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**Εμπειρία και δράση σε ένα μεταβαλλόμενο πολιτικό τοπίο: Η ελληνορθόδοξη κοινότητα της Σμύρνης στις αρχές του 20ου αιώνα**

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Vangelis Kechriotis

EXPERIENCE AND PERFORMANCE IN A SHIFTING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE:  
THE GREEK-ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF IZMIR/SMYRNA  
AT THE TURN OF THE 20th CENTURY<sup>1</sup>

*To the memory of my father*

*Introduction: historiographical preconditions*

The study of a non-Muslim community in an urban centre of the Ottoman Empire should normally stem from the field of Ottoman studies. However, it has become an established tradition within Modern Greek studies to investigate Greek-Orthodox (*Rum*) communities without making use of any Ottoman source whatsoever. Deriving from this academic environment, I initially followed the same path. Having said

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1. The research for this article has been part of the study for my PhD dissertation, 'The Greeks of Izmir at the end of the Empire: a non-Muslim Ottoman community between autonomy and patriotism', which I eventually defended at the Turkish studies program at Leiden University in 2005. This study was made possible thanks to a scholarship I was granted by the Foundation of the Hellenic World. The research at Public Record Office (henceforth PRO) in London was made possible thanks to a bursary I was granted by the British School at Athens. The research at the Archive du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères at Quai d'Orsay in Paris and in Nantes was made possible thanks to a bursary I was granted by the Fondation Leventis. I would like to thank the boards of those three institutions for their support. Moreover, I would like to thank professor Reşat Kasaba, professor Fikret Adanır, and professor Sarah Abrevaya Stein for inviting me to the workshop 'The Ethnic Break-Up of the Ottoman Empire', which took place within the 'Second Mediterranean Social and Political Research Meeting' at the European University Institute in March 2001, to present a first draft of this article. A similar draft was presented in the same year at the series of lectures organised by the History Program at Sabancı University. I would like to thank professor Halil Berktaş for his kind invitation. Finally, professor Haris Exertzoglou and professor Elisavet Zahariadou with their comments and support contributed to the revision of certain aspects of this article.

this, I would like to emphasize two points. Firstly, both in methodological and in ideological terms, this kind of endeavor has reached its limits. Secondly, the case study I am dealing with offers a certain space for negotiation among the various academic fields. Izmir/Smyrna was not only an Ottoman city or a Muslim city; it was also in many ways a Western or a Christian city. This diversity of Smyrna's ethno-religious composition allows us to discuss social and political phenomena also through the window opened by the accounts of representatives and officials of the Christian communities and colonies.

My own interest in the city derives from two historiographical traditions. Modern Greek studies have recently witnessed an increasing concern for the Greek-Orthodox populations of the Ottoman Empire. This concern draws its origin from the pioneering efforts, during the interwar period, to register and collect the memories of the populations from Asia Minor that found refuge in Greece in the wake of the Greek-Turkish War of 1919-1922. Under these circumstances, Melpo Merlier set the foundations of the most significant among these endeavors, an archive which first worked as a music folklore archive, to be renamed the Centre for Asia Minor Studies (CAMS) in 1948. Since then and until nowadays, generations of distinguished scholars offered their services to the Centre, enriching its material, but also taking advantage of its vast collection.<sup>2</sup> With the impetus provided by the CAMS, as well as by quasi-scholarly journals published by associations of refugees, Asia Minor studies developed to become an almost distinct research field, also including academic works produced by historians with broader interests.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, building on this tradition, the contemporary interest

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2. For the history of the CAMS, see Paschalis Kitromilides (ed.), *Ἐξήντα πέντε χρόνια ἐπιστημονικῆς προσφορᾶς. Αποτίμηση καὶ προοπτικὴ* [Sixty Five Years of Scientific Contribution. Evaluation and Perspective], Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1996. See also P. M. Kitromilides, 'The intellectual foundations of Asia Minor Studies. The R. W. Dawkins-Melpo Merlier correspondence', *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικῶν Σπουδῶν* [Centre for Asia Minor Studies Bulletin] 6 (1986-1987), p. 9-30; Penelope Pappalias, *Genres of Recollection: Archival Poetics and Modern Greece*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, p. 93-138.

3. The most influential among these studies have been the following: Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations*, Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1983; Gerasimos Augoustinos, *The Greeks of Asia*

in this field stems from the need to conceptualize the multiple loyalties of Greek-Orthodox populations and the way they were negotiated within multi-communal environments. In the most recent works, especially those of Haris Exertzoglou and Sia Anagnostopoulou, it has been strongly suggested that from the second half of the 19th century onward, Greek-Orthodox communities did not explicitly oppose a sense of Ottoman citizenship. It has also become widely accepted that one has to study developments in detail throughout a specific period, since identities are not static and frozen in time.<sup>4</sup>

Within this academic context, Izmir constitutes an interesting case study. The first systematic attempt to reconstruct the culture and the history of the city appeared in the pages of the journal *Μικρασιατικά Χρονικά* (*Asia Minor Chronicles*). It was first published in 1938 by the *Ένωση Σμυρναίων* (Union of Smyrniots), an association which gathered, among others, many prominent individuals originating from the city. The journal offered the opportunity to those who were practicing their

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*Minor*, Kent: Kent State University, 1992; Elena Frangakis-Syrret, *The Commerce of Smyrna in the 18th c. (1695-1820)*, Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1992; Elli Skopetea, *Η Δύση της Ανατολής* [*The Sunset of the East*], Athens: Themelio, 1992; Haris Exertzoglou, *Έθνική ταυτότητα στην Κωνσταντινούπολη τὸν 19ο αἰ. Ὁ Ἑλληνικός Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, 1861-1912* [*National Identity in Istanbul, in the 19th c. The Greek Philological Society of Istanbul, 1861-1912*], Athens: Nefeli, 1996; Sia Anagnostopoulou, *Μικρὰ Ἀσία, 19ος αἰ.-1919. Οἱ Ἑλληνορθόδοξες κοινότητες. Ἀπὸ τὸ Μιλλέτ τῶν Ρωμίων στὸ Ἑλληνικὸ Ἔθνος* [*Asia Minor, 19th c.-1919, The Greek-Orthodox Communities. From Rum Millet to the Greek Nation*], Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 1998; Efi Kanner, *Φτώχεια καὶ φιλανθρωπία στὴν ὀρθόδοξη κοινότητα τῆς Κωνσταντινούπολης, 1753-1912* [*Poverty and Charity in the Orthodox Community of Constantinople, 1753-1912*], Athens: Katarti, 2004.

4. In respect to my use of the term 'identity', I would only like to refer to the following two studies dealing with the individual perception of nationalism: Michael Herzfeld, *Cultural Intimacy, Social Poetics in the Nation-State*, New York: Routledge, 2005; and Catherine Verdery, 'Whither "nation" and "nationalism"', *Dædalus* 122/3 (1993), p. 37-46. Both works stem from an anthropological perspective, which is very relevant to my understanding of 'identity'. In other words, I refer to this term in order to denote not only self-consciousness, but also social performance, through which the individual demonstrates his/her perception of the self and the society around him/her. Moreover, performance becomes more crucial since, most frequently, we do not come across explicit statements of individuals regarding their public activity but traces of the activity itself.



talents as amateur historians to publish their studies. Within the next thirty years, the journal contributed enormously to the task of providing a bulk of information and the first historiographical accounts on the history of the city. However, the traumatic impact of what is widely known in Greek society and the relevant historiography as Asia Minor Catastrophe (*Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή*) was multiplied by the influx of refugees to Greece and the literature this migration instigated. As a result, the stereotype of an ideally colorful picture of the period before 1922 has prevailed in the collective memory.<sup>5</sup> Thus, only recently, historical accounts refer to those events in a more critical manner.<sup>6</sup> A similar interest has emerged in Turkish historiography as well.<sup>7</sup>

5. There are a lot of publications of this nostalgic character. The more scholarly among them are the series of studies by Christos S. Solomonidis. Four of his books were awarded the prize of the Academy of Athens. For more information see Vangelis Kechriotis, “Gāvur İzmir” den “Yunan Smyrni” ye, Bir kayıp Atlantis in yeniden inşası’ [‘From “Giavour Izmir” to “Hellenic Smyrna”: reconstruction of a lost Atlantis’], in Deniz Yıldırım and Evren Haspolat (eds), *Değişen İzmir’i Anlamak [Understanding the Changing Izmir]*, Ankara: Phoenix Yayınları, 2010, p. 435-462.

