op. cit. à la note 29, p. 620.

31. E. Balladur *Deux ans à Matignon*, Paris, Plon, 1995, p. 111-112.
32. Les accords de Dayton du 21 novembre 1995 consacrent le partage ethnique de la Bosnie, qui est formée de deux entités : *la Fédération de Bosnie-Herzégovine* (Fédération bosno-croate, 51% du territoire) *la République Serbe de Srpska* (49%). Ces accords seront officiellement signés à Paris, le 14 décembre 1995.
33. *Le Monde* du 1^{er} avril 1999.
34. *Le Monde* du 12 juin 1999.
35. C. Caramanlis fera un premier quinquennat comme président de la République de 1980 à 1985, puis un second quinquennat de 1990 à 1995.
36. Voir J. Catsiapis, *La Grèce, dixième membre des Communautés européennes*, Paris, 1980, la Documentation française.
37. Voir J. Catsiapis « La politique étrangère d'Andréas Papandréou », *Revue d'Etudes helléniques*, Printemps 1997, p. 13-28.
38. C'est dans le domaine de l'armement que la coopération franco-turque va notamment se développer. Les entreprises françaises, Aérospatiale et GIAT industries, favorables aux rencontres entre universitaires des deux pays, ont ainsi financé avec l'Ambassade de Turquie en France la publication des Actes du Colloque organisé le 18 novembre 1997 par l'Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques (IRIS) et le Centre pour la Recherche stratégique d'Ankara.
39. *Le Monde* du 2 mai 1998.

ANNEXE 1

Dépêche 1099 de l'Ambassadeur Guillemin, 30 décembre 1915

Réponse à votre télégramme 985

TRES CONFIDENTIEL. M. Venizélos s'est montré touché et reconnaissant de l'offre de M. Zaharoff. Il m'a déclaré qu'il accepterait volontiers le concours généreux d'un compatriote dont il connaît le patriotisme et la libéralité.

SECRET. Il a conclu toutefois des termes de votre télégramme 985 que la somme dont il s'agit ne serait pas mise à sa disposition exclusive et que le Gouvernement français aurait pris part aux décisions concernant son emploi. Je l'ai confirmé dans cette interprétation et qu'il y aurait grand intérêt à maintenir si M. Zaharoff est de son côté disposé à y consentir. Votre Excellence estimera sans doute comme moi qu'il y aurait avantage à ne pas prendre de décision définitive avant l'arrivée de M. Turot qui partant demain matin pour Salonique sera à Paris dans une huitaine de jours et pourra donner un avis très utile.

Guillemin

ANNEXE 2

Propagande en Grèce. Extraits du Compte rendu du Colonel Braquet, Attaché militaire en Grèce à M. le Ministre de la Guerre (Etat major de l'Armée – 5^{ème} Bureau).

Athènes 22 février 1916

J'ai l'honneur de vous adresser sur la propagande française les explications ci-après.

Tout d'abord, je rappelle que dès le début de la guerre, la propagande en Grèce a été effectuée en pleine communion d'idées avec M. Fougères, Directeur de l'Ecole française d'Athènes. Je crus devoir attirer votre attention sur l'intérêt de nommer à Athènes un Directeur général de la propagande et un agent chargé spécialement de la presse.

La propagande en Grèce est actuellement assurée par

1° M. Salanson, correspondant du « Matin », Directeur local d'une succursale de l'Agence internationale d'information, « Radio », créée à Paris sous la direction générale de Turot. Il a été décidé que M. Salanson serait chargé des relations de la légation avec les journaux gouvernementaux.

2° M. Bertrand, correspondant du « Temps » serait chargé des relations avec les feuilles ententistes.

3° M. Fougères était réservé et limité à la propagande par les brochures, conférences etc. mais il ne devrait plus désormais s'occuper des Questions de presse

4° L'Attaché militaire

Or depuis quelques mois la quantité et l'importance des documents reçus de Paris exigerait mieux que cette organisation de fortune. Il y aurait lieu, pour faciliter ma tâche d'augmenter mon personnel d'un Officier, qui serait chargé de toute la besogne matérielle exigée par la propagande (dépouillement des documents, préparation d'articles, expédition/réception de certains télégrammes).

Nous avons affaire à un peuple à la fois commerçant et oriental : sa vue est courte et réaliste, et il n'est sérieusement impressionné que par la force. On doit tenir compte de cette mentalité en ce qui concerne l'effet utile de notre propagande.

Quant aux Officiers de l'Etat major de l'Armée hellénique quelles que soient leurs convictions intimes, ils ne les manifesteront que dans la limite de leurs intérêts, et actuellement leurs intérêts leur commandent de n'avoir sur notre guerre d'autre opinion que celle qui peut être agréable au Roi. Ce dont il faut être convaincu, c'est que l'Etat major de l'armée grecque tout entier, est nettement germanophile.

ANNEXE 3

Procès verbal de remise au détachement franco-russe du Mont Athos du drapeau du prince roumain Etienne, conservé au monastère de Zographe

L'an 1917, le 18 mars, le capitaine Six, commandant le détachement franco-russe du Mont Athos s'est présenté devant la Supérieur et l'épître du couvent de Zographe et les a requis d'avoir à lui remettre le drapeau du prince roumain Etienne, conservé dans le salon de réception. Après avoir protesté contre cette, décision, l'higoumène a remis le drapeau entre les mains du Lieutenant Arnaud, qui l'a présenté aux troupes assemblées dans la cour du monastère. Les troupes ont présenté les armes.

En foi de quoi nous soussigné, Georges Six, capitaine, commandant le détachement du Mont Athos, nous avons rédigé le présent procès-verbal, dont copie a été remise pour décharge au supérieur du couvent de Zographe.

Ont signé comme témoins : Arnaud(Emile), sous lieutenant d'infanterie coloniale, commandant le détachement de Zographe, et Tastet (Jules), sergent, faisant fonction de fourrier.

Couvent de Zographe, le 8 mars 1917.

Les témoins soussignés certifient le présent procès-verbal sincère et véritable

(signé) Arnaud, Tastet

Le capitaine commandant le détachement franco-russe du Mont Athos

(signé) G.Six

ANNEXE 4

Chronique de Raymond Poincaré du 15 janvier 1921 dans la Revue des deux Mondes (Extraits) :

« Il nous arrive parfois dans la vie d'avoir un vieil ami, qui se conduit très mal envers nous. Comme nous le tutoyons depuis l'enfance, nous ne voulons pas nous donner le ridicule de nous battre en duel avec lui. Nous croyons nous venger suffisamment en prenant le parti de ne plus le saluer. Mais à partir du jour où nous nous sommes arrêtés à cette résolution, c'est comme un fait exprès : nous rencontrons partout notre vieil ami, et lui, qui ne nous en veut pas du tout pour le mal qu'il nous a causé, il redouble de politesse envers nous et met chapeau bas à notre passage. Que voulez vous que nous fassions ? Nous commençons par détourner la tête, une fois, deux fois ; mais il insiste et, de guerre lasse, un beau jour, nous lui rendons son salut.

Je ne jurerais pas qu'avec la Grèce les choses se passent autrement. Au lieu de nous mettre en garde contre les suites de son apostasie, nous avons frappé son roi d'une excommunication mineure. Nous n'avons même pas rappelé nos ministres, nous les avons consignés dans leurs légations. Le roi a débarqué au Pirée, acclamé par la foule enthousiaste et il est rentré dans ce Palais d'où il avait envoyé à Guillaume II de si chaleureux télégrammes. A peine avait-il mis le pied sur les marches du trône qu'il a donné aux Alliés l'assurance solennelle de sa fidélité. Les Alliés faisant mine de ne pas entendre, il a recommencé. Il va se trouver tous les jours sur notre chemin pour nous donner un coup de chapeau. Un beau matin, nous aurons un mouvement réflexe et nous oublierons de rester couverts. Tâchons, du moins, ce jour là, d'avoir avec le roi Constantin une explication théorique, et si nous retirons notre anathème, prenons pour l'avenir des garanties efficaces. Il en est une qu'il ne serait, sans doute, pas impossible de nous faire attribuer. Dans le traité passé, le 10 août 1920 à Sèvres, entre l'Empire britannique, la France, l'Italie et le Japon, d'une part et la Grèce, d'autre part, il y a deux parties distinctes, un préambule et trois chapitres comprenant vingt articles. L'Angleterre ne paraît pas disposée à modifier le traité lui-même mais peut être reconnaît-elle

que les considérants et la conclusion du préambule ne sont plus tout à fait en harmonie avec les évènements :

« La France et la Grande Bretagne renoncent, en ce qui les concerne, aux droits Raspéciaux de surveillance et de contrôle qui leur avaient été reconnus vis à vis de la Grèce par le traité de Londres du 7 mai 1832, par le traité de Londres du 14 novembre 1863 et en ce qui concerne les Iles Ioniennes par le traité de Londres du 29 mars 1964 ». Pourquoi ne pas revenir, au moins provisoirement sur cette renonciation ? Venizélos nous avait montré une Grèce très rapidement grandie et nous. Elle vient de nous avouer qu'elle était encore mineure. Prenons un peu de temps avant de lui accorder un affranchissement irrévocable.

ANNEXE 5

le 20 juillet 1919

Etat-major du C.A.A.

Liaison française

Rapport du Lieutenant-Colonel MOUGIN, Chef de la liaison française près le Ministère de la Guerre ottoman, sur le rôle que doit jouer la France en Orient.

Secret

I. LA SITUATION ACTUELLE EN TURQUIE.

Les évènements de Smyrne, les massacres qui les ont suivis au cours des essais d'occupation par les Grecs de tout le vilayet, la campagne de notre presse néfaste pour nos intérêts, les nouvelles mises en circulation sur le partage probable de l'Empire ottoman, ont provoqué en Turquie un mouvement nationaliste tel qu'on doit envisager, avec une certaine anxiété, les faits qui s'y développent actuellement.

Tout l'intérieur, notamment l'Anatolie, est en feu; l'incendie gagne de plus en plus et ne tardera pas à atteindre Constantinople; les signes

précurseurs l'annoncent : mouvement de l'entente libérale, formation de bandes par le congrès national.

Tous les partis se sont mis nettement en campagne contre le Gouvernement; ils ont déjà réussi à culbuter le Ministre de l'Intérieur Ali Kemal et son directeur de la police, le colonel Halil Bey. L'entente libérale, sous la conduite de l'homme énergique et populaire qu'est le colonel Sadik Bey, vise beaucoup plus loin; elle prend nettement pour cible le Sultan auquel elle reproche son despotisme et ses tendances anglaises.

La masse turque bouge aussi. Des réunions se tiennent un peu partout, on s'organise, on s'arme, on est bien décidé à résister à l'emprise grecque. Peut-être faut-il s'attendre à des massacres prochains si des solutions énergiques ne sont pas prises, si les Alliés ne mettent pas le holà aux fautes commises par les Grecs.

De ces solutions, les meilleures seraient :

- 1° - L'évacuation de Smyrne par les grecs,
- 2° - L'occupation de toute l'Anatolie par l'armée française d'Orient,
- 3° - Une décision urgente du Conseil des Cinq fixant le sort futur de la Turquie.

Peut-être est-ce demander beaucoup; il est cependant temps d'agir. Les esprits sont très surexcités.

En ce moment, l'insurrection a gagné presque toute l'Anatolie.

Le général Moustapha Kemal Pacha, inspecteur de la 3^e Armée, s'est nettement mis en rébellion contre le Gouvernement; il est parvenu à réunir sous son autorité politique et militaire tous les mouvements nationalistes jusqu'alors épars. Les opérations sont commencées pour le recrutement d'une armée de 300.000 hommes. Tous les anciens soldats licenciés à la suite de l'armistice accourent dans ses rangs. Les cadres sont ceux de l'armée régulière. Les approvisionnements sont

fournis par des contributions volontaires ou forcées. Le matériel vient des dépôts officiels ou clandestins.

D'ailleurs, le mouvement était commencé depuis longtemps, mais il aurait avorté dans la lassitude générale, si les événements de Smyrne et de Ménémén n'avaient pas jeté les masses dans la colère et le désespoir. L'Italie soutiendrait ce mouvement nationaliste en donnant tous renseignements, en fournissant des armes.

Un comité national, venu de Constantinople, s'est joint à Moustapha et va faire procéder aux élections et réunir une Chambre en Anatolie. Son programme est : expulsion des Grecs - renversement du Cabinet et du Sultan au bénéfice d'un gouvernement provisoire et du Prince héritier (connu comme francophile) - unité turque dans une fédération avec les Arabes.

Le Cheikh des Arabes de l'Irak, Adjemieh Pacha, est avec eux.

Les organisateurs de tout ce mouvement sont très montés contre l'Angleterre. Ils affirment leur grand désir de rester en bonnes relations avec la France et sont disposés à nous donner des concessions politiques et économiques en échange de notre appui moral. Ils prennent toutes mesures pour éviter que les populations chrétiennes ne soient molestées, mais disent que, si on laisse le mouvement durer ou s'ils trouvent de la résistance de la part des Alliés; il ne leur sera pas possible de répondre des volontaires qui se joignent à eux en foule.

Officieusement, il nous ont fait tenir des propositions précises, notre Haut-Commissaire à Constantinople en a été saisi.

La situation est donc du plus haut intérêt et le moment est unique. Le déclenchement du mouvement est suspendu en raison de l'incertitude sur l'attitude des puissances et notamment de la France.

II. MAINTIEN DE L'EMPIRE TURC DANS L'INTERET DE LA FRANCE.

Le démembrement complet de la Turquie, son partage en zones mises respectivement sous le mandat de plusieurs puissances, l'occupation de Smyrne qui semblait confirmer les nouvelles au sujet de la diminution de l'Empire ottoman, ont consterné les Français d'Orient, navrés et craignant par dessus tout de voir disparaître l'influence prépondérante et diminuer le rôle traditionnel de la France en Orient.

Le maintien d'une grande Turquie dans l'intérêt de la France s'impose et nous présentons ici les arguments basés sur des renseignements certains, sur des documents authentiques, sur ce que nous avons vu, observé, constaté au cours de notre séjour en Turquie, au cours de nos voyages en Asie Mineure et en Syrie.

Avant de présenter ces arguments, nous tenons à dire que nous ne voulons pas soutenir le turc pour lui-même, et que nous n'avons en vue que le seul intérêt de la France.

III. ARGUMENTS DE DROIT.

Tout le monde connaît bien, en Turquie, Wilson et ses 14 points. Le Droit, a dit M. Wilson, est une chose plus précieuse que la paix et, se basant sur le droit "ce Souverain du Monde" il énonçait son grand principe des nationalités, principe auquel se ralliaient toutes les Puissances de l'Entente.

Peut-on refuser au turc de reconnaître son existence comme nation? n'a-t-il pas son passé, son histoire? N'est-il pas l'élément le plus nombreux en Turquie comme en Asie Mineure? Les statistiques qui lui sont le plus contraire ne s'accordent-elles pas toutes à lui reconnaître près des 80% de la population totale? Peut-on refuser à ce grand empire le droit à l'existence alors que, depuis des siècles, le conquérant disparu, le turc ne cherche plus qu'à sauvegarder son indépendance ?

L'indépendance ? Pourquoi ce droit ne lui serait-il pas reconnu, alors que nous venons d'ériger en Etats nouveaux une Arménie, une Tchéco-Slovaquie, une Yougo-Slavie, une Pologne. L'Empire de Mahomet II n'a-t-il pas autant de droits que ces nations nouvelles dont les habitants étaient dispersés depuis des siècles ?

Pourquoi avoir voulu ignorer les 83% de la population de Smyrne qui sont nettement turcs, en autorisant les Grecs à occuper la ville ?

Il est évident que nous n'avons pas le moyen d'empêcher les Grecs d'être jetés à l'eau, ce qu'ils ont d'ailleurs bien mérité. Nous assistons à la levée en masse d'un peuple qui, malgré ses défauts, est fier et courageux et qui n'accepte pas d'être livré, pieds et poings liés, à une nation qu'il méprise et qu'il n'a pas rencontré sur les champs de bataille. Nous sommes dans l'alternative: ou de nous déclarer contre eux, ce qui n'empêchera rien, car nous ne sommes pas en état, ayant le gros de nos troupes dans les Balkans, d'intervenir par les armes, ce qui nous donnera un rôle ridicule, nous aliénera définitivement toutes sympathies et provoquera le massacre des populations chrétiennes, ou de favoriser le mouvement, tout au moins en n'intervenant pas, ce qui est l'occasion unique de reprendre notre place et nos intérêts, ce qui est juste et conforme à nos traditions, attendu qu'il s'agit d'un peuple qui lutte pour son existence et ne veut ni être réduit en esclavage, ni être humilié.

A ces questions de droit et de justice, s'ajoutent des arguments de sentiment et de culture.

Le peuple turc ressemble étonnamment, comme caractère, au peuple français; comme lui il est noble, généreux, tolérant, disons le sans crainte, comme notre paysan il est travailleur, attaché à la terre.

Notre culture y est ancrée, on ne parle que le français dans les familles turques, ce sont nos littérateurs qu'on lit, notre musique qu'on joue, nos mélodies qu'on chante. La femme turque a l'élégance de la nôtre, racée comme elle, c'est la seule femme qu'en Turquie on puisse fréquenter avec plaisir, avec décence.

Nous pouvons dire nettement que les Turcs est le peuple le plus sympathique dans les Balkans et certainement le plus propre au physique comme au moral.

IV. INTERETS POLITIQUES.

Aux arguments de droit et de sentiment dont nous venons de parler s'ajoutent des intérêts politiques procédant notamment des relations amicales de la Turquie avec la France.

Rappelons seulement le traité de François 1^{er} Suleyman le Magnifique, les relations des Sultans et de nos Rois, la politique d'amitié de la 1^{ère} République et de Napoléon 1^{er} avec la Porte, enfin l'aide puissante donnée par Napoléon III à la Turquie dont l'indépendance fût sauvée par nos troupes en Crimée.

Les conditions de politique internationale n'ont pas tellement changé que nous n'ayons plus d'intérêt à avoir un appui en Orient.

La question d'Orient est d'autant plus grave qu'elle est souvent la plus ignorée, qu'elle laisse indifférente la grosse masse du peuple français. L'Orient c'est la porte de l'Asie, la route des Indes et de l'Océanie, le centre des religions. C'est de là que sont tirées les ficelles qui mènent les musulmans; or, nous ne devons pas oublier combien la France est puissance musulmane, celle qui de toutes les Puissances a eu la compréhension la plus nette de l'esprit, de l'âme musulmane, celle qui s'est montré la plus tolérante. Disons-enfin, que c'est de là que viendront toutes les difficultés et les nouvelles guerres, si nous persistons à disloquer un Empire qui forme un tout.

Pouvons-nous trouver en Orient un appui aussi solide que le sera pour nous l'Empire ottoman? Non.

La nouvelle Serbie est trop loin des Détroits, sans action sur l'Asie Mineure.

La Russie est loin d'avoir repris son unité, et d'ailleurs serait-elle à nouveau notre alliée que nous savons, par l'expérience de la Grande Guerre, que nous avons besoin de la libre disposition des Détroits.

La Grèce, aucun fond à faire sur elle. M. Venizelos obtient beaucoup, trop même, mais les Grecs lui reprochent toujours de n'avoir pas obtenu assez; l'empire d'Alexandre ne comprenait-il pas la Perse et le Caucase. Et puis, le parti de Constantin est encore très fort surtout dans l'armée.

Reste donc la Turquie; organisée, conseillée, dirigée par nous, nous pourrions la rendre forte et faire fond sur son armée, son peuple, sa loyauté, à condition de vouloir s'en occuper ce que nous avons malheureusement négligé de faire pendant trop longtemps.

V. NOS INTERETS ECONOMIQUES.

La France a, en Turquie, d'énormes intérêts que nous ne devons pas négliger.

Chacun sait que toutes les Sociétés, en Turquie d'Europe comme en Asie Mineure, que toutes les grandes Compagnies de Constantinople, que toutes les exploitations ne marchent qu'avec des capitaux français. Compagnie des eaux, Compagnie des phares ottomans, tramways, quais, banques, mines, chemins de fer, tout est français.

Nous avons entre les mains les 5/6 des actions de la Dette ottomane, les statistiques prouvent que les finances turques sont composées par 80% de capitaux français.

Pense-t-on qu'une autre puissance protectrice protégerait nos intérêts ? Ne voudrait-elle pas s'en créer au détriment des nôtres ?

Et puis, n'aurons-nous pas en Turquie un vaste champ d'activités ? il y a encore de nombreuses richesses à mettre en valeur. Nous ne connaissons encore rien du sous-sol de l'Asie Mineure.

Constantinople dans nos mains, c'est le contrôle de tout le transit entre l'Europe et l'Asie, c'est la possession des bassins miniers de la Mer Noire, des riches plaines de la Russie méridionale.

Notre rôle économique, déjà si grand en Orient, doit devenir de tout premier ordre.

Tous ceux qui ont intérêt à ne pas nous désirer en Turquie mettent sous nos yeux le tableau comparatif du commerce des différents Etats avec la Turquie. Voyons-le :

	en 1887	en 1990
Angleterre	61%	35%
France	18%	11%
Autriche	12%	21%
Allemagne	6%	21%
Italie	3%	12%

Que constatons-nous ? Tout simplement les efforts considérables faits par la triple alliance (Allemagne, Autriche, Italie), qui ont réussi à augmenter énormément leur commerce, non pas seulement au détriment de la France, mais plus encore à celui de l'Angleterre.

L'Allemagne avait vu juste en visant au renforcement de la Turquie que, pour notre part, nous abandonnions; elle y supplantait notre influence. L'Allemagne vaincue nous devons reprendre notre place, celle que nous n'aurions pas du perdre, celle qui justifie les plus belles espérances.

L'Angleterre n'a qu'intérêt à nous aider en Turquie, en réciprocité de l'aide que nous pouvons lui donner en Arabie.

VI. CONCLUSIONS.

De ce rapport, comme des rapports que nous avons précédemment établis, nous concluerons que la France ne doit pas abandonner la Turquie.

Etre pour le Turc, c'est être Français.

Vouloir une Turquie forte, une Turquie d'une intégralité aussi grande que possible, une Turquie organisée, guidée par nous, c'est servir la France, son influence, ses intérêts, c'est sauvegarder tous les droits qu'une longue suite de siècles, que nos traditions, que notre glorieux passé, nous ont acquis.

Une politique grécophile à l'excès ne peut que nous discréditer en Orient, non seulement aux yeux des Turcs, mais aussi dans les colonies européennes; nous ne pouvons soutenir les auteurs des massacres de Smyrne et de Ménémen, ni prêter la main à l'asservissement, à l'humiliation, au démembrement d'un peuple qui nous connaît, qui nous veut, qui a été notre allié pendant cinq siècles.

Notre but doit être : Conserver à la Turquie tous les pays turcs avec mandat de la France.

ANNEXE 6

Déclaration du 13 avril 1939 de Georges Bonnet, Ministre français des Affaires étrangères :

« Le gouvernement français attachant la plus grande importance à prévenir toute modification imposée par la force ou la menace de la force au statu quo dans la Méditerranée et dans la péninsule balkanique et prenant en considération les inquiétudes spéciales que les événements de ces dernières semaines ont fait naître avait décidé d'accord avec le gouvernement britannique de donner à la Grèce l'assistance particulière qu'au cas où une action serait entreprise qui menacerait clairement l'indépendance de la Grèce et à laquelle le

gouvernement grec estimerait qu'il est de son intérêt vital de résister avec ses forces nationales, le gouvernement français se tiendra pour engagé à lui prêter immédiatement toute l'assistance en son pouvoir ».

Documents diplomatiques français 1932-1939

Tome XV 16 mars-30 avril 1939 594-595

ANNEXE 7

Ministère des Affaires étrangères. République française. Direction des affaires Politiques Europe. Sous Direction d'Europe Méridionale

Note sur les relations politiques franco-grecques. 2 septembre 1974 (extraits) :

Le coup d'Etat d'avril 1967 nous posa un problème délicat. Il fallait, en effet, concilier les réserves que nous inspirait le « régime des colonels » avec notre fidélité au principe de non ingérence dans les affaires intérieures d'autrui et avec le souci de nos intérêts permanents. Jusqu'à la fin de 1968, notre Ambassadeur eut instruction d'éviter de se mêler à la vie officielle et d'observer la plus grande réserve ; il ne fut autorisé à en sortir que lorsque le gouvernement d'Athènes montra par des avances qu'il acceptait une attitude, dont la neutralité, à Strasbourg par exemple, n'était pas sans avantage pour lui.

Nous nous sommes donc attachés à maintenir nos distances vis-à-vis d'Athènes, où aucun membre du gouvernement, à l'exception du secrétaire d'Etat aux affaires étrangères ne s'est rendu en visite officielle durant 7 ans, sans pour autant nous associer à ceux de nos partenaires, comme les Pays Bas, qui se montraient les plus ardents à condamner publiquement la Grèce au Conseil de l'Europe, à l'Assemblée de l'UEO, ou à Bruxelles.

Le gouvernement hellénique s'est accommodé de cette attitude qui a permis le maintien de relations politiques, correctes mais sans chaleur, entre les deux pays. Celles-ci n'ont pas été perturbées par la

présence en France de nombreux exilés grecs de marque, notamment M. Caramanlis, et les activités de nombre d'eux ; les plaintes adressées par l'ambassade de Grèce à ce sujet ont été régulièrement éconduites. De même, n'avons – nous jamais renoncé à effectuer à Athènes, avec la discrétion nécessaire à leur succès, des démarches humanitaires en faveur de prisonniers politiques.

ANNEXE 8

Visite en France du Colonel Makarezos.

Ministère de l'Intérieur. Secrétariat général pour la police. Paris, 6 juin 1969

Lettre du Ministre de l'Intérieur au Ministre des Affaires étrangères(extraits).

Objet : Possibilité d'incidents à l'occasion de la visite du Colonel Makarezos, ministre grec de la Coordination et mesures prises.

Le voyage du ministre grec de la coordination, M. Makarézos peut d'autant plus fournir aux adversaires du nouveau régime d'Athènes l'occasion de provoquer des incidents que l'on sait maintenant par la presse le motif de ce voyage, à savoir l'achat de matériel de guerre français en remplacement des armes refusées par les Américains aux colonels grecs en raison de leur entêtement à différer les élections et le processus de libéralisation.

Les renseignements ont d'abord porté sur l'intervention à partir d'Angleterre, d'un commando de militants grecs antifascistes chargés par un ancien député de l'Union démocratique des Gauches(E.D.A.) M. Antonios Brillakis, d'assassiner, à Paris, le colonel Makarézos.

Une information a ensuite indiqué que trois cars, venant d'Allemagne de l'Ouest, transporteraient à Paris des ressortissants grecs destinés à participer aux manifestations prévues pour demain.

Ces renseignements ont paru sérieux, M. Antonios Brillakis est un responsable communiste, du type activiste, organisateur du seul réseau de résistance grecque en Europe occidentale disposant d'hommes de main et ayant des prolongations dans la clandestinité en Grèce, « Le Front Patriotique Grec ».

M. Brillakis a très vraisemblablement pris part à l'opération qui a conduit à la capture, au dessus d'Orly, du Boeing de « L'Olympic Airways », par deux « révolutionnaires » italiens, le 8 novembre dernier.

D'autre part une information non recoupée a fait état des initiatives éventuelles d'un peintre nommé Canas, qui cherchait à savoir où résidait M. Makarézos.

Pour éviter des incidents, des instructions ont été envoyées aux postes frontières pour intercepter les « commandos » cherchant à pénétrer sur notre territoire.

En ce qui concerne M. Brillakis il a été décidé de lui refuser l'accès du territoire français jusqu'au 8 juin et de le refouler sur le pays de provenance à l'exclusion de la Grèce.

Ces mesures n'empêcheront pas pour autant des initiatives de l'extrême gauche française : dès le 30 mai « le Comité français pour la Grèce démocratique », d'obédience communiste a demandé à ses adhérents d'adresser des motions de protestation au Palais de l'Elysée et à l'Hôtel Matignon.

Des actions violentes sont envisagées contre les agences de voyages grecques, voire contre les établissements Marcel Dassault, fournisseur éventuel d'avions aux autorités grecques.

Le Préfet de Police a reçu des instructions précises pour faire échec dans toute la mesure du possible à des manifestations sur la voie publique.

FYROM: The Ochrid Agreement and Its Aftermath

Spyridon Sfetas*

RÉSUMÉ

Dans cet article est examinée la crise politique traversée par la FYROM (ancienne République yougoslave de Macédoine) après la rébellion albanaise que ce pays a subie. La mise en oeuvre des accords d'Ochride signés après la fin de cette rébellion, et qui prévoient une plus grande participation des Albanais à la vie publique, n'a pas été très facile. Les résultats des élections de septembre 2002 ont compliqué encore davantage une situation politique instable, que la Grèce pour des raisons évidentes suit avec un intérêt particulier.

ABSTRACT

In the following article, the author examines the political crisis within the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) after the Albanian rebellion. The implementation of the Ochrid Agreement signed subsequently foresees greater ethnic Albanian participation in the country's civil service and public life. This is easier said than done, though. The results of the September 2002 elections have further complicated an already unstable political situation which Greece is watching with special interest.

The optimistic prognostications of various leaders of the governing coalition VMRO-DPMNE (Interior Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation-Democratic Party for National Union) that the international community would be able to prevent a transfer of the Kosovo crisis to the FYROM finally proved unfounded.¹

The facilities that the FYROM brought to NATO's operation against Yugoslavia, the refugee as well as humanitarian aid that the FYROM offered to those fleeing Kosovar during the NATO bombardments did not prevent Albanians from trying to reach their objectives. The Albanian problem has existed mainly in the former Yugoslav Macedonia since the mid-war period, when the Albanian people, together with the Bulgarian organization VMRO, were

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struggling against the Serbs. During WWII, the western regions of Yugoslav Macedonia with the greater part of Kosovo had been integrated into the Greater Albania, which was an Italian protectorate. The Bulgarian government of Filov tried to revise the Ribbentrop-Ciano Agreement of April 1941, asking for the extension of the Bulgarian zone to the Albanian regions, but without real success. The majority of the Albanian population, though, considering that they had been freed from Serbian occupation with Italian and German assistance, joined mainly Albanian nationalistic organizations not the Yugoslav resistance movement. Albanians took part in a campaign to 'Albanize' the population of the occupied regions. Thus, the population of Slavic origin of the western regions of Yugoslav Macedonia, who basically identified themselves as Bulgarians, became victims of violent Albanization. In an appeal to the Bulgarian government, representatives of the Bulgarian cultural associations of the towns of Tetovo, Gostivar and Struga called upon the latter to intervene with the German authorities in order to protect the people of Bulgarian origin. A wave of migration to the Bulgarian zone followed. However, after the capitulation of Italy in September 1943, Bulgarian authorities started the extradition of Albanians from the town of Skopje as a reprisal. Although Germany permitted the occupation of the western albanophone regions of Yugoslav Macedonia by the Bulgarian army, the political leadership of Bulgaria was resentful; judging that allowing the Bulgarian army in would provoke a real war between Bulgarians and Albanians. The Bulgarian army thus occupied only certain zones of the Prespa-Ochrid regions, east of Kicevo and north of Kacanik, violating partly the borderline as defined by the Italian Bulgarian agreement of March 30, 1943. In order to protect the Bulgarian population, a system of 'self-defense' was created a form of police constituted by citizens armed with German weapons. In Slavic villages, people of Slavic origin were appointed as community presidents; Albanians, secretaries. The opposite was applied in mixed villages with an Albanian majority. That was an effort by the Germans to maintain the fragile balance between those of Slavic and those of Albanian origin. As the prospect of Bulgarian integration was becoming increasingly remote, by 1944 the Slavs in the western part of Yugoslav Macedonia began to

participate in the Yugoslavian resistance movement, thus provoking the creation of a Slavomacedonian identity.