6. The exceptions, besides the studies mentioned in footnote 3, include Alkis Panayotopoulos, ‘The Greeks of Asia Minor, 1908-1912. A social and political analysis’, unpublished PhD dissertation at the Oxford University, which does not deal specifically with Smyrna. The issue of the troubled relations between Muslims and Christians as opposed to the nostalgic narratives of the refugees is already put forth in P. Kitromilides and A. Alexandris, ‘Ethnic survival, nationalism and forced migration: The historical demography of the Greek community of Asia Minor at the close of the Ottoman Era’, *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατικῶν Σπουδῶν [Centre for Asia Minor Studies Bulletin]* 5 (1984-1985), p. 9-43. In this brief note, I have not included the numerous works on economic history by Elena Frangakis-Syrret referring to the entire period from the second half of the 18th to the early decades of the 20th century. Special reference should be made to the bilingual volume: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, *Σμύρνη. Ἡ Μητρόπολη τοῦ Μικρασιατικοῦ Ἑλληνισμοῦ / Smyrna Metropolis of the Asia Minor Greeks*, Athens: Efessos publications, 2002, which addresses, however, a broader audience. In the Turkish literature, there are numerous studies referring to the same period.

7. The most well-known are the following: Erken Serçe, *Tanzimat’tan Cumhuriyet’e İzmir’de Belediye 1868-1945 [The Municipality of Izmir from the Tanzimat to the Republic, 1868-1945]*, İzmir: Dokuz Eylül Yayınları, 1998 and *İzmir ve Çevresi, 1907-1913 [Izmir and its Surroundings, 1907-1913]*, İzmir, 1995; Özer Ergenç, *Salnamelerde İzmir [Izmir in the Yearbooks]*, İzmir, 1990; Rauf Beyru, *19. Yüzyılda İzmir’de Yaşam*

The second historiographical tradition that has inspired this study derives from within the Ottoman studies. Recently, there has been a significant increase in publications on the Young Turk Revolution and the diverse aspects of social and political conflicts during the last years of the Empire.<sup>8</sup> This literature has privileged Salonica and Istanbul as centres of decision-making and mobilization of populations. Therefore, a major urban centre like Izmir has been treated as part of a broader picture, together with all the other towns of Asia Minor. However, it would be most interesting to bring Izmir into a dialogue with the two other Unionist centres, namely Istanbul and Salonica, to shed light on the urban experience in the later years of the Ottoman Empire.

One can identify two convergent points in these historiographical traditions, which facilitates a synthetic account. The first one regards the study of urban phenomena. By this, I do not mean to imply that the urban experience was totally different from the rural one. Yet, there are certain ways that urban activities and ideology can incorporate and override their rural counterparts. The second point concerns the alterations of political culture that was the specific product both of this urban experience and of the political/institutional developments which gave birth to a form of 'public sphere' during that period.<sup>9</sup> Sibel Zandi-

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[*Life in Izmir in the 19th c.*], Istanbul: Literatür, 2000. Significant are, also, works on economic history, e.g. see Mühabat Kütükoğlu, 'Osmanlı dış ticaretinin gelişmesinde İzmir limanı ve gümrüklerinin rolü' ['The port of Izmir and the role of the customs office in the development of the Ottoman foreign trade'], in Mühabat Kütükoğlu, *İzmir Tarihinden Kesitler [Extracts from the History of Izmir]*, İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kent Kitaplığı, 2000, p. 285-312. This particular publication is part of a vast editorial endeavor undertaken by the late mayor of Izmir, Ahmet Pıriştina, who initiated this series having already published or republished dozens of important works referring to the city at all periods.

8. The most influential among them are: Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*, Leiden: Brill, 1984; M. Sükrü Hanioğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, and *Preparation for a Revolution, The Young Turks 1902-1908*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001; Aykut Kansu, *The Revolution of 1908 in Turkey*, Leiden: Brill, 1997, and *Politics in Post-revolutionary Turkey, 1908-1913*, Leiden: Brill, 2000; and Hasan Kayali, *Arabs and Young Turks, Ottomanism, Arabism and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire*, Berkeley-L.A.: University of California Press, 1997.

9. For my use of the term 'public sphere', see Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural*

Sayek has discussed the difference between the terms 'public space' and 'public sphere', the first referring more to the material aspect whereas the second to the social aspect of public activity.<sup>10</sup> She has especially focused on the tension between the 'public sphere' as a concept employed by Jürgen Habermas in relation to Western European societies and the possibility of applying the term in describing the social interaction we witness in an Ottoman post-Tanzimat city. However, since the latter was organized on the basis of semi-autonomous communities, I argue that social and cultural interaction in the interior of each community in many respects opened channels of communication beyond the community while it was also infiltrated by the overarching political and social practices of urban life (prefecture council, municipality council, stock market, bazaars, celebrations and festivities, multi-lingual individuals). In this sense, the difficulty of grasping the two-fold articulation of the Ottoman public spheres (communal vs urban) ultimately coincides with the very ambivalence of the Ottomanist ideological project. This ambivalence is further deepened by the significant presence of non-Ottoman elements in city-life, which on the one hand, jeopardizes the Ottomanist project (by challenging the conditions of citizenship) but on the other hand, enhances the implementation of a social interaction in a western manner, reinforcing thus both the communal and the urban aspects of the 'public sphere'. In other words, the broadening of the communal public sphere does not necessarily entail the disintegration of the urban one and vice versa. On this paradox lies, in my view, the puzzlement of the Western observers, when they attempt to describe the Ottoman society, as well as the reluctance of modern scholarship to employ the concept of 'public sphere' in its study. As a means of tracing down the points where communal and urban 'public sphere' interact, I will employ social networks in a way similar to that suggested by Smyrnellis.<sup>11</sup> I believe

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*Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991, p. 1-26.

10. Sibel Zandi-Sayek, 'Public space and urban citizens: Ottoman Izmir in the remaking, 1840-1890', unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Berkeley, California, 2001, p. 20-27.

11. Marie-Carmen Smyrnellis, *Une société hors de soi. Identités et relations sociales à Smyrne aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles*, Collection Turcica, vol. X, Paris: Peeters, 2005.

that it is the peculiarities of an Eastern Mediterranean Ottoman city as described above that necessitate the employment of both analytical categories, the 'public sphere' and 'networks', no matter how contradictory they might look at first sight, in an attempt to have a better insight to the kind of urban political culture that prevails in Izmir.

Against this background, I intend to trace continuities and discontinuities brought about by the major political events initiated in 1908, primarily through the experience of the Greek-Orthodox, who constituted nearly half of the city's population. Certainly, it would be crucial to relate this experience to similar or diverse developments within other communities (Muslims, Armenians, Jews) constituting the human mosaic of this port-city. Such an endeavor was actually undertaken by Hervé Georgelin,<sup>12</sup> with a brilliant result, despite the fact that an all-encompassing account does not allow much space for a micro-level analysis. What I propose to do here is to present certain critical moments in the political and social life of the Greek-Orthodox and contextualize them, and, by doing so, to suggest a way of reading these events as part and parcel of recurring themes that have an impact far beyond the boundaries of the community.

### *The plot*

The 'unpleasant incident' involving the Consul

In 1903-1904, due to the prolonged economic crisis, related mainly to the developments in the Macedonian front and the growing need for financing Ottoman troops to handle the conflict there, local authorities were urged to insist on tax collection by any means. After instructions given by the Capital, the *vali* (governor) Kâmil pasha, ordered the police force to assign guards in front of the shops of certain Greek entrepreneurs, who were foreign subjects and had not fulfilled their obligation of paying the *temettü* tax (tax on income from a profession). The *vali* had asked his government to reach an understanding with the Hellenic government. The Hellenic Consul General Stamatios Antonopoulos, visiting

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12. Hervé Georgelin, *La fin de Smyrne: du cosmopolitisme aux nationalismes*, Paris: CNRS, 2005.