After 1945, ethnic Albanians in the Federal Socialist Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia had been recognized as a minority and had obtained educational rights, but without being inserted into the government structure. The troubles in Kosovo in October 1968 and April 1981 had a direct impact on Albanians of Yugoslavian Macedonia who were aiming, along with the Kosovars, to found a Federal Albanian Republic within Yugoslavia. After Yugoslavia's dissolution, all the Albanian political parties of the FYROM and Kosovo put forward a common objective: independence for Kosovo and autonomy for the western regions of FYROM.

The main demand of all Albanian components of the FYROM was a change of the constitution and recognition of Albanians as an ethnic group equal at the constitutional level. In order to achieve this goal, Albanians did not limit their actions to political means only, e.g., the activities of the two Albanian political parties, the Democratic Party and Democratic Party of Welfare. Instead, encouraged by the developments in Kosovo, they applied Kosovar's tactics and resorted to an armed guerilla. The so-called Ethnic Liberation Army of Kosovo was founded in Skopje as a branch of the Liberation Army (UCK Ushtria Clirimtare Kobetare), having as a political representative Ali Ahmeti. The pretext for the beginning of its activities had been the agreement signed in February 2001 between Skopje and Yugoslavia for the establishment of the borderline between the two countries. Albanians considered unacceptable their exclusion from this decision that also affected regions of Kosovo. They interpreted the political movement of FYROM as evidence that for the FYROM, Kosovo was still part of Yugoslavia. After Milosevic had been overthrown, Albanians feared that the international community would not give priority to Kosovo any more and would focus on the reconstruction and democratization of Yugoslavia. Already at the Interbalkan Conference held in Zagreb, November 2000, there was no special attention paid to Kosovo. Albanians were anxious about the upcoming return of the Yugoslavian army in the neutral zone of Kosovo. Thus the armed conflict in Kosovo was designed or used to

attract international attention to the problem. All the declarations from Albanian politicians and the demonstrations held by Albanians in the FYROM and Tetovo had one common claim: Independence for Kosovo and the creation of a federal FYROM.

The armed conflict began in March 2002 with the occupation of the village of Tamsevcí. It soon moved to the surroundings of Tetovo and into the town itself. For security reasons, Slavomacedonian inhabitants of Tetovo and the western regions had sought refuge in Kosovo. Tetovo was controlled *de facto* by Albanian rebels. With their demonstrations at the centre of Skopje and the symbolic occupation of Parliament, Slavomacedonians claimed that a forceful response needed to be given to the Albanians. As a reprisal for Tetovo, paramilitary nationalistic organizations from the FYROM burned Albanian businesses at Monastiri in May. This forced Albanian inhabitants to abandon the town. The troubles had taken on not only an ethnic but also a religious character with the burning of churches and mosques. The gap between the two sides had been broadened. Albanians threatened to transfer the war into the town of Skopje itself, occupying in March 2001, the village of Aracinovo, which the Albanians had held hostage until the end of June.

With the armed conflict in FYROM, a series of questions were put forward:

Had the crisis been provoked by foreign centres for political reasons?

Why did the Skopje government not confront more forcefully the Albanian rebels?

What had the Albanians achieved through armed confrontation and to what extent had the survival of the FYROM become problematic for the future?

In his report on the position taken by his government toward the Albanians in the spring of 2001, prime minister Ljubco Georgievski revealed that the government had been informed on time by Yugoslav leaders about the imminent launching of the UCK's activities in his

country, but attention was not paid to these warnings. The hope was for NATO's deterrence power. He tried to find a way of facing the crisis only when it had already started. A very long debate followed on whether or not they should use only the police force or the army. There were also disputes in the government as to whether the country should be declared in a state of war. However, it was mainly the hypocrisy of the international community that permitted the Albanians to present themselves as victorious. Everything, according to Georgievski, was planned in advance so that NATO forces would be established in FYROM.

There can be no doubt that Albanians successfully undertook a psychological war against Slavomacedonians who had been taken by surprise. Having Kosovo as a base for providing fresh supplies and ammunition, and as place of refuge, Albanian rebels managed to launch a successful guerrilla attack against Skopje's police forces, also attacking army units. For domestic and foreign policy reasons, the country was not declared in a state of war. Albanians constituted forty percent of the FYROM armed forces and in the case of war, there was a danger of them enrolling in the UCK. In this case, also the party of Arben Xhaferi would leave the government coalition. More important, NATO prevented the government of Skopje from declaring the country in a state of war, aiming evidently to have the crisis under control. The incapacity or indifference of the KFOR in preventing the passage of Albanian rebels from Kosovo to the FYROM and the rejection of President Trajkovski's proposal for the creation of a neutral zone between Kosovo and FYROM strengthened the positions of the Albanian rebels. Nevertheless, greater effect on the public opinion of Skopje was produced by revelations of direct American involvement in the arming and protecting of the Albanian rebels. Their arms and training had been provided by an American company, Military Professional Resources Inc., which cooperates closely with the Pentagon, and in 1995, had provided weapons and training to the Croats for the reoccupation of Kraina. At the head of the company was a retired American officer, Richard Griffith, a close collaborator of Agim Ceku. (Their connection went back to the Croatian war, when Ceku took part in the war against the Serbs.)

Griffith had undertaken to supply arms to the Skopje army, thus taking advantage of his relationship with the General Jovan Andreevski. This relationship went back to the time when the latter was doing his army training in America. It has been shown that Griffith was playing a double role. All the information that Andreevski gave to him about army operations in Skopje was transmitted by Griffith to the Albanian rebels.

It is no coincidence that after what may be the unique and 'imposing' victory of FYROM forces at Aracinovo, where in June 2001, Albanian rebels were literally encircled and ready to surrender, American forces fled Kosovo, freed Albanians and took them along with their weapons to the Kosovo border. Among the 400 Albanian rebels were 17 American instructors.² Also worth noting is the fact that these rebels had an arsenal of American origin. A public revelation of American involvement would have exposed the Americans irreversibly.

The American involvement became more evident in the provision of arms to Skopje's army in order to face Albanian rebels. Skopje turned primarily toward Russia and the Ukraine. Skopje's pilots began being trained in the Ukraine, which provided Skopje with four SU-25 aircraft and four MI-24 helicopters. Military aid began to come from Yugoslavia in the summer after the signature of the Belgrade-Skopje agreement. But NATO vetoed the provision of aid from the Ukraine. Secretary-General of NATO Robertson, visiting Kiev, called upon the Ukraine to stop providing arms to Skopje. Undoubtedly NATO did not want the Albanian rebels to be completely defeated, but wanted to see a controlled balance of the armed confrontation in order to find a political solution.

The FYROM went through its greatest political crisis since 1944 during this period. Of course, the Albanian problem had always existed. While Yugoslavia remained united, however, the problem was faced on a federal level and Skopje was sure to get Belgrade's help. Now with the abolition of Serbian sovereignty in Kosovo and Belgrade's more limited possibilities for political flexibility on external policy after Milosevic's overthrow, the situation had certainly changed.

Because of the May 2001 crisis, a government of “Ethnic Unity” was formed in order to face the situation in a collective way. In the Slavomacedonian circles, a psychotic fear of war, heavy anti-NATO climate and an overall impasse prevailed. The frequent visits to Skopje by Solana and Robertson did not help reach any solution to this crisis. As a permanent solution to the Albanian problem, the President of the Academy of Skopje, Efremov, proposed the exchange of land and population with Albania. In other words, the western albanophone regions of FYROM would be integrated to Albania; Albanians from the town of Skopje and Koumanovo would be transferred to the clearly albanophone regions and, in exchange, the slavophone regions of Albanian near Prespa, as well as the town of Pogradec, would be integrated to the FYROM. Almost at the same time, Nova Macedonija published a map with the message that the Macedonian and Albanian problems must be solved together with the transfer of the Bulgarian part of Macedonia and western Greek Macedonia to the FYROM. Efremov’s proposal and the publication of *Nova Macedonija* provoked confusion and resulted in the resignation of the National Academy’s President and dismissal of *Nova Macedonija*’s editor-in-chief. It also demonstrated that border change in the Balkan region may have a chain effect. This last point was also reflected in Kissinger’s and Owen’s proposal for a new conference in Berlin with the participation of the Balkan states in order to redefine the borders in the Balkans on the following basis: partition of Bosnia, partition of Kosovo, partition of FYROM between Bulgaria and Albania, integration of North Transylvania to Hungary, independence of Montenegro and Serbian access to the Adriatic.

The political crisis in the FYROM generated special anxiety in Greece and Bulgaria. Greece characterized the crisis as a result of the international community’s incapacity to fulfill its obligations in Kosovo. Greece criticized NATO because in the name of human rights’ protection, the organization did not diagnose the underlying objectives of Albanians and ignored the links of Albanian rebels with the international mafia. The Greek businessmen who had invested in the FYROM were particularly nervous fearing for the future of their businesses as Greece has been the FYROM’s main financial partner.

Athens actually prepared to receive refugees in case war spread. Prime Minister Simitis stressed the need for the FYROM's territorial integrity and the need to not change the borders in the Balkans but he made it understood that Greece would not remain indifferent in the case of the FYROM's breaking up. The leader of the *Politiki Anixi* party and minister of external affairs in the Mitsotakis government from 1990-92, Antonis Samaras, known for his tough position on the name FYROM, took advantage of this occasion to support the policy of 1990-92 and justify himself. According to Samaras, Greece's policy of not showing haste on the matter of Skopje's name was correct because the state might have been dismantled anyway.

Meanwhile, Bulgaria was observing with tremendous anxiety all that was happening in the FYROM. In fact the Bulgarian press was providing full coverage of the events. According to the military doctrine of Bulgaria, special Bulgarian forces should be sent in case of armed conflict between Slavomacedonians and Albanians. The peak of the crisis in the FYROM in May coincided with the beginning of the election campaign period in Bulgaria. The upcoming elections were gaining special importance as the rapid advance of the King Simeon II movement was changing the political scene of Bulgaria. Georgievski's government did not officially seek help from Bulgaria but did not refuse the Bulgarian offer to send tanks and arms. Nevertheless, it did not want to send Bulgarian troops for reasons easy to understand. The presence of a Bulgarian army would probably contribute to the revival of WWII memories, while among the Slavomacedonian circles of the Social Democratic Federation, there also existed the doubt as to whether or not the Bulgarian army would finally declare war against the Albanian rebels or strengthen its positions in the eastern part of the FYROM, thus contributing to the partition.

Of course, the position of the Kostov government was difficult. Bulgaria wished to strengthen Skopje but also maintain channels of communication open with the Albanians because of Corridor no. 8. For this reason, the shipping of arms and ammunition had been accompanied with the request that these not be used against Albanians. Bulgaria had moved its armies to the border with the

FYROM. Officially it was announced that this was done for security in case a wave of refugees swelled toward Bulgaria or Slavomacedonian paramilitary organizations penetrated Bulgaria. But NATO not only prevented Bulgarian armed involvement but also called upon Sofia to stop providing aid to Skopje. It should be mentioned that Bulgaria, in order not to disappoint NATO, as it wanted to become a member, refused to permit Ukrainian helicopters and planes *en route* to Skopje in its airspace. The Ukrainian aircraft flew over Romania and Yugoslavia instead. Furthermore, Bulgaria was examining two possibilities in relation with Skopje:

- 1- the manifestation of a strong anti-NATO climate in Skopje which would finally be turned against Bulgaria
- 2- the penetration of Russian volunteers in Skopje where, as in the case of Tchetchenia, they would undertake the ethnic cleansing of Albanians. Bulgaria did not manage in this instance, to fulfill its historic role as protector power of the FYROM.

The question most often asked was why the international community had shown tolerance toward Albania despite the revelations of Albanian rebel connections with drug traffickers and the presence of the Mujahadin in UCK ranks. Although a fully documented answer to that question can not yet be given, especially for the case of Skopje, there is information showing that America, which sought stability basically, but only after having secured the prerequisites for the region's control in its favour and until then had tolerated a controlled instability, tried to obtain a solution to the Albanian problem of the FRYOM favourable to the Albanians mainly because of the construction of Corridor no. 8. In this corridor, a part from the steady Italian interest in linking the Adriatic to the Black Sea, the oil company AMBO (Albanian-Macedonian-Bulgarian Oil Pipeline) under American control, also has a special interest in reducing the American dependency on OPEC countries. In sum, energy seemed to upgrade the position of Albanians in the Balkans. As usual, and in previous cases of ethnic conflicts in the Balkans, the crisis goes towards a solution through international mediation. In July 2001, Leotard was appointed mediator representing the European Union and Pardew as representative of the USA in order to negotiate

a political agreement between Albanians and Slavomacedonians. At the same time, it was announced that NATO would send a force of 3,000 men after the signing of an agreement for UCK's disarmament. The great obstacle in reaching an agreement, however, was the steady claim by Albanians for change in the constitution, especially its preamble. Albanians wanted it to recognize them as an equal ethnic group and they rejected the bill for changing the constitution, which provided modifications that abolished any discrimination in the hiring process in the civil service, guaranteed ethnic pluralism in the courts, strengthened the local governments and requested that the ethnic symbol of Albanians of FYROM be different from the Albanian flag. The dialogue that began between the Albanian and Slavomacedonian parties continued at Ochrid with the active participation of mediators. The change in the preamble of the Constitution for the recognition of Albanians as equals and the modification of Article 19 for the equality of the Orthodox Church of Skopje with the Islamic Union constituted the main obstacles.

After NATO's declarations that it would not be involved, should armed confrontation recur, and under the threat of Albanians that they would proclaim the Republic of Illirida in case of non-attainment of an agreement, the Ochrid Agreement was finally signed on August 13, 2002, by president Trajkovski, prime minister Georgievski, the leader of the Social Democratic Union, Cervenkovski, the leader of the Democratic Party of Albanians Arben Xhaferi and the leader of the Albanian Democratic Party of Welfare Ymer Ymeri, as well as Leotard and Pardew. The agreement includes ten basic points:

The use of force to reach political objectives is rejected and only political means are permitted.

The unitary and multiethnic character of the state is maintained.

The Albanian rebels are to be disarmed.

A series of laws decentralizing the state and strengthening the powers of local government, education and the participation of Albanians in the state structure.

The enumerated list includes:

The preamble of the constitution considering only Slavomacedonians as people of the state is abolished and the Albanian language is permitted in Parliament; the Albanian language becomes the second official language in communities with an Albanian population of more than 20%; the State gives subsidies for the teaching of Albanian in these communities; proportional representation of Albanians to the Constitutional Court according to their percentage in the population; the nomination of Albanians as directors of police stations in regions where minorities are more numerous; more power to the local governments; the conference of donating countries will finance the reconstruction of the damages caused by the armed conflict; equality of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches with the Islamic Union.