Athens, also addressed his government with the same request. Both received instructions to persist in their positions.<sup>13</sup>

On the 23rd of April, the *vali* located the gendarmes once again at the doors of three shops. The Hellenic Consul General, when informed, wrote to the *vali* protesting and insisting on the removal of the gendarmes. The *vali* refused to withdraw the gendarmes unless the tax was paid. As a result the Hellenic Consul and the Dragoman of the consulate were involved in an 'unpleasant incident' while trying to protect the shop-owners. As was reported by the Ottoman authorities, an account also largely adopted by the British Consul, the Dragoman was arrested after shooting against the gendarmes. The Consul tried to help him escape from the police station and then the guards removed the horses from his coach. Of course, the Greek version is different. According to it, the authorities were responsible for both incidents and any accusation against the consular authorities should be withdrawn. The tension was such that it not only called for the intervention of the Great Powers between the Ottoman and the Hellenic government, but also caused the reaction of a large part of the Greek-Orthodox community. People from nearby villages gathered in the city, armed and furious. Riots were impending. The British Consul appealed both to the Hellenic Consul and to 'influential Greeks' urging them to prevent any disturbances. The Consul concluded: 'I also begged him [the Hellenic Consul General] to convey to his friends not only the uselessness of any demonstration but also the grave responsibility that, all concerned, were incurring in risking a conflict between Greeks and Turks which would inevitably lead to a bloodshed and to the interruption of business, besides rendering a satisfactory solution to the two Governments more difficult'.<sup>14</sup>

Riots were eventually prevented since the Hellenic government gave instructions against any demonstration liable to cause trouble. The official Ottoman version of events was published in the francophone newspaper *Impartial* on the 25th of May.<sup>15</sup> The account presented there held the

13. Foreign Office [henceforth FO], 195/2184, Cumberbatch (Smyrna) to O'Connor (Constantinople), No 12, 25 April 1904.

14. FO 195/2184, Cumberbatch (Smyrna) to O'Connor (Constantinople), No 14, 2 May 1904.

15. *Impartial*, 5320, 25 May 1904, p. 1.

Hellenic Consul responsible for having presented a distorted version of the events with the purpose of deceiving the public opinion in Athens. Antonopoulos is said to have organized a demonstration by ordering all the Hellenic subjects of the city and the surrounding towns and villages to gather in front of the consulate. Speeches had been prepared for the occasion. Eventually, however, the Hellenic government disapproved of this initiative and advised Antonopoulos to abstain from such activities. The same announcement, translated into Greek, was published in the newspapers *Néa Smyrñn* (*New Smyrna*)<sup>16</sup> and *Áρμονία* (*Harmony*).<sup>17</sup>

The British Consul fully supported this version of the story by indicating that Kâmil pasha had published the document in order to counter the misinformation among the Greek population, due to the exaggerated accounts published in the Athenian Press. He also pointed out that, in the meantime, the *vali* had received threats against his life from nationalist Greeks.<sup>18</sup> The British Ambassador had considered the *vali*'s insisting upon the payment of the tax to be justified. However, at the same time, he had advised the Grand Vizier to be as discrete as possible in enforcing the tax and to avoid any drastic measures.<sup>19</sup>

The Hellenic Consul, on the other hand, in his main report concerning the events, concluded by stating: 'from the very moment those deplorable events happened, the consulate receives crowds of co-citizens (*συμπολίτες*) and foreigners (*άλλοδαποι*) congratulating the consulate and expressing their surprise and their fury for the Turkish crimes'.<sup>20</sup> In a report dated 17 April 1904 he described his plans for the demonstration: 'on the head of the demonstration there will be a committee of distinguished scientists and merchants. This committee will hand in the decision of

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16. *Néa Smyrñn*, 7428, 14 May 1904, p. 2. Since censorship was implemented during that period, it is not surprising that this statement was not challenged in the aforementioned newspapers.

17. *Áρμονία*, 5411, 14 May 1904, p. 2.

18. FO 195/2184, Cumberbatch (Smyrna) to O'Connor (Constantinople), No 18, 27 May 1904.

19. FO 195/2169, O'Connor (Constantinople) to Cumberbatch (Smyrna), No 22, 18 June 1904.

20. Αρχείο Υπουργείου Έξωτερικών (Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, henceforth AMFA), 1904, 80, I.3, 3, 'Επεισόδια στη Σμύρνη' ['Riots in Izmir'], Antonopoulos (Smyrna) to Romanos (Athens), No 1317, 15 April 1904.

the whole Greek community to the Consuls of the Great Powers ... I have already telegraphed ... in order to manage to keep all the shops here, in Vourla (Urla) and in Magnisia (Manisa), closed down at least for eight days and ... organize large demonstrations. If your Excellency takes under consideration that here in the entirely "Greek" Smyrna, most of the shops, from the department stores up to the last tavern, they are all Greek, you will immediately realize the great impression, even the disturbance of public order, the simultaneous lock down of those shops can bring about'.<sup>21</sup>

In a dispatch of the 22nd of April, Antonopoulos asked for permission to cancel all celebrations for the name day of the King of Hellenes, George I, as a sign of protest and mourning. Moreover, he claimed that if he did not, he would have to invite the local authorities, as was the habit.<sup>22</sup> Regarding the attempts by the British Consul, who was the Dean of the Consuls, to negotiate with the two sides, he accused Cumberbatch of having particularly friendly relations with the *vali*.<sup>23</sup> Eventually, the demonstration was cancelled following the intervention of the Hellenic government. Antonopoulos was 'promoted' and transferred to Göttingen, while Evgeniadis took his place, and the Dragoman was transferred to Alexandria. The Greek entrepreneurs were instructed to pay 'under protest,' since some of them had already paid, and the tax was included in the treaty signed between the two countries the previous year.

### *The election of a Hellenic professor*

In October-November 1908, following the Young Turk Revolution, which led to the restoration of the constitution, parliamentary elections took place all over the Empire. The *sancak* (province) of Izmir was one of the more important areas in Asia Minor, with an overwhelmingly pro-Unionist Muslim, Armenian, and Jewish population. The local Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) representatives began negotiations with

21. AMFA, 1904, 80, 1.3, 3 'Riots...', Antonopoulos (Smyrna) to Romanos (Athens), No 1387, 17 April 1904.

22. AMFA, 1904, 80, 1.3, 3 'Riots...', Antonopoulos (Smyrna) to Romanos (Athens), No 1442, 20 April 1904.

23. AMFA, 1904, 80, 1.3, 3 'Riots...', Antonopoulos (Smyrna) to Papageorgiadis (Athens), No 1488, 26 April 1904.

the Greek-Orthodox community, in order to prepare for the upcoming elections.<sup>24</sup>

The elections were based on a two-round system. First, the voters would elect their representatives, who, then, in a second round, would vote for the appointment of the deputies. The first results of the first round elections of the electors were very encouraging for the Greeks at the *sancak* of Izmir. This success could be partly attributed to the long-standing experience of the mostly urban Greek-Orthodox population in participation not so much in the community administration, which was rather restricted among the privileged elite, as in the charitable foundations which immensely contributed to the incorporation of the lower social strata to the community. It could also be attributed, though, to the very efficient central control that was exercised by the Hellenic consulate. This, however, instigated the reaction of the local leadership of the CUP, which started intervening in order to prevent the election of an overwhelming Greek majority, fueling thus the already existing tension among Muslims and non-Muslims and triggering once again rumors about imminent violence.

Bergama/Pergamos was one of the locations where the first elections were cancelled exactly because many Greeks had been elected. From an open letter of a citizen, who signs as 'an inhabitant of Bergama', to the local CUP, published in the newspaper *İttihad*, we are informed that the number of voters in the town and the surrounding villages were 4,000, among which 2,400 Muslims, 1000 Greek-Orthodox and 200 Armenians and Jews. Of them, 1,100 Muslims, 930 Greek-Orthodox and 100 Armenians and Jews voted in the elections. The elections lasted, according to the article 39 of the election regulations, for fourteen days. In order to facilitate the process, the municipality council had decided that every quarter (*mahalle*) would vote in one day. After the conclusion of the voting, the votes were counted within six days and the results indicated that all eight electors (*müntehib-i sani*) elected were Greek-Orthodox, with the number of votes ranging from 968 to 879. However, the local mayor protested at the *vilayet* (prefecture) authorities that the elections took place illegally and sent to Smyrna a *muhtar* called Dimitri who

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24. Kansu, *Politics...*, p. 212.



managed to receive a telegram for the cancellation of the elections on the grounds that individuals who had no right to vote (obviously referring to Hellenic subjects) participated in the elections. And the author of the letter wonders: 'Now we ask you. Is it because the Ottoman Greeks won the elections that the elections were deemed not valid? If the elections did not take place properly, they should explain this to us and not stir our Muslim brothers against us... The whole population of Bergama has declared that it is not going to participate in the elections which will start from scratch. Therefore, we are expecting from the members of the local branch of the CUP to grant the devastated Greeks their legal rights and not allow for such incidents to be exploited'.<sup>25</sup>

This atmosphere compelled the *vali* to invite the Greek-Orthodox notables, reassuring them about the friendly sentiments of the Ottoman authorities and asking them to abstain from spreading any disturbing rumors and dismiss fears about conflicts.<sup>26</sup> The excitement, however, won't fade away. On the 23rd of September, the leaders of the community were going to meet with Enver bey, the hero of the Constitutional Revolution, upon his own invitation to negotiate about the elections. Exactly that day, however, a Christian was killed by the troops during an incident at the strike of the Aydin railway workers and the atmosphere had turned really gloomy.<sup>27</sup> During the negotiations with Enver bey, the delegation of the Greek-Orthodox community made it clear that they would come to terms with the CUP only if five Greek deputies were elected. Enver bey and the local CUP leadership are said to have responded positively. This understanding, as well as the conclusion of the Aydin railway strike and some moderate articles in the local newspapers, contributed to the improvement of relations and the decrease of tension.<sup>28</sup> However, as the Hellenic Consul General Evgeniadis claimed, the CUP proved to be

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25. *İttihad*, 14 October 1908.

26. AMFA, 'Ανακήρυξις τοῦ Συντάγματος' ['Proclamation of the Constitution'], disp. Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 29 September 1908.

27. AMFA, 'Παράνομοι δραστηριότητες κατὰ τὴν διάρκειαν τῶν ἐκλογῶν' ['Illegal activities during the elections'], 5446, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 23 September 1908.

28. AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', 5675, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 28 September 1908. The distribution of the sixteen parliamentary seats for the

insincere and avoided any negotiations with the Greeks, after Enver bey left the city. The Greek-Orthodox authorities, he also added, had distrusted the CUP from the very beginning, since the latter's aim was to elect only two Greek deputies, 'unimportant individuals from Anatolia, who betrayed our activity'.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, both the 'Elders Council' and the 'Central Committee', the two administrative bodies of the community, which after so many years of fierce conflict, had joined their forces in view of the urgent political circumstances, deemed campaigning on their own as the only solution. They even considered the possibility to ally themselves with the Armenians and the Jews in the event that separate ballots would be applied for the members of each community. If the CUP, though, forced them to accept one list for all 'Ottoman' (in this case the term referring to all Ottoman subjects) candidates, the Greeks would abstain, since, being the minority in the *sancak* had no chance against the Muslim majority. The Consul asked his superiors to approve such an initiative and wondered whether the same strategy could be applied all over the Empire. Interestingly, while describing the attitudes of the community, Evgeniadis is using a powerful 'we', which assumes a complete identification of the local Greek population with the Hellenic consulate, at least from the Consul's point of view.<sup>30</sup>

We do not know whether the Hellenic government approved this course of action but we do know that the Hellenic Consul had taken over the coordination of the electoral campaign. Evgeniadis considered it his duty to unite the Smyrniot Greeks and direct them politically. At the end of August, when he had returned to Smyrna after a trip to Athens, he had worked for the creation of a Hellenic Association of Smyrna under

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*sancaks* of the Aydin *vilayet* is described as follows: 6 for Izmir, 3 for Manisa, 2 for Aydin, 2 for Denizli, 3 for Menderes.

29. AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', 5717, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 29 September 1908. Most probably, he refers to Aristidis pasha Georgantzoglou and Minas Chamoudopoulos who were bureaucrats and thus supported by the Ottoman authorities and the Patriarchate but not the consulate. Eventually, a compromise would be achieved, since one of the two Greek deputies elected would be among those favored by the Ottomans, the second one, however, would be Carolidis who was supported by the consulate.

30. AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', 5717, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 29 September 1908.

the auspices of the consulate. All 'parties' of the Greek community are said to have submitted themselves under the Consul's authority. An important task was the registration of the population in the electoral lists, in order to achieve the greatest number of electors possible in the first round of the elections. In the meantime, the consulate abstained from indicating any names before the people voted but it would try, as it appears, to manipulate the 'Turkish' element in the hinterland in order to achieve the election of Greek deputies. The Vice-Consuls of Manisa and Urla would also cooperate closely to this purpose. And Evgeniadis concludes: 'A relevant announcement has been made and the people were asked through newspapers and speeches in churches, by medical doctors, lawyers and other leading figures. Committees visit neighborhoods and register everybody in catalogues. Sub-committees of the association have been set up and appropriate individuals were sent to the hinterland, others are sent for the setting up of associations ... and all these depend on us in Smyrna ... All decent patriots are supporting the consulate'.<sup>31</sup> Later on, however, during the campaign, Evgeniadis admits that in order to achieve the election of the Greek-Orthodox nominees by the 'Ottomans' (here the term referring only to the Muslims) in the *kazas* (regions) in the interior of the *sancak* of Izmir, he would have to work in secrecy. He claims that the CUP had not achieved to coordinate the Muslim voters and there was the chance that Muslim votes could also be attracted. For this purpose, he even asks for the permission to spend money, if necessary, for 'buying' electors' votes.<sup>32</sup> Such political machinations, though, became increasingly difficult.

Eventually, the outcome of the first round was not very successful for the Smyrniot Greek-Orthodox community which achieved the election of only 41 electors against 73 Muslims. However, since there were six parliamentary seats available for the *sancak* of Izmir, it seems that the local CUP leadership had eventually agreed that the elections should return two members from the Muslim and two from the Greek-

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31. AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', 4664, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 27 August 1908.

32. AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', 5865, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 2 October 1908.

Orthodox community and it had guaranteed that the Muslims would vote for the Greeks, and vice versa, leaving the other two parliamentary seats to the Armenians and the Jews.<sup>33</sup> The second-round elections started on the 8th of October. In the five *sancaks* of the Aydin *vilayet*, out of the sixteen deputies that were elected twelve were Muslims, two Greeks, one Armenian and one Jew, a result almost proportional to the population figures as they are provided by Ottoman sources. However, the Greek Smyrniots had reasons to complain. The first one was that many thousands among them, who had not been registered in the local registers, since they held also or only Hellenic passports, were not allowed to vote, protesting for violation of the elections by the Ottoman authorities. The second and more important was that, whereas the Greeks had kept their promise to vote for the Muslim candidates, the Muslims, obviously influenced by the tension revolved around the issue of nationality of one of the major Greek candidates, the History Professor at the University of Athens Pavlos Carolidis,<sup>34</sup> did not vote for him. Thus, according to the initial results, only one Greek deputy, Aristidis pasha Georgantzoglou, was elected with Carolidis as a runner-up.<sup>35</sup> The Greek community was filled with great discontent. On the 13th of November, people from the surrounding villages, who had already

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33. PRO 195/2299, Barnham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 117, 8 December 1908.

34. The Turkish press, both in Smyrna and in Istanbul, mainly incited by the activity of the Muslim Cretans in Smyrna, published repeatedly against Carolidis. The newspaper *İttihad* reproduces an article written in *Άρροβία*. The Greek newspaper maintains that nobody had the right to reproach Carolidis for fleeing his country due to the oppressive regime. Since there were no official documents which proved that he was deprived of his Ottoman nationality, it would be unfair to exclude him from the elections. The answer of the Turkish newspaper was prompt. It accused the Greeks of trying to present Carolidis as a martyr of the Hamidian Regime, who as so many others fled his country. But even if this was true, it is claimed, even if the constitutional regulations were disregarded, it was still the case that Carolidis was now a Hellenic subject; *İttihad*, 1 Teşrinievvel 1324, in Arikan Zeki, *İzmir Basınından Seçmeler, 1872- 1922 [Excerpts from the Smyrniot Press]*, İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kent Kitaplığı, vol. I, 2001, p. 194-195.