The agreement in question constituted a framework. It needed to be ratified first by the Parliament and after the relative regulations concerning the language and local government would be submitted to a vote. Nevertheless, the main problems for ratification were the preamble of the Constitution and Article 19 on the equality of churches, and religious organizations. The Slavomacedonian side could accept the formula "citizens of Macedonia" without making specific reference to the term "Macedonian people". On the other hand, Albanians did not want to be characterized as a minority. In addition, the Orthodox Church of Skopje reacted to the equation with the Catholic Church and the Islamic Union. The ratification of the agreement was put on the table in relation with the disarmament of Albanian rebels. Also on this point, disagreements arose between NATO and Georgievski. NATO was estimating the number of all kinds of weapons that the Albanians possessed some 3,300 pieces; the Slavomacedonian side was estimating their number at 80,000 to 85,000.

The legislative elections and a census of the population had been planned for after ratification and adoption of the laws. Unfortunately, after the terrorist attack of September 11, it was difficult to ratify it. The Slavomacedonian side tried to prove that the Albanian rebels were

linked with Islamist fundamentalists and thus denounce them as terrorists. A video was projected showing the withdrawal of Albanian rebels from Aracinovo and the presence of Mujahadin in their ranks. But it has been confirmed that NATO was aware of the existence of Mujahadin, a fact that only enforces the opinion that the Skopje crisis was planned in advance. Consequently these revelations had no real significance for the FYROM peace-making process. At the end of August, under NATO surveillance, the UCK disarmament began. As in the case of Kosovo, in this case contemporary arms were not turned in. However, the impact of the events of September 11 led to the dissolution of the UCK by October. The Slavomacedonian side characterized this self-dissolution as a tactic because of the revelations of relations that Albanians had with the Mujahadin. In Skopje, a German NATO force was established for the protection of the OSCE observers (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe). It would supervise the application of this agreement. Moreover, the threats from donating countries that there would not be any financial aid without the ratification of this agreement did not leave much choice to the Slavomacedonian side.

After prolonged discussion over the preamble of the constitution, the final text read as follows:

The citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian people, and the citizens who live within its borders and are composed in part of Albanian people, Serbian, Vlachiko and Bosnian people.... In order to prevent the equation of the terms Macedonian and Albanian people, the formula preferred was “part of” with the immediate recognition of all the other ethnic groups as part of the people who form the population. Evidently Skopje’s objective was to interpret the term part of Albanian people, as recognition of a minority. Nevertheless, nothing modifies the spirit of the agreement, which basically increases the political role of Albanian and their equality with Slavomacedonians. In the imposition of this formula, President Trajkovski had been obliged to grant a generous amnesty to the Albanian rebels. No modification of the Ochrid Agreement for the equality of the Orthodox and Catholic Church had been made and Article 19 of the Constitution proclaimed that the “Macedonian

Orthodox Church, the Islamic Religious Union, the Catholic Church, the Evangelical-Methodist Church, the Jewish Union and other religious unions and religious groups are separate from the state and equal before the law.” These constitutional modifications were adopted on November 16, 2001, and thus the Ochrid Agreement was ratified by the Parliament.

Considering that political stability after this ratification agreement had been secured in the country, the Social Democratic Union withdrew from the government. There were, of course, other reasons for its withdrawal. The Parliament had to vote on the laws for the extension of the Albanians’ rights. As the Social Democratic Union wanted to dissociate itself from any responsibility for these historic decisions, it sought to obtain political advantages at the expense of the VMRO-DPNE. Thus was formed a new government, with the participation of the New Democratic, the Liberal Party, the VMRO-VMRO and the two Albanian parties, which under no circumstances wanted to withdraw from the government in view of the adoption of the new laws.

Prime minister Georgievski attributed the crisis that the country had undergone to foreign centres and not simply to the Albanians of the FYROM. Even in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attack and in light of the revelations of the prior relationship of the USA with Osama Bin Laden, Georgievski did not hesitate to declare directly to Pardew that the USA encouraged terrorism.

In a report published in December 2001, the non-governmental organization, International Crisis Group, which does not know the Balkan reality, attributed the crisis to Greece’s, Bulgaria’s and Yugoslavia’s policies towards the FYROM. The pending problems in the relations of these countries with the FYROM, e.g., recognition of the Macedonian nation and of the autocephalous nature of the Orthodox Church of Skopje, and problem of the name of FYROM, encouraged Albanian extremists, according to the International Crisis Group, to start the armed conflict. However, this charge remains unfounded.

The Ochrid Agreement not only protects Albanians' human rights, but recognizes Albanians *de facto* as an equal nation. During the first half of 2002, laws were enacted for the local administration, giving Albanians judiciary and executive power as well as their say in matters of education and health. Language equality also was legislated. A law granted a very generous amnesty to former Albanian rebels in exchange for the approval of financial aid from the Conference of donating countries to Skopje for the reconstruction of material damage caused by the armed conflict soon followed. In parliament, Albanian will be used verbally while all acts of parliament will be published in Slavomacedonian only. The proposal for separate issue of passports for Slavomacedonians and Albanians in their respective languages was, however, rejected.

Obviously the Agreement aims to integrate Albanians into the structures of the state. Yet Albanians see it as a starting point for the creation of a federal state in the FYROM. The political representative of the UCK, Ali Ahmeti, after the 'self-dissolution' of his armed organization, decided to get involved in politics and unify the Albanian political parties by founding a Co-ordinating Committee. This effort failed as Ahmeti presented the Achrida Agreement as his own achievement, denouncing the two other Albanian parties for obstruction. Ahmeti then founded his own party, the 'Union for Integral Democracy'. Included in its program was the creation of a multi-ethnic Macedonia, decentralization, a fight against corruption and organized crime. The new party is essentially a rival to that of Xhaferi.

Between these two parties, a race began for the recruitment of former Albanian rebels. Xhaferi, as well as Ahmeti, who moved from Tetovo to Skopje, adopted extremist positions in order to increase their political influence. Ahmeti sought to establish August 13 as a national holiday in order to commemorate the liberation of Skopje from the Turks after the common struggles of Albanians and Slavomacedonians. It was during the great Albanian revolt of 1912 against the Neo-Turk policy that the Albanians entered Skopje. Common struggles at that time between Albanians and the Bulgarian organization VMRO did not exist. Evidently Ahmeti aims to link the Achrida Agreement to the events of 1912. Another one of his claims

is that the Skopje state emblem should include some Albanian elements. Xhaferi declared that the Albanian objective is no longer the Achrida Agreement but rather the profound transformation of Macedonia according to the European model.

There can be no doubt that the gap between Slavomacedonians and Albanians has broadened. The Kosovoization of the western parts of the FYROM is completed and Albanians do not want integration, but partition over the long term. According to the latest data, the new reality in Kosovo and the FYROM has led to an increase in the number of Albanians who want a Greater Albania. It is revealing in this sense that the Albanian parts of Skopje refused to sign a common declaration drafted by the Slavomacedonian parties in which the latter condemned the decision of the Kosovo Parliament related to the dispute of the border line between Kosovo and the FYROM. The probable change of borders in the Balkans is not a taboo issue any longer for American circles. In June 2002, Steven Mayer, former assistant director of the Balkan section of the CIA, stressed the need to outline new borders in the region in order to create more homogeneous states and thus regional stability. He essentially was repeating the earlier proposals made by Owen and Kissinger. As it is well known, the American policy is changing according to the new data, given that it is not based on principles. Nevertheless, establishing new borders will upset the balance completely and create new problems. The policy of the European Union is oriented not towards the creation of new countries but the so-called creation of peripheral zones, or peripheralization; prevention of Montenegro's independence, and integration of Kosovo as a third component of the Serbian-Montenegrin Union. Nevertheless, economic recovery is essential to the maintenance of stability in the Balkan states. What the Balkans need is a new Marshall plan. For instance, the plans of Skopje and Bulgaria for a Skopje-Sofia railway and a pipeline transporting electricity at a high voltage (440 kw) as well as a new road network within the Corridor no. 8 have constantly been postponed because of a lack of funds.

Greece, a Balkan nation with a European identity, has understood the importance of peripheral growth and co-operation. In addition to

its investments, Greece has elaborated its own program for the reconstruction of the Balkans. The start of the Thessaloniki-Skopje pipeline operations with the prospect of an extension to Kosovo and Southern Serbia constitutes the biggest investment in the Balkans during the past few years. For reasons easy to understand, Greece's first priority is stability in the FYROM. Thus, notwithstanding the results of the September 15, 2002 elections in the FYROM, Greece has remained a strategic partner. The intermediate agreement of September 1995 will be extended and President Trajovski has struck a committee to examine the solution for the problem of the name Macedonia. According to some sources, the name being discussed currently is Gorna Macedonia-Upper Macedonia.

In the elections of last September 15, the coalition, for "Macedonia Together", which is composed by the Social Democratic and Liberal-Democratic Party of the Vlachs, the Democratic party of Bosnians, gained 60 seats (out of a total of 120 thus the numerical majority in the parliament). Although it can form the government with the Albanian party of Democratic Welfare (2 seats) and the Ethno-Democratic Party (1 seat), under pressure from NATO, it started negotiations with the party of Ahmeti which had gained 16 seats and had become the main party of the Albanian voters. The leader of the Social Democratic Union, Branko Evenkovski, had rejected cooperation before the election but was finally forced to change his mind as the American position is that he can not ignore the will of the majority of Albanians. Nevertheless, Ahmeti asks about important ministries, e.g., the Ministry of Defense or of the Interior. This is something that has made negotiations difficult thus far. There is in fact some doubt as to whether the new government formation will be viable.

Greece in no way wishes to win the struggle for the name Macedonia with the dissolution of the FYROM. In spite of the disagreement over the Macedonian problem, there is no doubt that the FYROM has created a Slavomacedonian identity which now is undergoing a self-searching stage, especially in terms of the definition of borders and connections with Bulgaria. During the period in which the BMRO-DMRNO governed the country (1998-2002), there has been a relative relaxation of the prejudices of the past regarding

'Bulgarism'. For instance, the songs of the Miladinovi Brothers have been published or played, and Bulgarians have developed some reconciliatory position towards the Macedonian Patriotic Organization of America. In a similar vein, the decision of the first "Committee for the Macedonian Language" of November 27, 1944 has been published as well as the reactions of Blaze Koneski, who clearly gave a political dimension to the choice of alphabet. Meanwhile, discussions have taken place as to the extent to which the Macedonian nation is actually a technical creation. Interestingly, the prime minister changed his name from Ljupco to Ljubco. But no real revival of philo-bulgarism has been observed as perhaps one could expect from Sofia, despite the cultural attack of Bulgaria (circulation of Bulgarian newspapers in Skopje, attribution of Bulgarian citizenship and passports to citizens of the FYROM, attribution of scholarships and grants for studies in Bulgaria, etc).

Evidently Bulgaria expects that because of the Albanian factor the FYROM will turn to Bulgaria and gradually Slavomacedonianism will disappear. No one can tell, however, what the ethnic choice of the Slavic population of the FYROM would be if the state were dissolved. One must not ignore Serbia, which in the case of the loss of Kosovo will not remain indifferent to the FYROM, as the insistence of the Serbian Church on recognizing the Orthodox Church on recognizing the Orthodox Church of the FYROM as autonomous not autocephalous plus last year's military agreement between Skopje and Belgrade clearly indicate. There is no doubt that for the FYROM, the axis Athens-Belgrade is functioning in a stabilizing way. The basic precondition is that Kosovo does not become independent *de jure* but rather is integrated in the Union of Serbia-Montenegro. Albanians, who constitute a specific phenomenon in the Balkans for historic reasons, must adapt to the international criteria of multiculturalism and tolerance thus surpassing the stage of the racial-patriarchal structure. It is unacceptable that Albania be interested in the fate of individuals of its own ethnicity in neighbouring countries while refusing in its own census to take into consideration the language and ethnicity and the religion of the minorities inside the country. It is understandable, however, that Albanians insisted on the recognition of the Islamic Union as equal to the Orthodox Church of the FYROM.

If the future of the Balkans belongs to the European Union, then Europe owes it to itself and future members to draft a concrete policy for the Balkan region. The EU should also undertake a more important role in the economic reconstruction of the area as modernization and economic stability undoubtedly contribute to the decrease of ethnic conflict.

NOTES

1. This article is based on the following press sources:
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2. Reported by *New York Times*, September 13, 2002

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Political Allusions in Book 22 of the Odyssey Odysseus, Pisistratus and the deployment of myth for the justification of tyranny.

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RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur s'attache à démontrer que des concepts politiques peuvent être dépistés dans des textes littéraires et notamment dans deux genres, l'épique et le tragique. Le texte exposé dans l'article ne relève ni de l'histoire ni d'une pure propagande mais présente une philosophie de la politique concernant la démocratie à Athènes au V^{ème} siècle avant Jésus Christ.

ABSTRACT

This article considers how political information can be gleaned from literary sources, notably epic and tragedy. Although not history, although manipulated as propaganda at times, the text that the author describes exemplifies how a *philosophy of politics* relative to democracy in sixth-century Athens may be discerned.

Relating 6th Century Athens to the Political Parameters of the Epics

It has been an academic tendency to associate the Homeric epics with a historically disputed social background.¹ Two mainstream theories inform this basis: the first one claims that the epics reflect a Mycenaean code of political organization and are, therefore, indicative of a pragmatic community arrangement. The other view regards the epics as a compilation of mythical facts, with little or no relevance to political structures in the semi-historical times described by their composer.² There is a functional way out of these problems. One has only to accept that the epics are indeed the compilation of different stories, *with*, nevertheless, an accretion of various historical truths. These may, however, originate from unparalleled and asynchronous

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temporal periods of the Mycenaean Era, as well as from the times usually referred to as “Dark Ages”.³

The embodiment of these stories into the temporally and culturally specific environment of classical Athens is a process that raises potentially controversial points.⁴ It is well known that the epics formed the basis of the officially constituted Athenian educational system,⁵ and most classical scholars accorded them a degree of respect bordering on awe.⁶ Many a modern scholar, though, has often wondered about the political projections of the epic narratives. It is only natural to investigate the way that a consciously political society, such as the one of classical Athens, relates to the political conveyance of those ancient poems. Literature, as a form of public and civic expression, had never been free of politics, as the case of Athens often proves. The subtle way that emotions are manipulated and ideologies are reinforced for the sake of the *polis* has been extensively researched, especially with regard to tragedy.⁷ It would be naïve, then, to presume that a state which paid so much attention to the political dimension of its public art, would neglect the political aspects of a text used in the education of its future citizens.⁸

It has been recently suggested that in the Homeric epics appear elements of democratic concepts.⁹ This sounds logical to anyone who connects Athens to the democratic constitution. However, there might be more to this case. Without underestimating these democratic traces in the epics, we should strive for a wider appreciation of the position of the epics within the contemporary historical and political framework of classical Athens.

The parameters that will inform the present research follow briefly:

- The epics are, indeed, a compilation of stories. Nevertheless, reference to historical events should be regarded as factual, especially information concerning political organization.
- The ways in which various community types are described in the epics - especially the way that different kinds of government are described - do not necessarily mirror historical facts. These descriptions should not be regarded as an attempt to chart a

political situation synchronous to the times of the composer, but as an attempt to inform a *philosophy of politics*, in general.

- The present article shall not be concerned with clarifying the pragmatic, historical parameters of the poems. Focus is placed on the political allusions of Book 22, in relation to the society responsible for the establishment of the first known written copy of the epics: this is the Athenian society, in which a moderate tyrant, Pisistratus, is trying to establish himself.
- It will be claimed that the decision to write down the epics was taken with dual criteria: undoubtedly esthetic, since it was oral tradition that preserved and established the epics in human consciousness. On the other hand, an intuitive and gifted politician like Pisistratus could not have neglected epic paradigms that might subconsciously inform political opinions. He managed to detect in them the possibility of an acceptable and subtle propaganda that would allow him the chance to justify his tyranny; even if it had been imposed in the manner that tyrannical constitutions were usually established.