35. Out of the first 75 electors, only 4 voted for Carolidis while 73 voted for Georgantzoglou; AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', 6656, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 17 October 1908.

expressed their disapproval towards the new regime well before this event, gathered again in the city in order to claim their rights. A mass demonstration was organized. The next day, the shops remained closed and the authorities took measures against a demonstration.<sup>36</sup> On the 15th of November, the demonstrators, who numbered almost 30,000 and were nearly all armed, entered the city.

The representatives of the CUP promised that, whatever the case, two Greek-Orthodox deputies would be sent to the parliament, since in the *kaza* of Bergama, where the elections were not yet concluded, all Muslim voters would be ordered to vote for Carolidis. However, the Greek-Orthodox had lost their faith. The administrative bodies and a crowd following the Greek-Orthodox prelate, Metropolitan Vassilios, gathered in the courtyard of the Metropolitan Palace and decided to protest organizing a large demonstration for the following day. The Hellenic Consul warned his superiors that the demonstration could provoke riots, but he also claimed that such discontent could not be halted.<sup>37</sup> In any case, he did not seem willing to quash the protests. The instructions, however, he received from Athens were urging him to avoid any conflicts and act with prudence.<sup>38</sup> Eventually, Ottoman troops surrounded the crowd. The Hellenic Consul together with the Dean of Consuls protested to the *vali* who promised to withdraw the troops if the demonstration was restricted in the Metropolitan palace and the neighborhood.<sup>39</sup> The mayor Tevfik pasha and the director of the bureau of political affairs visited the consulate and agreed that a delegation would come to the administration office (*konak*) to address the *vali*.<sup>40</sup> Thus, bloodshed was avoided. A description of the riots soon reached countries abroad. It was mentioned

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36. AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', 5865, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 1 November 1908.

37. AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', 6674, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 31 October 1908.

38. AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', 6675-6685, Baltatzis (Athens) to Evgeniadis (Smyrna), n.d., 1908.

39. AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', 6686, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 31 October 1908.

40. AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', 6694, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 1 November 1908.

that there was fighting in the streets between the crowd and troops, during which one person was killed, while many others, frightened, 'sought refuge in the churches, which they refuse to leave'.<sup>41</sup> The official newspaper of the CUP, *İttihad*, gives a very different picture, while criticizing the attitude of the Greeks. 'Before the elections in the Izmir *sancak* are completed, the fact that Carolidis, professor at the University of Athens whose candidacy they supported, did not gain the necessary votes and would not be elected, became the reason for a heated excitement among our Greek-Orthodox compatriots. The last Friday in the early afternoon they gathered in the courtyard of Aghia Fotini, the bells were ringing and certain speeches were delivered, before the police, simply fulfilling its duty, dispersed the crowd. Later on, after it became known that yesterday at around 10:00 *à la franka* they would gather in the aforementioned church courtyard and the message was sent to the surrounding villages to the effect that people would arrive at the city from the previous evening, in the morning a sufficient number of troops was sent and, without any need for intervention due to riots, the demonstrators were dispersed in the afternoon'.<sup>42</sup>

It is interesting that, under these circumstances, the community appears united. Even the socialist newspaper *Εργάτης* (*Worker*), which had been published only a few months ago and was highly critical of the community administration, protests towards this 'great insult, the great injustice that was committed against us'.<sup>43</sup> The newspaper denounced what it perceived as the 'immoral attitude' of the 'Turkish' voters who did not vote for Carolidis, despite the fact that the Greek-Orthodox had voted for all Muslim candidates of the ballot. The demonstration of the Greek population is said to have had no precedent. The crowd spent two days, Friday and Saturday, in front of the cathedral of Aghia Fotini, where they had been waiting for the results from the remaining areas.

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41. 'Turkish Internal Affairs: Election Riots at Smyrna', *The Times*, 17 November 1908, p. 7.

42. *İttihad*, 16 November 1908.

43. 'Ἡ ἀπιστία τοῦ κοιμητήτου γιὰ τὴν ὑποψηφιότητα τοῦ κ. Καρολίδη' ['The deceit of the Committee regarding the candidacy of Mr Carolidis'], *Εργάτης*, 2 November 1908, p. 3.

The results from Ödemiş (Odemision) arrived on Friday at 16:30 and were equally disappointing. However, the results from Pergamos, which became known at 15:00 on Saturday, finally indicated that Carolidis had been elected.<sup>44</sup>

Thus, despite internal divisions, the elections had unified the community. The professor was elected by a slight majority, but after having received all the Greek votes of the *sancak* of Izmir.<sup>45</sup> The Hellenic Consul referred to the event as a 'manly victory' and reported that all shops, which had been closed down on his instructions, were open again. According to his report, 23 out of the 27 electors of Pergamos had voted for Carolidis. In addition, he boasted that 107 of 'our own electors' had voted according to the instructions without any objection.<sup>46</sup> Eventually, the Greek-Orthodox celebrated the event as the reward of their determined and brave attitude and not the outcome of a generous gesture on the part of the CUP. Moreover, they deplored the fact that in order for Carolidis to be elected, another Christian, the Armenian Spartali seemed to have temporarily lost his seat. Eventually, contrary to the CUP allegations, they accused the Ottoman authorities of provocative behavior and they claimed that it was thanks to the reservation demonstrated by the Greek-Orthodox that violence was prevented. Carolidis, in his turn, saw his election as the call for a mission, and believed that his candidacy should have been supported by everybody, 'just to show the power of Hellenism in Smyrna, in order for the Smyrniots to show that they were able to call even a professor from a Hellenic University and elect

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44. *Ibid.*

45. The final results were the following: Müftü efendi 262 votes, Seyit bey 290, Aristidi pasha 250, Nesim Masliyah efendi 186, Doctor Taşlızade Ethem bey 184, Pavlo Carolidi efendi 166; *İttihad*, 15 November 1908. However, after Carolidis' election, the Armenian candidate, Stephan Spartali from Izmir, who had been favored by the Young Turks, since he had contributed 2,000 liras to their funds, lost his seat. In order to solve the problem, the CUP leadership which considered its duty to award the latter's generosity, persuaded Dr. Ethem bey to step down and the new election gave Spartali back his seat; FO 195/2360, Barnham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 117, 8 December 1908.

46. AMFA, 'Illegal activities...', Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 6701, 1 November 1908.

him as deputy'.<sup>47</sup> He, thus, conceived himself as an 'incarnation of a national victory against the whole of the Turkish nation and the Turkish government'.<sup>48</sup>

### *The Boycott*

During the spring and summer months of 1909, 1910, and 1911, as a result of the unilateral proclamation by the Cretans of the annexation of the autonomous principality of Crete to the Hellenic state, Hellenic subjects as well as Greek-Orthodox merchants and entrepreneurs were boycotted.<sup>49</sup> To this purpose, a 'Committee of the Commercial War' (*Boykot Cemiyeti*) was set up in Istanbul, and similar ones in Salonica and Smyrna. In Smyrna, sub-committees had been established in the main towns of the *vilayet*.<sup>50</sup> Their strategy was to hire unemployed people and use them to form police groups. The duties of those groups were to prevent Greek vessels from approaching the shore, to seal all exports with the sign of the Committee and to prevent the public from entering shops owned by Hellenes. In many occasions, boycotters marked storefronts with the word *Yunani* (Greek) and, in case the customers were not discouraged,

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47. Pavlos Carolidis, *Λόγοι και Ύπομνήματα [Speeches and Memoranda]*, Athens: Petrakou, 1913, p. 47.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

49. Interestingly, the first incident of boycotting foreign products in the Ottoman Empire was initiated by the local Greeks. Following the expulsion of Hellenic Greeks from Romania, Greek lighter owners in Mytilini refused to unload merchandise from a Romanian ship, while, due to the great excitement among the local population and the demonstrations organised, military squads were patrolling the harbor to secure order; Archive du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (henceforth AMAE), Nantes, No 51, 'Incident Gréco-Roumain', Blanc (Smyrne) à Constans (Constantinople), 26 June 1906. The Ottoman authorities are described as unwilling to take any further measures to suppress the boycott; AMAE, Nantes, No 49, 'Incident Gréco-Roumain à Mételin', Blanc (Smyrne) à Constans (Constantinople), 22 June 1906. Moreover, the boycotters are encouraged both by this attitude of the authorities and by articles published in the newspapers of Athens; AMAE, Nantes, No 52, 'Manifestations anti-Roumaines', Blanc (Smyrne) à Constans (Constantinople), 30 June 1906.