It should also be remembered that the term *tyrant* had not always carried negative connotations and the first known tyrants exhibited a lot of care for the prosperity and the interests of the people.¹⁰ It is often hard to draw clear lines between different kinds of rule – a task that Aristotle himself does not seem able to solve clearly.¹¹ In book III of the *Politics*, Aristotle defines six forms of constitution, three of which are “right” (*kingship, aristocracy, polity*) and three of which are “deviations” (*tyranny, oligarchy, democracy*).¹² We already detect a political possibility here: Pisistratus, as seen by Aristotle, could have noted a latent connection of democracy to tyranny, as well.

The true meaning of rhapsodies and of the *Odyssey* becomes clearer if we accept the fact that the epics were first brought to Athens by a tyrant¹³ and that they were first recorded in the 6th century B.C. for the official celebration of the *Panathenaia*, established by Pisistratus.¹⁴ This fact is one of the reasons why it could well be true that the last couple of rhapsodies of the *Odyssey* were added at a later stage – a

subject to be addressed promptly. This hypothesis refers to an extremely important question; is there a possibility that there were additions or alterations made to the epics during the stage of their official recording during the reign of Pisistratus? The truth is that we are in no position to determine exactly the original nucleus of the two poems. The compilers of the epics probably had several versions to choose from – every oral composer would have added something of his own – so even if Pisistratus' camp did not actually add interpolations themselves, they may have chosen the versions most amenable to his purposes. Furthermore, there was presumably tremendous scope for censorship. If a passage appeared which reflected badly on Pisistratus, he could simply have it omitted. As a result, it may be just as important to look for what is missing in the epics as it is to look at what is present. More important, however, is that we are certain that altering text was indeed a known, if not common, practice in classical Athens.¹⁵ It should therefore not come as a surprise that Pisistratus' régime might have had something to do with the final shaping of the poems, which were meant to educate its future citizens. After all, Pisistratus had realized the importance and ideological power of education and he created a good name for himself by making education one of his prime tasks in the new-founded regime.¹⁶

Pisistratus and the Populist Régime

The fact that Pisistratus cared for the citizens is not necessarily proved by the longevity of his reign – albeit with intervals – but this longevity may be evidence that he was successful in placating the people and in justifying his tyranny. His tyranny really ended in 510, when the Spartans, aided by the Alcmaeonids and other Athenian exiles, removed Hippias. Pisistratus and his sons had managed to maintain their status by diminishing the powers of local aristocrats, and the period from 546 to 510 B.C. was one of stability with a developing sense of unity in Attica.¹⁷ The encouragement of civic festivals in honour of Athena and Dionysus not only offered an alternative to the faith in local *archons*, but they also redirected

attention towards festivals of the polis which were open to all Athenians. The *Panathenaia* and the *City Dionysia* were bound to evolve into powerful symbols of Athens and its people in the 5th century B.C.¹⁸

Pisistratus had to make use of peaceful means of propaganda, in order to establish himself in the public consciousness. He had attempted three times to institute a tyrannical constitution in Athens.¹⁹ So, it was obvious that he needed to find other means to make himself accepted by the people of Athens. When he tried to bring himself in (both metaphorically and literally, since he was in exile) from the periphery to the centre, he enacted a drama in which the goddess Athena in person restored him to Athens.²⁰ A beautiful girl of impressive physique was enrolled to dress up as Athena and to lead him into the city, where an astounded crowd actually believed in the epiphany and hence a divine justification for his comeback!²¹

Within a decade of the foundation of the Panathenaic Games, he had attempted two coups. The second was cemented by the political alliance with Megacles, an Athenian aristocrat, whose daughter he married. Megacles himself had envisaged “the end of the complicated faction-fighting between groups representing different geographical areas as well as different socio-economic and political interests in Attica. ... Initially, the marriage allegiance was a success, and through it, Pisistratus achieved, briefly, the second of his three tyrannies some time around the mid-550s. But it ended all too soon in tears, allegedly because Pisistratus refused to practise the sort of sexual intercourse that might lead to procreation (he already had two sons by an earlier marriage)”.²²

Pisistratus was forced into exile once more, this time for a decade. It must have been during this period that he realized the importance of symbolic and cultural means of securing himself on the political stage of Athens. Economic power was not enough and military prowess was a relative measure. Therefore, when he returned to power, he paid attention to religion (via the glorification of the *Panathenaia*), and to tragedy, as a means of educating people and informing the civic ideology.

“Less predictably, rather than simply ruling by dictatorial fiat Pisistratus chose to operate through the existing constitutional rules of Athens, that is those laid down at the beginning of the century by the moderately oligarchic reformer Solon. Of course, he was careful also to see to it that the top jobs were always held by the “right” men, that is his men”.²³ However, the people of Athens were allowed participation in the state-affairs, thus gaining political experience, and at the end of the day, the twenty-year reign of Pisistratus was recalled as an era of prosperity and political stability.²⁴ It was this kind of enlightened leadership that fits Aristotle’s description of the ruler who, “if he has been well educated by law, gives good decisions; but he has only one pair of eyes and ears, one pair of feet and hands, and it would be a paradox if he had better vision in judgment and action than many men with many pairs. Monarchical rulers, as we see even in our own times, appoint large numbers of men to be their eyes and ears, hands and feet; for such people as are friendly to themselves and to their rule, they make sharers in it.”²⁵

Deployment of Myth and Literature in Civic Propaganda: Odysseus the Tyrant.

As already mentioned, Pisistratus managed to detect the powerful effect of mythical stories in the process of shaping ideology. Therefore he provided for an official and formal context in which tragedy was developed.²⁶ Since tragedy draws extensively upon epic, it is a possibility that the reason for which Pisistratus supported these two genres was more complex than just the wish to keep people entertained: both epic and tragedy deal with stories about kings and royal courts. Both genres do not question the need of rule by exceptional people. Perhaps this is the reason for the late establishment of *theorika*, by Pericles:²⁷ During his most “democratic” constitution, Pericles felt the need to disseminate tragedy to as many people as possible, even the poorest, whereas Pisistratus was satisfied by educating politically only the ones who could afford the ticket to the theatre — the aristocrats.

It is possible that the intuitive ruler had grasped the essence of *applicatory history*, through the paradigms of which one can draw historical parallels.²⁸ Since, just like its successor, tragedy, the epic was such an important means of political education, some parts of it might possibly serve as justification of the regime. After all, the allegorical use of Homer was a common practice at least since the 5th century BC.²⁹

The *Iliad* presents us with a world in which the aristocratic, heroic ideal prevails. The heroes of the *Iliad* are the depiction of the land owning, prevailing social echelons of the archaic period, whereas the *Odyssey* shows more interest in people from the lower classes.³⁰ It seems that the political tendencies are clear-cut in the two stories; the world of the aristocracy in the *Iliad* and interest in the importance of common people in the *Odyssey*. Nevertheless, the *Odyssey* includes a particularly interesting rhapsody, book 22, which allows space for break-through approaches.

This rhapsody holds distinctive importance in both epics, as it marks the logical conclusion of the whole story.³¹ The war of Troy has ended, the hero Odysseus has left the battlefield, wandered around the world and after long sufferings now confronts the final obstacle that stands between him and the regaining of his status and identity: the threat posed by his wife's suitors.³²

A number of incidents occur in this book, which is characteristic of the *aristeia*, one man's heroic heat of arms against a series of powerful enemies. Typical elements in an Iliadic *aristeia*, for example, are: divine exhortation and inspiration of a hero, arming, enthusiasm for battle, the advance of the hero through the ranks, a number of single combats, various counter-attacks, a moment of danger or weakness (often a wounding), a grand duel, and finally victory, with ritual boasting over the dead man. The whole episode is frequently enlivened with similes (often multiple similes) and divine interventions at critical points. See, for example, Diomedes' *aristeia* beginning at the start of *Iliad* 5 and Agamemnon's at the start of *Iliad* 11.

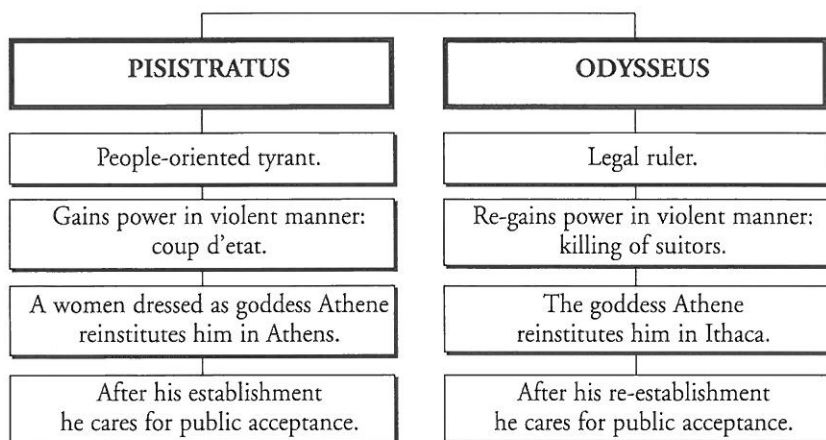
It is obvious that the conditions that apply to battle in the hall in the *Odyssey* 22 are radically different from those which apply to the battlefield. First, the arena for the conflict is the palace, not an open field, and battle is joined by subterfuge, before the opposition realizes that a battle is going to take place at all. Second, until his arrows run out (119), Odysseus is fighting exclusively with a bow, a weapon which scarcely encourages Iliadic hand-to-hand combat, and it is with this instrument that he dispatches his two deadliest rivals Antinoos (14-21) and Eurymachos (81-8) at the very start of the contest. Third, the odds are so numerically stacked against

Odysseus that before the contest even starts he has organized some help, in the shape of Telemachos, Eumaios and Philoitios. These have a part in the household, under Odysseus' leadership, and finally bring to an end the rule of the suitors in the palace – and so must, to some extent, detract from the mighty achievements of one man.³³

In these ways, the battle in the hall in the *Odyssey* cannot be said to fit the *aristeia*-structure typical in the *Iliad*.³⁴

The resemblance here of Odysseus to a classical tyrant in the mold of Pisistratus is very graphic. He is a political leader who marches against the old, established régime (the institution of the suitors). In this task he is not alone, but is assisted by loyal supporters (Telemachus, Eumaios). In analogy, Pisistratus marched against the old, decadent aristocratic régime, supported by a number of loyal followers. It should be stressed at this point, that tyranny is not a one-man régime, as opposed to a multiple democratic leadership, despite the deceitful perception created by the single-numbered essence of the noun *tyranny/tyrant*. After all, Thucydides was the first to notice that democracy was not all it was cracked up to be from the point of view of collective decisionmaking.³⁵ The following diagram shows the analogy between Pisistratus and Odysseus:

Political Analogy of Leaders:



The analogy of the situation in the *Odyssey* and that in Athens is thus based on the analogy between Odysseus and Pisistratus, both of whom fight against old, decaying aristocratic régimes. The pattern is reinforced by the analogy one could highlight between Telemachus and the sons of Pisistratus, both of whom support their father. There is also Eumaius, who could well stand for the common folk, willing to assist the rightful leader's comeback. Even Pisistratus' banishment from Athens, during which he only dreamt of his return, could be compared to Odysseus' wanderings and his burning desire to return to Ithaca.

As noted in the diagram, the first political problem that Odysseus faces after the killing of the suitors is the placation of their relatives.³⁶ The problem is resolved in the last book of the *Odyssey* by divine intervention. *Odysseus*, aided by Telemachus, is ready to fight the suitors' relatives and, in fact, he kills Eupheithes, the initiator of the attack against him.³⁷ However, Athene and Zeus intervene in time to enforce order and bring an end to the retaliations.³⁸

There are considerable problems about the authenticity of this final book.³⁹ Even if the spirit of it is not anti-Homeric, it carries a logical conclusion of a coup d'état's aftermath. Odysseus, just like Pisistratus, would have to explain his actions to a crowd of varied opinions. Eupheithes is the voice of those who condemn the violent change of the regime (*Od.* 24. 425-37) and Halithersis is the one who sees the need for the change and understands the necessity for it, even if it is brought about by violent means (*Od.* 24. 454-62). One can easily apply the voice of these characters to the Athenian people subjected to the upheaval of the political situation by Pisistratus.

The end of the *Odyssey* is a glorification of Odysseus and an affirmation of Athene's favour of him. Just as Athene assisted Pisistratus in his comeback from exile and continuously watched over the city that honored her through the *Panathenaia*, Athene of the epic promises to protect Odysseus and the people of Ithaca. One might still doubt the originality of this rhapsody, but the lesson is simple and it applies to Pisistratus' Athens too. In sum, a ruler who has the

approval of gods can exercise his power with wisdom and sincere care for the people, even if this power was gained by violent means.

Conclusion: Mythological Justification of Contemporary Political Patterns

Being a remarkably perceptive politician, Pisistratus realized the authority that literature and especially myth held. It not only preserved tradition, but also helped forge political ideologies and attitudes. Since the political change he was about to introduce had to be justified before a skeptical, not to say *hostile*, public, he needed to legitimize his position. Therefore, the trick with the girl/Athene and the aid of the epics for the justification of his actions were politically necessary. The establishment of the festival of the *Panathenaia* was indeed an act of honouring the goddess who brought him back to power. In fact, Pisistratus made this festival an occasion for the celebration of *the people*, unlike the character of other state-festivals. Even at later times, when the Parthenon was constructed, Pericles' populist policy favoured the depiction of the Panathenaic procession on the Parthenon's frieze, rather than the carving of heroic or divine figures. Thus, Athenian citizens with their sons and daughters are given the illusion of priority and importance in the state.⁴⁰

Furthermore, Pisistratus detected in the popular fiction of his times a means of justifying his rule by analogy to mythical patterns that had earned the people's approval. It has been argued that Pisistratus made conscious use of the epics, taking advantage of the political allusions of the *Odyssey*, especially through the comparison between himself and Odysseus. If we turn, yet again, to Aristotle, we could see another part of the analogy reinforced: according to Aristotle, kingship (Odysseus) and tyranny (Pisistratus) were both "rule by one man", the literal meaning of the word *monarchia*, monarchy.⁴¹

In relation to the main theme of this rhapsody the killing of the suitors by Odysseus should not be considered as the re-establishment

of the constitution of *basileia* (since Odysseus is the rightful king of Ithaca), but as a reference to the constitution of tyranny. The approach is based mainly on three points:

- First, the suitors represent the decaying aristocracy of the archaic and classical period.
- Second, the violent manner of their removal from the palace refers to the manner that tyrannical constitutions are enforced upon the political stage.
- Third, the 24th book of the *Odyssey*, in which a civil war and the final rule of Odysseus thanks to the intervention of Athena are described, remind us of the way that Pisistratus devised for his return from exile, in order to gain the rule of Athens by force.

If one sides with Page, who doubts the authenticity of this book,⁴² one would have firm ground for the hypothesis that this final rhapsody was added at a later period⁴³ – perhaps during that very period when Pisistratus needed to justify his political rule, and perhaps via a popular narrative that was turning into an educational tool. Even if Pisistratus did not deliberately manipulate the epic text for his own purposes, he may have simply populized for political reasons a story which was already current, but, at that time, just one amongst many. We may therefore owe something of the popularity of the *Odyssey* today to his political ambition.

ENDNOTES

1. Georges C. Vlachos, *Les Sociétés Politiques Homériques* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1974); here used translated in Greek by M. Apostolopoulou & D. Apostolopoulou (Athens, 1985, 2nd ed.)
2. Cf. M. I. Finley's classic, *The World of Odysseus* (London, 1977), where he proposes that the society described in the epics is essentially factual, but does not represent however the Mycenaean society or the society of the period of the polis. Instead, Finley suggests that this

society is that of a transitive period between 10th and 9th c. B.C. This is strongly questioned today, as it presupposes a distinctive break between the 10th and 9th c. B.C. and between the 8th and 7th century B.C.

3. The avoidance of a stance on the matter of the poet's uniqueness, as opposed to the theory of a poem originated by multiple contributors will be noted. For the single poet theory, see J. Russo, "Homer Against his Tradition", *Arion* 7 (1968), pp. 275-95 and J. Griffin, "The Epic Cycle and the Uniqueness of Homer", *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 17 (1977), pp. 39-53.

4. An exemplar of the school of criticism regarding the continuity between Homer's period and that of the Hellenistic age is R. Hunter, *The "Argonautica" of Apollonius: Literary Studies* (Cambridge, 1993).

5. Plut. Alc. 7; Plut. Them. 10. Cf. Aesch. 1. 9ff. For the proposition that poetry is read in the depiction on almost all red-figured vase painting of the classical period see H. R. Immerwahr, "Book rolls on Attic vases", *Classical, medieval and renaissance studies in honor of Berthold Louis Ullman* I (Rome, 1964) and "More book rolls on Attic vases", *Antike Kunst* XVI.2 (1973), pp. 143-7. See also, F. D. Harvey, "Greeks and Romans learn to write", *Communication arts in the ancient world* (New York, 1978), pp. 63-78. The same is suggested by A. A. Long in P. Easterling & B. M. W. Knox (edd.) *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*. I: Greek Literature (Cambridge, 1985), p. 705.

6. Cf. F. Solmsen, "Leisure and play in Aristotle's ideal state", *Rheinisches Museum* 107 (1964), pp. 193-220; C. Lord, *Education and Culture in the Political Thought of Aristotle* (Ithaca & London, 1982).

7. In general, see C. Meier, *The Political Art of Greek Tragedy* (Munich, 1988), transl. by A. Webber (Cambridge, 1993); P. J. Euben, *Greek Tragedy and Political Theory* (Berkeley, 1986); W. M. Calder, "Sophokles' political tragedy, Antigone", *Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies*, Vol. 9 (1968), pp. 389-407; A. J. Podlecki, *The Political Background of Aeschylean Tragedy* (Michigan, 1966).

8. See, F. A. G. Beck, *Album of Greek Education* (Sydney, 1975).

9. G. Rousis, *Ancient Democracy. Forever Young* (ed. Govosti, Athens, 1999), pp. 44-48. A similar opinion was presented recently by A. Kontos during the 16th Seminar of Homeric and Odysseian Literature, held at Ithaca (30th August – 3rd September, 2001).

10. Arist. *Pol.* 1305a22; Thuc. p. 13.

11. In *Pol.* III, vii, Aristotle discusses four types of limited monarchy (the Spartan, the non-Greek, *aismneteia*, and the heroic) in the light of four main criteria: (a) whether they are subject to law, (b) whether the monarch's tenure is for life or for a set term, (c) whether they are elective, (d) whether they are over willing subjects. Confusingly, Aristotle calls all these four monarchies "kingships", but admits that two are in effect tyrannies.

12. Arist. *Pol.* 1284b35-1285b33.

13. This tyrant was Hipparchus. Cf. Pl. *Hipparch.* 228 B.

13. Cicer. *De Orator.* III, 137.

14. Cf. the incident with Alcibiades, who struck a teacher because he did not have a copy of the epics. To another teacher who claimed that he had a copy of the texts "corrected by himself", he answered that, if he had the ability to edit Homer, he should not be teaching children, but young men (Plut. *lc.* 7). Also, Plutarch informs us that Aristotle had amended or corrected a text of the *Iliad*, in order to use it as a textbook for Alexander's education (Plut. *Al.* 8).

15. It is argued that, although we cannot speak for an education scheme applying to all castes, elementary lessons in reading and writing (with the use of Homeric texts) applied to all during the last decades of the fifth c. B.C. Cf. F. D. Harvey, "The use of written documents in the business life of classical Athens", *Pegasus* 2 (1964), pp. 4-14; "Literacy in Athenian Democracy", R. E. G. 79 (1966), pp. 585-635. Some scholars even place the beginning of formal education earlier than the beginning of the 5th c. B.C. Cf. W. V. Harris, *Ancient*

Literacy (Cambridge, Mas.: H. U. P., 1989), p. 57; M. A. Manacorda in M. Vegetti (ed.), *Oralità, scrittura, spettacolo* (Turin: Boringhieri, 1983), pp. 190-1.

16. R. Sinclair, *Democracy and Participation in Athens* (Cambridge, C.U.P., 1988), ch. 1. See also, W. G. Forrest, *The Emergence of Greek Democracy (The character of Greek politics, 800-400 BC)* [Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 1966], ch. 7.

17. A. Andrewes, *The Greek Tyrants* (London, 1967), pp. 107-15; H. W. Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers* (Oxford, 1933), pp. 34-45, 125-35.

18. He was exiled two years after the battle of Marathon due to the suspicion he caused, as he had become tyrant while leader of the democrats and a general. Cf. Arist. *Pol.* XXII, 3.

19. Detailed account in Herodot. 1. 60.

20. This "justification" is often questioned: "In spite of the confidence with which mythical precedents were often invoked, seeing one thing or person "as" another was far from being a straightforward matter; especially when that other belonged to the world of mythology. When a link is inserted with the world of gods and heroes, authority, albeit limited and potentially questionable authority is conferred. But the nature of the paradigmatic authority is complex": R. G. A. Buxton, *Imaginary Greece* (Cambridge: C. U. P., 1994), pp. 196-7.

21. P. Cartledge, "Power and the State", in P. Cartledge (ed.), *Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 144.

22. P. Cartledge, "Power and the State", p. 145.

23. Cf. W. G. Forrest, *The Emergence of Greek Democracy*, p. 242; P. Cartledge, "Power and the State", p. 145.

24. Arist. *Pol.* III, xvi 1287b25.

25. Around 536-533, Thespis undertook the first production of a Tragedy for the festival of *City Dionysia*, established by Pisistratus. Cf. Par. Marble I. G. XII, 5, 1, 444. For the introduction and

establishment of Dionysus' cult by Pisistratus, cf. J. de Romilly, *La Tragédie Grecque* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1970), pp. 13-22.

26. Cf. D. Kagan, *Pericles of Athens and the Birth of Democracy* (London, 1990).

27. Cf. A. Platias, *International Relations and Strategy in Thucydides* (Athens, 1999) p. 18.

28. B. M. W. Knox, "Books and readers in the Greek world", in P. Easterling & B. M. W. Knox (edd.) *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature. I: Greek Literature* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 65.

29. E. Degani, "Ancient Greek Literature until 300 B.C.", in H. G. Nesselrath (ed.) *Einleitung in die Griechische Philologie*, Vol. I (B. G. Teubner Stuttgart und Leipzig, 1997), transl. in Greek, I. Daniel & A. Rengakos (edd.), (Papadimas, Athens, 2001), 178-9.

30. The *Odyssey*, overshadowed by the prophecy of Teiresias, never really ends. It closes with Odysseus at home, but fated to wander still, and at last to meet death from the sea, that shifting and chaotic substratum of boundless possibility. Indeed, Odysseus is not home to stay, and judging by his sea-borne death; neither is the anger of Poseidon, the god and lord of the sea, to be placated. See, H. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), p. 290.

31. An old, yet intuitive account of the episode in T. W. Allen, "The Theme of the Suitors in the *Odyssey*", *TAPAA* 70 (1939), pp. 104-124, esp. p. 260.

32. P. Jones, *Homer's Odyssey. A Companion to the English Translation of Richmond Lattimore* (Bristol Classical Press, 1988), p. 203.

33. Yet, there are distinctive *aristeia* elements present. For example, divine inspiration has spurred Odysseus on ever since Book 13, and cf. 20.32-53, 22.233-5. There is an arming scene (108-25). Enthusiasm for battle is shown at 203-4. At 233-5, Athene urges

Odysseus to follow her forward into the attack, after which a number of mass and individual combats are joined, with counter-attacks from the suitors (241-96). Moments of weakness and slight wounding occur at 147-8, 208-9, 277-81, and while there is no single, climactic grand duel (the two main suitors have been killed with the bow at the start of the contest), there is the scene of triumph at the end (381-417), but without any ritual cries of triumph. The whole is enlivened with runs of similes (299-309, 381-9, 401-6) and divine interventions (205-40, 356, 273, 297-8), typical in the *Iliad*. So there is much in Book 22 to remind us of a hero's triumphant feat of arms, suitably modified to the special circumstances of this battle in the palace (information cited here is from P. Jones, loc. cit., p. 203).

34. In fact, Thucydides claims that the constitution of Athens was only a nominal democracy, gradually becoming a form of power exercised by the leading citizen, Pericles. Cf. Thuc. II, 65, 8-10.

35. Hom. *Od.* 23. 360-4.

36. Hom. *Od.* 24. 520-4.

37. Hom. *Od.* 24. 527 ff.

38. P. Jones, *Homer's Odyssey*, pp. 216-8. Cf. H. Clarke, *The Art of the Odyssey* (repr. Bristol, 1989). D. L. Page, *The Homeric Odyssey* (Oxford, 1955).

39. E. Simon, *Festivals of Attica* (Madison, Wisconsin: University Press, 1983), pp. 55-72.

40. Arist. *Pol.* 1284b35 ff.

41. D. L. Page, *The Homeric Odyssey*, pp. 101-36.

42. Cf. P. Jones, *Homer's Odyssey*, p. 215 (notes on Hom. *Od.* 23. 296).

Doubly Outsiders: Pre-war Greek-Australian Migrants and their Socialist Ideals

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RÉSUMÉ

Cet article nous plonge dans l'univers des Grecs immigrés en Australie dans les années trente et quarante. L'auteur expose comment l'engagement de certains Grecs dans le Parti communiste les a conduit à définir leur identité de façon très spécifique. Cette étude a été rédigée à partir d'une série d'entretiens, qui permettent d'entendre la voix de ces immigrés fort courageux.

ABSTRACT

This text invites us into the world of Greek immigrants to Australia in the thirties and forties. The author describes how their political commitment to the Communist party in particular led them to define their identity quite differently. The authors quote interviews with witnesses or participants so that we hear the voices of these brave immigrants.

Introduction

In the 1930s and 1940s Greek-Australian migrants with socialist ideals were positioned as dual outsiders. They were excluded not only from the broader Australian society but also from their own ethnic communities.

Australia's Greek communities had previously been established largely through the initiatives of the shop-owning classes or sections whose members forcefully advocated to their compatriots' conformity to a foreigner discourse. According to this discourse it was the place of the Greek-Australian migrant to work hard and remain law abiding without ever making any social and political demands on the system.

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In this paper we explore attempts by Greek-Australia radicals to overcome their dual outsider status through a process in which we construct the Greek communities of Melbourne and Sydney as political entities and link them to the Australian left and labour movements of the time. The account we offer draws on the archives of the Democritus League, Australia's first Greek-Australian workers' league, and the recollections of six Greek-Australians who migrated to Australia as young men during the 1920s and early 1930s. Our informants' stories, along with that of Andreas Raftopoulos, whose efforts to unionize Australia's Greek café workers ultimately resulted in his suicide, show how the outsider status of these migrants gave rise to a conceptual opening for the construction of an Australian identity that could be positively related to their Greekness. We argue that this opening was grounded in the idea that Australian citizenship could be detached from its exclusive ties to British nationhood.

Let us introduce our discussion with a quotation from the first article of the Constitution of a national confederation that was formed in Sydney in 1949.

We, the representatives of various Greek organizations - who strongly believe in the democratic ideals; and in the fundamental principle that the ethical, spiritual and financial advancement and success of individuals can only be achieved with the freedom guaranteed to them by a democratic state; and that for this reason every free person has the duty to defend above all the institution of democracy with every legal means available - at a meeting on the 28th and 29th October, 1949, have formed the Confederation of Greek Organizations in Australia (Democritus Archives, emphasis added).

The Confederation was formed as a means of co-coordinating and facilitating a range of Greek-Australian community organization activities Australia-wide. We will say more about this event below. At this point, the important thing to note is that the founders of this organization did not speak about Australian citizenship rights; instead, they spoke as Australian citizens, despite the fact that many of them would not have been granted this formal status. Indeed, in their

political practice they foresaw by 50 years what the current Australian Government's New Agenda for Multicultural Australia (December 1999) formulates as the essence of official policy on Australian multiculturalism, namely that it accepts and respects the right of all Australians to express and share their individual cultural heritage within an overriding commitment to ... Australian democracy (p. 6, emphasis added).

Who were these visionaries? What were the social and cultural conditions in which they came to formulate their ideas about Australian social and political life and what was the relationship between these ideas and their understanding of the role of their ethnicity? What did it mean for them publicly to articulate their commitment to Australian democracy above all else? Finally, in what ways did their position help to shape the direction of involvement by later post-war Greek-Australians in a form of political practice that constructed their identity as 'Australian citizens-of-Greek-origin'?

Greek Migrants' Australian Identities

Our answers to these and some related questions take us back to the 1920s and 30s when Greek chain migration to Australia had already produced established Greek communities in the major Australian cities. According to Michael Tsounis' extensive historical study of the period "the tendency in each capital was to fashion a typically Greek social and cultural environment which acted to perpetuate the identity of Greeks and maintain a link with their country of birth" (1971, p.115). The first organized moves in this direction came with the formation of the Greek Orthodox Communities (GOCs) in each city, beginning with Melbourne in 1897 and followed by Sydney in 1898. Initially these organizations focused on establishing churches but they went on rather quickly to extend their programs of activity to include social events, celebrations of Greek national anniversaries, charity work, support for the community's unemployed and for Greek national causes (Tsounis, 1971, p. 90; p. 97). Other ethnic

organizations, in the form of both pan-Hellenic and region-based fraternities, and institutions, such as the press and the Greek Church, were being established throughout the 1920s and 1930s. (Tsounis, 1971, p. 65; pp. 130-132).

The GOCs were formally constituted as democratic organizations that were run by leaders elected regularly from the membership base that was open to all Greek migrant men. In practice, however,

as permanent settlers in urban centres, Greek shopkeepers played the most important role in the affairs of communities assuring the continuing existence of Greek immigrant organizations, supplying leadership for these and determining many of their activities and policies (Tsounis, 1971, p. 205).

Furthermore, given that the economic activity of pre-war Greeks was concentrated in the catering trade, Tsounis maintains that from very early on 'the ideal ardently pursued was to become a shop-owner, *katastematarchis*,' so much so that large numbers of Greek migrants 'served their apprenticeship as shop assistants and kitchen hands' (1971, p. 57). Work conditions and financial insecurity afforded relatively limited opportunities to the vast majority of pre-war Greek migrants for pursuing contacts outside their communities. But even those from the shop owning sections who, having established themselves financially now devoted time to their social advancement, were forced to restrict their activities to inward oriented Greek community affairs. As a result of the wider xenophobic climate amongst Anglophone Australians, Greek migrants were defined by a foreigner identity:

To the [Australian] people, we are above all a foreign group. They care little about whether we have our citizenship papers. All they want from us is that we should behave as befits foreigners and guests: obey the laws and attend to our business (*Hellenic Herald*, editorial 12/2/1931, p. 1).