50. FO 195/2360, Bernham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 77, 30 August 1910.



they posted guards outside in order to forcibly prevent customers from entering.<sup>51</sup>

In Smyrna, the most active agitators in harassing any kind of Greek economic activity were often Muslim Cretan migrants who had found refuge in the outskirts of the city. Muslim Cretans had started arriving in Smyrna in great numbers in 1899. In May of that year, they were already 20,000. This population without any resources and in a state of misery maintained an unreconcilable hatred against the Christian population due to the hardships they had suffered in Crete. But their ferocious attitude posed a threat for the local Muslims as well, who were hardly welcoming towards their coreligionists. The local authorities had tried to get rid of the turbulent Cretans by relocating them to Konya (Ikonio). This project, however, was fiercely opposed to by the Cretans themselves, on the grounds that they did not speak Turkish so there was no way they could survive in the interior, whereas on the littoral, most of the population was Greek-speaking and, therefore, it would be easier for them to make a living. Moreover, they claimed, they would not be able to take roots on such a poor land, which pushed even the natives to migrate. Thus, the local authorities had to deal with the difficult task of settling these populations close to Greek-populated districts, while minimizing the possible contacts between the two elements, which would definitely lead to conflict. Thus, Smyrna and its surroundings were becoming more and more ethnically diverse and sensitive, since there were thousands of Bulgarian and Circassian refugees already settled there since the 1880s.<sup>52</sup>

Many of these Cretan Muslims worked in the port, whereas others were unemployed and ready to offer their services against any Christian. On the other hand, the active participation of the rest of the Muslim population in the boycott seems to have been rather limited. The British Consul described one of the early demonstrations organized by the local CUP branch with the aim of urging the government to take a strong position regarding the 'Cretan Question'. Twenty thousand people were

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51. FO 195/2360, Bernham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 75, 28 August 1910.

52. AMAE, Paris, No 18, *Au sujet des réfugiés Crétois*, Guillot (Smyrne) à Delcassé (Paris), 31 May 1899.

reported to have participated, twelve thousand of whom were Muslim Cretans, while there were also a few hundred Jews.<sup>53</sup> In the speeches delivered, the leitmotif was that everybody was ready to 'shed their last drop of blood' in order to protect Crete from falling into Greek hands. The protesters also manifested that if Crete were annexed to Greece, Hellenic subjects should be expelled from the Empire. Benham concluded that 'the whole meeting was extremely orderly and as the Greeks carefully refrained from appearing, no incidents took place'.<sup>54</sup> The Greek-Orthodox, however, who had been already at odds with the always suspicious newly-arrived population from Crete, had been already alerted.

### *The agents*

#### Becoming Hellenes

A short survey of the developments within the Greek-Orthodox population is very crucial for a better understanding of the behavior of its members. To begin with, population figures for Smyrna are among the most controversial issues. However, according to two French contemporaries, the Consul Rougon and the geographer Cuinet,<sup>55</sup> whose accounts for the end of the 19th century are generally respected, the most probable figures for both the Hellenic subjects and the Ottoman Greeks are 80,000-100,000 for the *belediye* (municipality), 180,000-200,000 for

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53. As Feroz Ahmad has shown, the Jewish population was the only one which remained faithful to the CUP until the end. Ahmad argues about the common fate of the Jewish and the Muslim population of the Empire as well as their rivalry against the Christians: Ahmad Feroz, 'Unionist relations with the Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities', in Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (eds), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: the Functioning of a Plural Society*, New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1982, p. 434-435.

54. FO 195/2331, Bernham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 73, 2 August 1909. According to the same report, smaller demonstrations were organized in various towns of the province. In Chios (Sakız adası) and Krini (Çeşme), the Greek-Orthodox notables refused to sign the telegrams sent to the Grand Vizier.

55. Firmin Rougon, *Smyrne: situation commerciale et économique des pays compris dans la conscription du consulat général de France de Vilayet d'Aydin, de Konieh et des îles*, Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1892; and Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie, géographie administrative*, Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1894.

the *kaza*, and 300,000 for the *vilayet*. Rougon has described the Greek population as comprising of two different elements: on the one hand, the Ottoman Greeks, the *reaya*, a mainly Turkish-speaking rural population, who occupied mostly the surrounding villages and, on the other hand, the Hellenic Greeks who were more familiar with urban manufacturing and trade and had closer relations both with the European communities and the Hellenic authorities.<sup>56</sup> This description, schematic as it is, gives a clue for the stereotypes perpetuated even by individuals who spent years in the city and urges us to be skeptical when dealing with their accounts. As a matter of fact, one should not disregard a quite extended petit-bourgeoisie, composed mainly of immigrants of either Ottoman or Hellenic nationality, who were gradually integrated into the ethnically complex urban fabric and claimed their role through their guilds (Greek: *συντεχνία*, Turkish: *esnaf*).

At the same time, since the second half of the 19th century, many Ottoman Greeks had developed a Hellenic national consciousness, particularly by intermingling with Hellenic subjects. As Sia Anagnostopoulou has pointed out, these Hellenic subjects form a new middle bourgeois class and they claim a legitimacy which will allow them to take over the leadership within the community. This legitimacy can rely only on a 'national' collective identity, not a religious one, and, therefore, the community ends up as part of the Hellenic Greek and not the Greek-Orthodox entity.<sup>57</sup>

This development resulted in a series of crises evolving around the status of the local Elders Council (*Δημογεροντία*, *heyet-i ihtiyar*), whose authority was now challenged by the new middle-class social groups.<sup>58</sup> The initial compromise ended in the victory of the newcomers, who, through the establishment of a Central Committee (*Κεντρική Έπιτροπή*, *heyet-i merkeziye*), managed to restrict the power of the Elders. However, the new leading groups were mostly connected with the local Hellenic authorities, and found it difficult to consolidate their hegemony. The

56. Rougon, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

57. Anagnostopoulou, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

58. Philippe Iliou, 'Luttes sociales et mouvements des Lumières à Smyrne en 1819', *Actes du Colloque Interdisciplinaire* (Bucharest: AIESEE, 1975), p. 295-315; Augoustinos, *op. cit.*, p. 145-185.

last and most prolonged of these crises took place during the years 1902-1908, and divided the community into two fiercely opposing groups, the supporters of the Elders on the one hand, and the supporters of the Central Committee on the other: broadly speaking, the Ottoman Greeks and the Hellenic Greeks respectively. The pretext upon which the conflict emerged was an economic scandal for which members of the Central Committee were held responsible. Following that controversy, Hellenic subjects supported by Metropolitan Vassilios manipulated the elections in order to secure their participation in the Mixed Ecclesiastical Council that was supposed to handle the issues, though according to the community regulations only Ottoman subjects were entitled to be members of that Council. This initial conflict created a series of side conflicts within many foundation committees and it came to an end with the adoption of the new 1910 regulation, which consolidated equal participation within the community administration.

In any case, in 1904 and in 1908, many among the members of the Greek-Orthodox community in Izmir addressed the Ottoman authorities as lawful citizens and actually managed to achieve their goal. Hellenic national sentiment did not necessarily contradict with civic loyalty to the Ottoman state. Their protests were based exactly on those grounds. There was no feeling of inferiority. At the same time, it seems that the authorities did not treat them differently. During the 1908 elections, the negotiation over the second deputy was indicative of the atmosphere. However, the community conflicts already described should not lead to the conclusion that there was a strict distinction between the Ottoman Greeks and the Hellenic Greeks. The dense network of institutions and associations created a space where leading social groups could participate, regardless of their nationality. As a matter of fact, ethnic affiliation had been a determinant in fostering ties among the members of the community, since apart from the Orthodox there was also a number of Greek Catholics who did participate in the community life.

Having said that, it is also true that a great deal among them took advantage of the opportunities offered by other foreign consulates and sought to be granted the status of protégé or even full nationality. This practice was accelerated towards the end of the century when the antag-

onisms among the foreign powers compelled them to follow such policies more frequently. It was also true that Hellenic Greeks as well as many Ottoman Greeks who managed to be granted Hellenic nationality were protected by the capitulations granted to the Hellenic state and profited accordingly. Following the foundation of the Hellenic kingdom, the Hellenic nationality was conceded to any Ottoman subject who would reside in Greece for three years. Initially, the Ottoman authorities refused to recognize this status, which resulted to constant disputes. The first step towards a compromise was made with the Kanlica convention, on the 27th of May 1855, which constitutes the first Greek-Turkish commercial treaty and which actually provided Greece with the privileges deriving from the Capitulations that other Western European states used to enjoy.<sup>59</sup> However, the issue of nationality among the Greek-Orthodox would be resolved only in 1869, with the 'Law on Ottoman Nationality'. According to this law, the Ottoman state recognized the Hellenic nationality of all those who obtained it until 1869. From that date onward, no Greek-Orthodox who would be attributed the Hellenic nationality, would be recognized as such by the Ottoman state. Instead, the same person, while staying in Greece, would be recognized as a Hellenic subject, whereas in the Ottoman dominions it would be treated as an Ottoman subject. This peculiar status safeguarded the right to many Hellenic subjects to keep their nationality while at the same time participating in the guilds as Ottoman subjects, as long as they fulfilled their tax duties to the Ottoman state, without any involvement of the consular authorities. In practice, though, these individuals, while they were involved in domestic economic activities by taking advantage of their Ottoman nationality, they frequently used the privileges related to their Hellenic nationality in order to avoid taxation. Thus, whereas the agricultural products from land owned by these individuals should be normally subjected to the *aşar* (tithe) taxation, they used to ask for the intervention of the consular authorities in order to achieve a more favorable arrangement. Moreover, professions such as that of a lawyer, a medical doctor or a merchant were not subjected to the *temettü* or the *kantariye* (on the weight of a commodity) tax, according to the signed treaties. Therefore,

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59. Anagnostopoulou, *op. cit.*, p. 388.

it became the norm for all Greek-Orthodox to try to prove their Hellenic nationality so that they could be exempted from taxation.<sup>60</sup>

On the other hand, the local Ottoman authorities responded by trying to prevent certain stipulations of the treaties. They either claimed that they were not informed or that the Hellenic subjects who had also Ottoman nationality were compelled to be members of a guild. To make things worse, the war of 1897 between the two countries eliminated the clauses of the treaties that were beneficiary for the Hellenic subjects. The Ottoman authorities in order to eliminate conditions of exemption from taxation forced the Hellenic subjects to chose Ottoman nationality or leave the country within fifteen days.<sup>61</sup> Their purpose, Anagnostopou-

60. Ibid., p. 310-312.

61. In an article, in the review *Άκρίς* (*Ray*) published in Izmir by Emmanouil Emmanouilidis, the publisher, a famous lawyer and journalist, who, during the Second Constitutional Period, was actively involved in politics, deals with the international legislation on war and focuses on the issue of the application of these laws in the war between Greece and the Ottoman Empire. According to the author: 'The Imperial government, relying on the international law, ordered the expulsion of the Hellenic subjects, either because it wished to harass the commercial activity of the state, with which [the Ottoman Empire] was at war, or because it considered the great number of them [Hellenic subjects] as dangerous for public order'. He points out, however, that the Ottoman authorities behaved with lenience, taking into consideration the grave results that such a decision would have on local commerce. Therefore, it issued a two weeks' notice which it renewed many times. During that period of tolerance, Hellenic subjects were subjected to the Ottoman legislation and therefore their private rights and property were protected. Thus, the author claims, the Imperial government protected domestic commerce which would have been severely harmed by an immediate expulsion of the Hellenic subjects. The terms which conditioned their status were the following:

1. The protection of the Hellenic subjects by neutral states was not valid for the period of war.

2. The Hellenic subjects were considered deprived of the privileges that the subjects of the Protector Powers enjoyed. However, their affairs would be suspended until the reinstatement of peace relations. Thus, apart from penal cases, no other lawsuit could be brought against them.

3. Those that had debts were urged to provide guarantees; those who had real estates could not sell them. The previous selling of *mülk* (private property) and *mukataalı vakf* (rented property) were all considered valid, according to provided receipts, as long as they complied with the needs of the state.

lou points out, was not so much to make the Greeks flee but incorporate them into the taxation system. Relations between the two countries were not to be restored until the Ottoman-Greek commercial treaty of 1903 was signed. The Ottoman government, however, considered that, according to the Kanlica convention, all Hellenic subjects were obliged to join a guild and consequently pay the taxes, as did the Ottomans. Thus, although, according to the new treaty, all Hellenic subjects were exempted from the *temettü* tax, the dispute remained.<sup>62</sup> In any case, the war of 1897 should be considered as a turning point in terms of the distinction between Hellenic and Ottoman subjects and the privileges that a double nationality entailed for the Greek-Orthodox population. It would be exactly these new conditions that a large number among the Ottoman Greeks, who controlled the 'Elders Council', took advantage of in the first decade of the 20th century in order to claim back part of their social influence that the Hellenic subjects, who controlled the 'Central Committee', had deprived them of.

This attitude can be easily explained by the fact that Ottoman Greeks, contrary to Hellenic Greeks, felt their position quite precarious, as they were subjected to any unpredictable decision of the Ottoman authorities. Thus, despite the fact that they were equally proud of their Greek ethnic identity, and even considered themselves as the authentic offspring of Ionia, the cradle of Hellenism, if compared to the newcomers from the islands or mainland Greece, they vehemently claimed the rights deriving from their Ottoman nationality, occasionally at the expense of their Hellenic brothers.

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4. Those that left Turkey should bring along their families, too.

5. Those who applied for Ottoman nationality would not be allowed to shift to the Hellenic one after the war.

6. Those who claimed Ottoman nationality should provide a registration proof (*δημοτικόν, tezkere*). Those who had shifted from Ottoman nationality to Hellenic, even if they had not been recognized as Hellenes by the authorities were to be immediately expelled.

Emmanouil Emmanouilidis, *Διεθνές Δίκαιον ἐν πολέμῳ: 7 Ἐφαρμογὴ τῶν ἀρχῶν τούτων κατὰ τὸν ἐνεστώτα πόλεμον* [*International War Law: 7 Application of these Principles during the Present War*], *Ἀκτῆς* 5 (1 May 1897), p. 88-89.

62. Anagnostopoulou, *op. cit.*, p. 315-316.

The situation changed rapidly with the boycott, when they were urgently faced with the dilemma of choosing between Ottoman and Hellenic identification. The self-confident appropriation of the 'public sphere' on the part of the Greek-Orthodox population belonged to the past. In his report, the British Vice-Consul Haethercot-Smith left no doubt: 'Great fears have been entertained during the past fortnight as to the action that the Turks and more especially the Mohammedan Cretans—some 30,000 are settled in this vilayet—would take against the Greeks at the time of the evacuation of the foreign troops in Crete. The Greeks have been so sensible of the dangerous feeling abroad, that they have not held the many local fairs (*panaghir*) which are due to take place at this time of the year. And they studiously refrain from anything likely to excite the Turks'.<sup>63</sup>

### *Participating in the public manifestations*

In most of the cases we tackled, the fragile relation between urban and rural areas was part of the process. Both in 1904 and in 1908, rural populations were given the opportunity to participate in urban developments and claim a significant role in decision-making, even if the issues discussed did not immediately affect their everyday life. It seems that the ethno-religious affinity, in these cases, had built bridges over the distinction between urban and rural experience, all the more so since this distinction did not coincide with the one between Hellenic Greeks and Ottoman Greeks. What was still at stake was the legitimacy of those bridges, since they were built in moments of crisis when the urban networks needed the rural support. Whether that meant that an organized and consolidated 'public sphere' in the urban area would expand to include the rural areas remains an open question.