Based on an analysis of conservative Greek press editorials from 1926 to 1935, Christina Holbraad maintains that:

Greeks at this time saw their ethnicity as the characteristic which defined their identity in the society and which determined the relationship of the individual to others. For the individual the most significant distinction in his social world was that between Australians and Greeks. Relations with Australians were seen exclusively in terms of unequal power; and this power inequality was perceived as absolute, vast and static. The immigrants' sense of powerlessness involved the belief that Greeks, as individuals and as a collectivity, were necessarily dependent, inadequate, unprotected and dispensable to the host society. A further and most important component of the sense of powerlessness was the belief that the foreigner identity precluded common interest or affinity across the ethnic boundary. Greeks could not draw on anyone in Australian society for help in achieving objectives (1977, p.167).³

To be sure, Holbraad's sources offer us a clear sense of the ways in which ethnicity, in this case Greekness, was lived as marking a rigid boundary between this group and Anglophone Australians. This was not surprising given that throughout this period of our social history, both formally and in public and political practice, Australian citizenship was conflated with British nationhood.⁴ So, from this perspective, to be a Greek migrant was most certainly to be an outsider.

Notwithstanding this, the Democritus League records and the testimonies of our informants serve to provide a more complex picture of the positions taken up by pre-war Greek migrants and, indeed, of the role of Greek radicals in the construction of an alternative understanding of the relationship between ethnicity and Australian citizenship that was already in the making and served to challenge their outsider status. These activists first came into contact with left ideas soon after arriving in Australia during the 1920s and 1930s. They all became members of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) most of them having joined after experiencing the great hardships associated with the lead up to, and period of, the 1930 Depression. Indeed, they all attribute their radicalization to their experiences of economic hardship, though their ethnicity would, no doubt, have contributed the specific manner and intensity of their exposure.⁵

Unlike many in the Greek community at the time, the Depression communists⁶ placed tremendous emphasis on self-education. This took the forms of listening to the Anglophone speakers at the Domain and Yarra Bank on Sunday afternoons and studying Australian history. It did not take them long to identify closely with the Australian people. They came to see themselves as sharing in an Australian tradition of struggles for survival and advancement that was not too different from their familiar Greek heritage.

Their insistence on self-education enabled the Depression communists to construct their identity as Australians. Jim Mitsopoulos explained that

We did that [that is, organize as Greek left] in association and as a branch of the Australian left movement. ... From the beginning the [Greek] Left movement was very closely associated with the Australian left movement (Interviewed by Stelios Kourbetis, 1987).

Not only did our informants typically refer to themselves as 'we Australians', but they also actively constructed a self-definition that went beyond divisions based on ethnicity. Another of their comrades, Alekos Doukas, sums up the ideals in which this self-definition was grounded. Writing of the Australian working people's solidarity activities, such as rallying support for the families of striking workers, he noted:

These anonymous soldiers ... don't have their own, separate homeland. Nor their own separate language. The whole earth is their homeland; peoples' solidarity is their common language. (Stin Pali, Sta Niata, (For Struggle, For Youth, 1953, p. 341, our translation)

As we will see below, their ethnicity certainly served as a source of meanings and values that could be invoked in the Depression communists' efforts to define their identity as a collectivity within Australian society. But Greekness was by no means the basis for positioning themselves alongside their compatriots as foreigners. Instead, not only did they see themselves as Australian communists but their 'Australianness' was mediated by their discourse of solidarity.

Within this discourse their socialist ideal of internationalism played a unifying role. Through it they were able to take on convictions and attitudes to life that they encountered amongst other Australians irrespective of different national origins. The commitment to bringing about democracy and social equality, the maintenance of a firm stand against racism and the struggle for world peace all extended beyond national origins or ethnic ties.

Their commitments drew our informants into struggles that were taking place within the wider Australian labour movement. The Depression communists were active in the campaigns advanced by their anglophone comrades. For example, they were active in the so-called 'fraternal organizations'. As Alexander puts it,

there were more fraternal than your two hand fingers. There was the International Labor Defence, it was the Workers' International Relief, it was the Friends of the Soviet Union, the Militant Minority Movement. There were more bloody organizations than I can think of. I had to support them, you see (Interviewed by Stelios Kourbetis, 1987).

According to Peter Stevens,

we were selling the [CPA paper] Tribune, books. We were struggling every day (Interviewed by Stelios Kourbetis, 1987).

But they also worked hard to unionize Greek migrant workers who, as we indicated above, were largely to be found in the catering trade and they played a leadership role in co-operative initiatives such as the Australian Fishmongers' Association. They overcame the limits of an exclusive association with a migrant minority's natural language and customs by positioning themselves within the framework of the abovementioned discourse of solidarity. This discourse enabled them to see themselves as Australian in virtue of their identification with the life struggles of the Australian people.

Accommodating Ethnicity

Even so, this overcoming was not itself achieved at the cost of a rejection or undervaluation of the ongoing importance of their Greek ties and origins. On the contrary, while being active Communist Party of Australia (CPA) members at the margins of Australian society, by the mid-1930s they also succeeded in adding a new dimension to their understanding of their role within the Greek communities. Previously, they would meet, formally or informally, to co-ordinate their political activities as CPA members. In 1935, however, in line with the CPA's call to members to become active in so called mass organizations, the Melbourne based Depression communists were amongst a group of 24 progressives who succeeded in forming the first Greek-Australian workers' league in Melbourne. There were similar moves in Sydney that ultimately resulted in the formation of the Greek ATLAS League in 1939. In Adelaide, the foundation members of the Panhellenic Union drew upon a copy of the Democritus League Constitution to guide them in forming their own organization in 1946. Until then, Greek communists living in South Australia joined the Democritus League and co-coordinated their community-oriented political activities through correspondence with Melbourne based members from whom they also obtained resources from time to time. For present purposes we focus on the Melbourne-based organization.

According to its Constitution, the founders of Democritus, the 'Greek Workers' Mutual Aid, Cultural and Educational League', aimed "to raise members class consciousness ... facilitate their intellectual development' and grant them 'all possible support and help" (Article 2, Constitution, Democritus Archives). From the outset, the emphasis was on the democratic participation of all members in programs of activity and, unlike other Greek community organizations of the time, membership was open to both men and women of Greek origin.

It is worth noting here that the preservation of Greek culture was never represented as a central aim of the organization. From the very

beginning the League's program of activities sought explicitly to organize workers in the interests of the Australian labor movement. Consequently, a significant amount of voluntary work went into the organization of lectures, production and distribution of a bulletin and holding of social gatherings that combined fundraising for various causes. One of the League's first actions was to pledge moral and financial support to striking Australian maritime workers.

Still, an important part of the League's early program supported Greek community efforts to promote Greek culture in the Australian context. As its first major community event the League organized a fundraiser for Melbourne's Greek school. It also enthusiastically accepted invitations from the President of the Greek Orthodox Communities (GOC) and the Greek Church Committee to join in their respective fundraisers for the local hospital and church. This positive response to community needs in relation to three of its most important institutions and facilities represents the League's first attempts to insert itself into community affairs and to define its mass character. Indeed, it was high on the agenda of the League's first elected executive committee both to promote the organization to the Greeks of Melbourne and to initiate cooperative activity with other Greek organizations.

Ethnic Community and Australian Society

The League's attention to 'ethnic concerns' can be read as a way of guarding against political isolation from the mass of Greek migrants in the light of the likelihood of conservative attacks on them as 'un-Greek', a charge that was routinely made in Greece against the Left. Nevertheless, this attention to ethnic issues and the Greek community was not merely instrumental or strategic. Through their actions, League members took a decisive step in the direction of what would prove to be a historical redefinition of the relationship between the insular Greek community and the wider Australian society. In forming the first Greek-Australian workers' league the members were

responsible for socially instituting a new understanding of the connection between Greek ethnicity and Australianness.

Previously the forms of collective organization available to Greek migrants *as Greeks* were premised on an understanding of Greekness as marking separation; this difference was constructed by reference to the mutually exclusive categories of Greekness and Australianness. So, for example, the GOCs, understood Greekness in terms of the traditional valuing of the Greek language, religion and homeland and differed from Greek Church authorities only in that their decisionmaking structure was democratic rather than hierarchical. Both these institutions sought to preserve Hellenicity which they understood as a fixed and pre-given substance. They treated it as surrounded by another foreign substance, Australianness, that was only ever confronted as a potential or actual source of attack on Greekness. The conservatives within the GOC promoted this understanding of the relationship of ethnicity to Australianness as did the Greek press by regularly reminding Greeks that...

The Greek does not forget the traditions of his fathers. He does not forget his language. He never loses his orthodox ethos. Let them call him dago, as they will, the Greek will stay Greek in his soul and mind to his dying day (Hellenic Herald, editorial, 3/3/26, p. 3, cited in Holbraad, 1977, p.147)

In contrast, Democritus League members could at once embrace the Australian labour movement as their own site of struggle and raise funds for the community's Greek school and church because they acted within a framework that enabled them to see the ethnic practices of Greek language learning and spiritual expression as being amongst the particular and specific ways in which ethnicity marks universal values, in this case the values of human intellectual and spiritual advancement. For them, ethnicity was dynamically constructed rather than set out statically marking and preserving boundaries with everything Australian.

As such, their ethnicity offered them opportunities to explore its potential for articulating the universal values through which they could also identify themselves as Australian. Characteristically, in an editorial that sought to introduce their *Bulletin* to readers they drew upon the long tradition of Greek philosophy and on the history of Greek liberation struggles to point out to the readership the links between their twin duty to oppose the German occupation of Greece and to create 'a new life and liberty in Australia' (*Democratic Bulletin*, 1943, Democritus Archives).

Democritus 'call for' the creation of a new life and liberty in Australia marks the first occasion on which a Greek migrant organization advanced this kind of ideal. The Leagues' members were well aware of the radical nature of their claim, not only because migrants were excluded from mainstream Australian society, but also because, as explained earlier, Greek migrants typically defined themselves in insular and ethnocentric terms. They were so convinced that it was the right time for them to present themselves as an integral part of Australian society that at their General Meeting, in July, 1943, they decided to change their emblem that consisted of 'two hands that greet each other as a symbol of solidarity' (Democritus Minutes Book, 1943). This was replaced with interwoven Greek and Australian symbols. Article 10 of their revised Constitution, reads:

The League seal is composed of the Greek Flag in a Circle with the torch of Education upon which the Southern Cross is superimposed, and the League's name around it in Greek and English (Democritus Archives).

One of the founders of the League, Vasili Stefanou, recalled that if you looked at the emblem of the Democritus, you would see that it is a round thing with the Greek flag and the name of the organization around it. If you noticed more carefully you saw that on the Greek flag is the Southern Cross to bring about the relationship of the Greeks with the Australians. Most of the Greeks only wanted the Greek flag. So we said, 'Not on your bloody life. You've got to have something about Australia' (Interviewed by Zara Sarandis, 1986).

In other words, they took their Australian identity to incorporate, rather than deny, their Greek heritage. One consequence of their stance was the rise of what was to become a long-standing conflict between left and right forces within the community. Conservative Greek migrants had always been reluctant to show any critical stance to the representatives of the Metaxas régime in Australia and this had caused some friction from as early as 1939 when Democritus League members succeeded in calling upon attendants to disrupt a public meeting at which the Greek representative of Metaxas was due to speak. The reaction of the GOC was to attempt to ostracize the Democritus League. It refused to attend any community gathering at which the League was also represented in the hope of pressuring other community organizations to distance themselves from co-operative activities with the League.

These kinds of tensions between the left and right were not restricted to Melbourne. In Sydney, they resulted in Andreas Raftopoulos' suicide in 1941. Raftopoulos, who had been married with two children, had left his family behind in Greece to become one of the many young migrant men who found work as a kitchen hand in Sydney's Greek restaurants and cafés. However, Andreas was also an intense person with a heightened sense of social responsibility and this led him to join the Communist Party of Australia. He had been putting in long hard hours seven days a week at his brother-in-law's restaurant on Oxford Street in Sydney when the Party decided that the Greek comrades should attempt to unionize the café workers. After some discussion with his Greek comrades Raftopoulos left his job to become an organizer with the Restaurant Employees Union, making him this country's first union organizer of Greek origin.⁸

Those who knew Raftopoulos were under no illusions as to the cause of his suicide. According to Alekos Doukas' portrayal of events in *Kato Apo Xenous Ouranous* (Under Foreign Skies, our translation), a novel based on the author's real-life experiences of pre-war Australia:

[H]is [Raftopoulos'] 'compatriots' pushed him over the edge. They would lay complaints with the authorities branding him a terrorist and

an anarchist. On his way home every night he would be accompanied by a couple of shadows. They never approached him, they would not speak to him, they only followed him. His room would always be disturbed; his bags opened and his belongings scattered around yet nothing was ever taken. They wanted to shatter his nerves and they succeeded. On Judgement Day the blood of this unfortunate man, still in the prime of his youth, will weigh heavily against those responsible (1963, p. 252).

Dimitris Kalomiris, another of Raftopoulos' comrades, confirms that Raftopoulos had fallen victim to a concerted effort to rid the community of left activists. Kalomiris recalls that

when word of Raftopoulos' suicide got out we [left activists] panicked whereas the community establishment celebrated his death as a moment of success in its war against the progressive movement. Indeed, as the news spread throughout the community the threats we had been receiving for some time increased: it would be our turn soon; we would be imprisoned, killed, exiled and the like (Chronico, 10, p.15).

Throughout the 1940s, conservatives within the community tried to construct as un-Greek all League initiatives. In this way they constructed a dual outsider status for their opponents. But the conservative community leaders also sought to be seen as acting in accordance with the image of Greek migrants that they believed the Australian authorities preferred. This explains why the conservatives within the community often sought the support of the Australian authorities in their attacks upon the left.⁹ These actions represented attempts to root out troublemakers who behaved in an un-Australian way. Their strategy was to create an image of the Greek left that represented them as, at one and the same time, less than Greek and less than Australian.

Despite this atmosphere of conflict and all efforts to restrict Greek activists to the margins of the Greek communities in both Melbourne and Sydney, the response of the workers' leagues to international events resulted in their becoming a major political force by the mid-1940s. During this period the Democritus League membership shot

up to 250 and repeated new membership drives setting targets for 150 new members came to be considered entirely realistic in this period. Wide respect and mass support was gained, not only because the workers' Leagues led community campaigns in support of the Australian war effort, but also because they took a strong stand against British intervention in the immediate post-war conflict between Greece's opposed political forces that resulted in civil war. (Democritus Minutes Book, 1943-46)

Throughout the 1940s, League members put a lot of time and effort into strengthening ties, not only with other Greek community organizations, but also with other migrant groups and with progressive and democratic organizations including trade unions, the CPA and the Australian Labor Party. These efforts constituted an on-going struggle to transform the Greek community from an inward looking, isolated group to a political entity that could ultimately function as an integral part of Australian social and political life.

The Confederation of Greek Organizations

It was in this climate that the Confederation of Greek Organizations was formed in 1949. As indicated at the outset, the Confederation representatives chose to speak as Australian citizens but migrants' citizenship status was not itself an issue at the conference. Instead, the meeting adopted aims addressed to the social conditions of the time, seeking

- to support world peace and a return of peace to Greece;
- to co-ordinate member organizations' efforts to promote humanitarian relief to the victims of the Greek civil war;
- to co-ordinate member organizations' efforts to defend the democratic ideals and the state of democracy in Australia;
- to struggle against anti-foreigner feeling and to cultivate friendly relations with Australian democratic organizations;

- to contribute to the organization of Greek life in Australia in the areas of community politics, educational and cultural developments;
- to provide support to new Greek migrants and
- to assist in their free absorption into the Australian people.

These aims developed out of a year-long series of meetings held around the country. It is worth noting also that the conference participants had already claimed for Greek migrants the identity of 'citizens' and, indeed, of 'Greek-Australians' at least from as early as 1944 with the distribution of the June edition of the *Democratic Bulletin* (Democritus Archives). Incidentally, in the same edition an article on racism in Australia offers an early rendition of the principle of multiculturalism. By introducing the idea of 'bringing together all nationalities ... for the pleasure and benefit of all' the article effectively reduces the dominant culture to one amongst many.

Against this background and judging from the choice of Confederation aims it is probably fair to speculate that the Confederation founders did not address migrants' formal citizenship status because they placed their emphasis on the work that needed to be done to transform and accommodate Australian conditions to their own, already existing concept of active Greek-Australian citizenship. Even when they enjoyed formal citizenship status, it was not possible for Greek migrants to participate in Australian political life as equal citizens in the absence of an effective separation of Australian citizenship from British nationhood. The first challenge to the conflation of these two ideas arose with the Conference participants' adoption of the identity of Australian-citizen-of-Greek-origin. In this way the 1949 conference also marks the beginning of a 20-year struggle by Greek-Australian activists to translate into concrete political practice their demand for the separation of Australian citizenship from British nationhood.

NOTES

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented to 'Traditions and Transitions: 13th Congress of the International Society for Folk Narrative', Melbourne, 2001. The authors conducted the research for this paper in their capacity as staff members of the University of Adelaide pursuant to an ARC grant administered by the Department of Social Inquiry, Women's Studies, Labour Studies. We would also like to thank all the contributors to our research and especially the members of the Democritus League and the Atlas League for allowing us access to the organizations' archives.
2. Tsounis, 1971, p. 56; p. 205. Indeed, by 1947 this trade occupied 71% of Greek migrants. See Tsounis 1971, p. 56; p. 205.
3. Later researchers have also argued that it was, indeed, in the class interests of the shop-owning classes to perpetuate this stranger mentality amongst their work force. See, for example, Kakakios and van der Velden, 1984.
4. Davidson, 1997.
5. Stelios Kourbetis argues that ethnicity based concerns were at the heart of the radicalization process for these 1920s and 1930s Greek communists, despite their own claims to the contrary. As evidence he cites editorials of the first left leaning newspaper, *The Australian-Greek*. As further evidence he points to (1) their concern to establish Greek workers' leagues; (2) the naming of the leagues after Greek philosophers and mythological figures; and (3) the Democritus league's support for the Melbourne community's Greek school (Kourbetis, 1990, pp. 58-61). However, all these events took place well after the people in question had become active members of the CPA.
6. We have borrowed this phrase from MacIntyre, 1998.
7. For a comprehensive history of the CPA in this period see MacIntyre, 1998.

8. Editorial interview with George Kalomeris, *Chronico*, 10, pp. 10-15.

9. For a depiction of these attacks, see Doukas, 1963, p. 253.

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Chronologie - Chypre

1^{er} avril 2002 - 31 octobre 2002

3 avril : Le Premier ministre Costas Simitis déclare que la présidence grecque au premier semestre 2003 sera « la présidence de l'aboutissement réussi de notre stratégie nationale pour l'adhésion historique de Chypre »

10 mai : Transfert à Chypre de 13 Palestiniens bannis d'Israel. Le 22 mai 12 d'entre eux quitteront l'île à destination de différents pays européens d'accueil, le 13ème reste à Chypre

22 juin : Le Conseil européen de Séville confirme le calendrier de l'élargissement et exprime son soutien aux pourparlers sur le problème de Chypre.

2 juillet : Le Président Cléridès et le chef de la communauté chypriote turque R. Denktash achèvent le quatrième tour des pourparlers directs sur le problème politique de Chypre

23 juillet : Nouvelle rencontre Cléridès - Denktash en présence d'Alvaro de Soto, représentant spécial du Secrétaire général de l'ONU

20 août : Le représentant à Genève de Chypre demande l'intervention du haut commissariat aux droits de l'homme et du Président de la commission des droits de l'homme des Nations Unies pour obtenir la libération de deux journalistes chypriotes turcs, après leur condamnation par les autorités de la zone occupée.

6 septembre : Rencontre Cléridès- Denktash à Paris en présence du Secrétaire général de l'ONU, Kofi Annan

3 octobre : Rencontre à Athènes des ministres de la défense nationale de Chypre et de Grèce dans le cadre de la coopération militaire bilatérale entre les deux pays

9 octobre : La Commission de Bruxelles a officiellement donné son feu vert à l'entrée dans l'Union européenne de dix nouveaux Etats dont la République de Chypre

Chronologie - Grèce

1^{er} avril 2002 - 31 octobre 2002

13 avril : Le Gouverneur de la Banque de Grèce, Lucas Papademos, est choisi comme nouveau Vice Président de la Banque centrale européenne

24 mai : La Grèce a levé l'état de mobilisation générale en vigueur depuis l'invasion de Chypre en 1974 par l'armée turque

11 juin : Le maire d'Athènes Dimitri Avramopoulos annonce la mise en sommeil de son parti le KEP (centre droit créé en décembre 2000)

12 juin : Début d'une grève de 48 heures des employés de banque pour défendre leur régime de retraite

27 juin : Le gouvernement décide de renvoyer 3000 clandestins venus au cours des semaines précédentes par voie terrestre en provenance de Turquie

4 juillet : Première arrestation depuis 27 ans d'un membre du mouvement terroriste « 17 novembre »

5 juillet : Conférence du Pasok à Athènes. Costas Simitis affirme qu'il conduira son parti lors des prochaines élections législatives prévues au plus tard au printemps 2004

16 août : Accord de coopération entre la Grèce et l'Albanie pour la période 2002-2006. Athènes accordera une aide de 50 millions d'euros à Tirana.

2 septembre : Le Président de la République déclare à Thessalonique que l'Allemagne doit indemniser les victimes des crimes nazis commis en Grèce pendant l'occupation.

10 octobre : Le ministre des affaires étrangères G. Papandréou souhaite qu'un message positif soit envoyé aux Turcs lors du sommet européen de Copenhague de décembre. Ce message pourrait être l'annonce d'une date d'ouverture des discussions d'adhésion de la Turquie

13 et 20 octobre : élections municipales et départementales. Nombreux succès de la Nouvelle Démocratie avec Dora Bakoyannis élue maire d'Athènes avec 60% des voix . Mais bonne résistance du Pasok, qui remporte avec Phophi Yennimata la super – préfecture d'Athènes le Pirée

Recensions / Book Reviews

Leonidas T. Chrysanthopoulos, *Caucasus Chronicles: Nation-building and Diplomacy in Armenia, 1993-1994*, Princeton and London: Gomidas Institute Books, 2002, 180 pages.

It is evident that the collapse and dissolution of the USSR had not been without dire consequences — political, economic, social and military — for the constituent Soviet Socialist Republics which, more or less suddenly, had become independent states and, obviously, most of them had been caught completely unprepared for such an eventuality in the early 90s. Civil or inter-state wars, for either territorial or ideological reasons — an almost constant consequence in any effort of State-building — enhanced and aggravated those already grave problems that followed most, if not all, the newly independent states.

One of those former members of the Soviet Union was the Armenian SSR, which, after a referendum two days earlier, declared independence on September 23, 1991. A year later, in September 1992, the Greek government, which had recognized the Armenian independence two months after its declaration (December 31, 1991), established a Greek embassy, which was opened in July 1993. The first Ambassador of Greece appointed to Armenia was Leonidas T. Chrysanthopoulos (Mr. Chrysanthopoulos was also the representative of the Belgian government and of the European Community; *cf.* p. 23).

Mr. Chrysanthopoulos, nine years after his departure (when the politicians who were in power at that time in Armenia ceased to play an active role in political life) decided to publish the weekly notes he kept in his agenda. Thus, in his book *Caucasus Chronicles: Nation-building and Diplomacy in Armenia, 1993-1994*, he gives an account of the opening and the activities of the first Greek embassy in Armenia covering, precisely, the seven-month period, from 17 July 1993 to 20 February 1994 during which he stayed in Yerevan and presenting, vividly, his experiences from his perspective as the ambassador of Greece and also... as a human being (p. 1).

Obviously, it is not easy to put together and present, almost in one and the same flash, topics as diverse and irreconcilable as are, for instance, the personal, e.g. living conditions, the uncompromising, e.g. diplomatic confidentiality, the technical, e.g. military operations, the painful, e.g. the tragedy and misery of people, the emotional, e.g. humanitarian assistance. And yet the author succeeds in presenting them all well with skill and spice. This book is not only for future historians as the author hopes (p. 2), not only for the present political and social scientists nor even mainly for the career diplomats and public relations officers. This book is, indeed, excellent reading for any one who feels close to anything Armenian: the people, the landscape, the history, the culture, etc. It is not a dry scientific book, political and historical as it may be; it is an excellent narrative, at the same time autobiographical and literary, which one would read with ease and pleasure, even when it is referring to technicalities, like the UN resolutions (821, 823 and 853) or to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and its meeting in Minsk (Minsk Group) on the recurrent hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The serious and the witty, the scientific and the literary, the detached and the passionate are constantly alternating and overlapping.

Indeed, the author provides us, in a chronological way, with a clear picture of the tragic situation in Armenia during its first and difficult steps towards Statehood. In a well-written first person narrative that is lucid and pleasant, flowing and easy to follow, emotional yet fair, the author describes the agony of Armenia with the extreme poverty and misery of its people (*cf.* pp. 19, 45, 69, 110, 113-115, 176), the conflicts and the hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, the difficulties of the government over the shortage of goods and services, over the introduction of the new currency (the *dram*) or over the energy crisis. At the same time, he gives his own experiences day-by-day, often, hour-by hour, describing in great and provocative detail his own hardships and tribulations in adverse living and working conditions or, simply, the risks in his travelling to and from Armenia or around the country (*cf.* pp. 48, 113, 129, 131); He relates his adventures (pp. 104-109), his frailties (pp.

104-105: stupid decision) and his surprises (*cf.* pp. 121ff, Little did we know then what the following day had in store), his pride (p. 31: the Greek flag, on his car, which could be seen at the Turkish border), his emotions (p. 71: became very angry and frustrated), his views (p. 23, 110, 111: on communism and capitalism, on art, etc), his frustrations (pp. 67, 71, 84: difficult meeting, unreliable, etc) and, also, his occasional pleasures (*cf.* all the interludes with the parties, the concerts, the visits to Museums). Yet, the author succeeds in presenting even a painful incident or circumstance in such a witty way that, knowing the happy ending, the reader finds it amusing (*cf.* the flabbergasting remark of the flight attendant in pp. 19-20 or the brainstorming of the pilot pp. 129-131).

It is interesting to note that the book had been praised in advance (*cf.* back cover) by, amongst others, Gerard J. Libaridian, the then first deputy foreign minister of Armenia and author of *The Challenge of Statehood* and by Atom Egoyan, the famous Armenian-Canadian filmmaker (producer and director) whose latest film *Ararat* (on the Armenian Genocide of 1915, a 2002 production) is currently making headlines.

One may find a few errors, minor or secondary in most of the cases, which, do not alter the subject or the value of the book. Thus, one may notice, for instance, that Ejmiatzin is not east of Yerevan (p. 89) but west (*cf.* the map given at the beginning of the book); that Saint Sophia was not built around 325 (p. 90) but in 537 (*cf.* Justinian and Theodora); that Kurou Anabasis did not take place in 450 B.C. (p. 145) but in 400-399 (*cf.* Xenophon was born in 434); that the first (main) Alexandrian Library (Broucheion) was not destroyed in 272 A.D. (p. 157) but (and this is, at least, the most generally accepted view) in 47 B.C. (*cf.* Julius Caesar). One may also remark that it cannot be an atheist religion when worshiped [are] the sun and fire (p. 145) but, rather, a polytheistic one. Of course, one may notice, in addition, that in the case of Armenia it was not a case of Nation-building (*cf.* sub-title; an Anglo-Saxon notion of Nation), but of State-building: Armenians would, perhaps, argue that, as a Nation; i.e. as an ethnic entity, they have been strong all along in history; it was, however, as a State (i.e. as

a political entity), that they were rebuilding themselves after 1991 (*cf.* Libaridianís *The Challenge of Statehood*, above).

Mr. Chrysanthopoulos spent only seven months in Armenia while he has spent many more in other missions. Yet, despite all the adversities he suffered in the span of those seven months, he loved the people, liked the place and enjoyed his work in Armenia so much that, as he admits, he really did not want to leave and that he felt as if [he] had left his heart there (p. 166). It is noticeable, however, to a Greek Canadian that Mr. Chrysanthopoulos seems to have enjoyed, earlier in his diplomatic career as a Consul General of Greece, the magnificent Canadian winters so much that not only he mentions it twice in the book (pp. 126, 138) but he returned to Canada as the Ambassador of Greece where he will again enjoy the blanket of beautiful white snow.

Yannis Philippoussis

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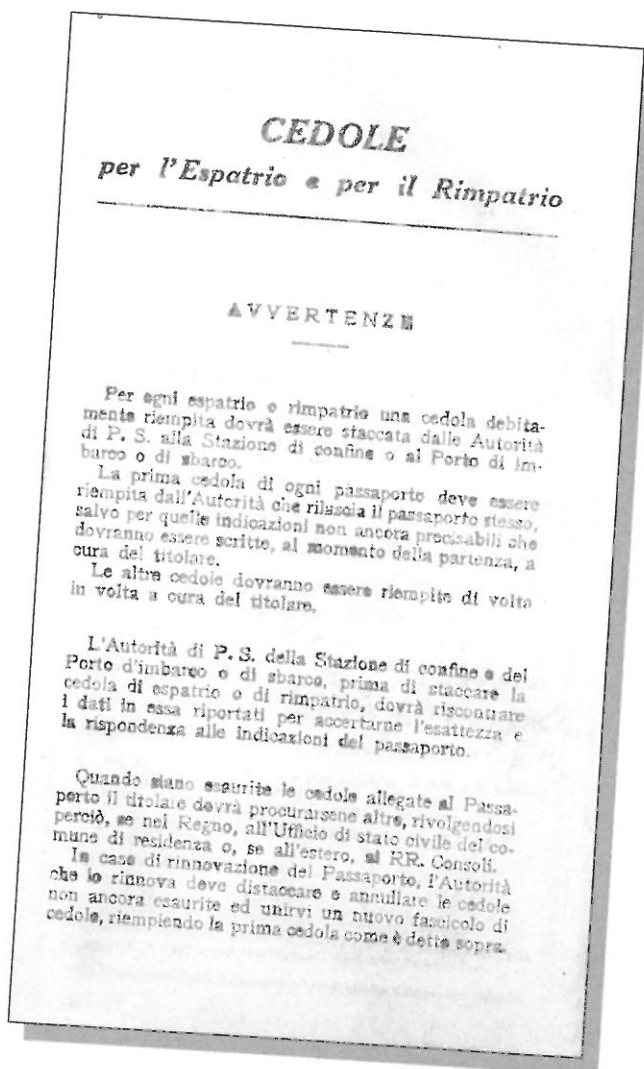
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ROYAL ITALIAN CONSULATE
MONTREAL CANADA

To whom it may concern:
Mr. Torguelli Emanuele
son of Torguelli Nicola
.....
..... on applying for this passport
(no. *113727/48*) has stated
that *he* been legally
admitted to the Dominion on
September 1928 that *he* intends
to go abroad only on a temporary
visit and to return to Canada.
MONTREAL. MAY 31 1932
The Royal Italian Consul
Antonio Sauer

Passport given by the Italian Consulate of Montreal (Quebec-Canada) to Emmanuel Georgoulis a Greek immigrant from Dodeconese islands, at that time occupied by Italy, dated May 31, 1932.

Apparently Georgoulis entered Canada in 1928 (From the book of Vissarionas Hatzidavid, *Greek Dodecanesians in Montreal* which will soon be published by the Centre of Hellenic Studies and Research Canada-KEEK).



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