It is necessary to investigate the means appropriated by the urban community in order to incorporate the rural populations. Most significant among them were the educational and commercial networks. The countryside consumed urban products. Such products included foreign

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63. FO 195/2331, Haethercot-Smith (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 69, 20 July 1909.



merchandise transported through the port,<sup>64</sup> but also educational material and skills carried by teaching personnel from either the community itself or beyond.<sup>65</sup> At the same time, the city was dependent on the countryside both in terms of food supplies and commercial activity. The most crucial axis of this exchange was the railway. Not only were merchandise and people carried back and forth by the railway, but also a whole new social and economic activity flourished along its line, comprising at the same time trade and brigandage. In these terms, it is possible to trace the interrelation between the urban and the rural areas, but it still remains unclear to what extent the rural areas used to participate in urban social and political activity.

At the same time, the appropriation of urban space is attributed a certain typology and invested with specific meanings. Exertzoglou has described the importance attributed by the urban communities to the ceremonies and parades as a way of setting up social hierarchies and defining the community.<sup>66</sup> In 1904, as I have already mentioned, Consul Antonopoulos described a public demonstration led by scientists and merchants. In a 1908 dispatch, Consul Evgeniadis referred to the celebration of the Young Turk Revolution as follows: 'A demonstration led by scientists organized by the Greek community took place today, but without having been prearranged. At the *konak*, from where I was watching the event, I could see arriving up to 5,000-6,000 people with Greek and Ottoman flags ... The city celebrates every day demonstrations and formal dinners of officials [take place]'.<sup>67</sup>

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64. Elena Frangakis-Syrret, 'The economic activities of the Greek Community of Izmir in the second half of the 19th and early 20th c.', in D. Gontikas and Ch. Issawi (eds), *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism*, Princeton N.J.: Darwin Press, 1999, p. 18-19.

65. Haris Exertzoglou, 'Shifting boundaries: language, community and the "non-Greek speaking Greeks"', *Historein* (1999), p. 82-83.

66. Haris Exertzoglou, "'Μετὰ Μεγάλης Παρατάξεως': συμβολικὲς πρακτικὲς καὶ κοινοτικὴ συγκρότηση στὶς ἀστικὲς ὀρθόδοξες κοινότητες τῆς ὕστερης ὀθωμανικῆς περιόδου' ["'With pomp and circumstance': symbolic practices and social formation in the urban Orthodox communities of the late Ottoman period"], *Τὰ Ἱστορικὰ* 31 (1999), p. 349-380.

67. AMFA 1908, I, 'Proclamation...', 3603, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 20 July 1908.

Immediately afterwards, though, the Hellenic Consul sent a report in which he complained that his dispatch was published in the Athenian newspapers but was misread, since he never addressed the demonstrators with the words 'Long Live the Sultan'. He pointed out that 'it would be impossible for me to follow the views of the demagogues here in Smyrna, especially the locally published newspapers, which try everything in order to be pleasant to the Committee of Union and Progress'.<sup>68</sup> Evgeniadis wished to avoid being accused of being the one who had organized the demonstration but also that he favored the new regime. Moreover, he did not appreciate at all the prevailing excitement and his expectation from the political change was to establish law and order, whereby the chief of police would not be able any more to proceed to the 'usual abuses'.<sup>69</sup> His discourse seems to reflect the embarrassment of the Greek authorities which were caught totally unprepared in view of the new developments. Since he had not received any instructions, the Hellenic diplomat feared of being accused that he acted upon his own initiative.

The demonstrations described above brought together part of the urban population. The 'scientists'<sup>70</sup> might have been at the head of the demonstrations, but the protests were a spontaneous activity rather than an event organized by the consular or the community authorities. However, these events, as it became clear both in 1904 and in 1908, were frequently used as occasions, where the community or the consular authorities found the opportunity to claim a prominent role at the symbolic representation

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68. AMFA 1908, I, 'Proclamation...', 3856, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 26 July 1908.

69. AMFA 1908, I, 'Proclamation...', 3566, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 19 July 1908.

70. The most prominent role among those scientists was probably played by medical doctors and lawyers. As part of a project on 'urban elites with scientific education' directed by Meropi Anastassiadou, I have studied the social and political involvement in community affairs of some of the medical doctors attached to the Greek-Orthodox Hospital. The prestige those figures enjoyed thanks to their profession was enormous both in social and in symbolical terms; V. Kechriotis, 'Between professional duty and national fulfillment: The Smyrniot medical doctor Apostolos Psaltoff (1862-1923)', in Meropi Anastassiadou (ed.), *Médecins et ingénieurs ottomans à l'âge des nationalismes*, Paris: IFEA, Maisonneuve & Larose, 2003, p. 331-348.

of the community. Moreover, regarding the relation between the rural and the urban population, those occasions were utilized as rituals which temporarily expanded the boundaries of the community. As Cohen has put it: 'A ritual has also this capacity to heighten consciousness. It should not be surprising, therefore, to find ritual occupying a prominent place in the repertoire of symbolic devices through which community boundaries are affirmed and reinforced'.<sup>71</sup>

In 1908, it seems that Consul Evgeniadis wished to keep himself aloof, especially after the 'unpleasant incident' of 1904 and the removal of his predecessor. He also rejected this kind of naive enthusiasm and demagogic discourse that both the demonstrators and the newspapers conveyed. It is clear that, temporarily, he did not feel competent to deal with the emancipation of the Greek-Orthodox population, a result of the excitement prevailing all over the city.

### *Social networking*

Moments of crisis reveal the different layers of self-identification as well as the tensions between the intermediaries of political power and the central administration. In the cases I presented, local authorities did not always closely follow the instructions provided by either the Ottoman or the Hellenic capital.<sup>72</sup> It is not surprising that political agents with

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71. A. P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, London: Routledge, 1989, p. 50.

72. Akarlı has described the difficult relation between local *valis* and the Capital and he stresses the fact that they always had to appeal for the assistance of the central government in order to handle the pressure exercised by the Consuls. The central government, in its turn, provided them with laws and regulations in order to facilitate their activity. However, this legal apparatus made it necessary for the *valis* to share their authority with all the local state officials, especially the police and army commanders but also the council of local notables. The result was that no senior Ottoman official really wished to hold a governorship and everybody considered these offices as places of exile. Thus, the pashas tried to establish themselves in the Capital. Their success would largely depend on personal contacts with foreign diplomats and on personal ability to handle foreign affairs. Engin Akarlı, 'The problems of external pressures, power struggles and budgetary deficits in Ottoman politics under Abdülhamid II (1876-1909): Origins and solutions', PhD Dissertation, Princeton University, 1976, p. 90.

personal relations and social affiliations within the diverse communities found it difficult to ignore them in order to come to terms with distant Istanbul or Athens.

On the whole, the inconsistencies in decision-making were frequently related to power struggles in the capital itself. The *vali* Kâmil pasha had been a political rival of the Sultan Abdülhamid, and as a matter of fact had been appointed in Izmir after his removal from the office of Grand Vizier.<sup>73</sup> Therefore, it was not difficult for him to channel social discontent towards the central government and spare himself any accusation. During the first months after the Young Turk Revolution, four different officials succeeded one another as *valis*. Moreover, for a certain period, the office of Grand Vizier was held by Kâmil pasha himself. In a comment on the unstable situation at the Aydın *vilayet*, the British Consul pointed out that: 'It was hoped that the appointment of Raouf pasha in succession to Faik bey would have been attended by good results, but he has disappointed everyone. It may be thought that after enjoying the advantage of being governed by his Highness Kâmil pasha, the Smyrna public is difficult to please, but the condition of the various departments of the [local] government shows that there is no controlling hand'.<sup>74</sup>

A combination of local networks made it very difficult for any newcomer to consolidate his authority.<sup>75</sup> For example, Mehmed Ali pasha, one of Kâmil pasha's successors, tried at one point to take refuge in the summer residence of the British Consul, following the example of Kâmil pasha who had done the same in 1907, when he had fallen in disgrace. However, when Mehmed Ali pasha heard that orders had been issued for his arrest and removal to Istanbul, he escaped and was caught on the coast near Beirut.<sup>76</sup> Whereas it had been possible for a *vali* who had been closely related to the local networks to protect himself in the view

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73. On the relations between Abdülhamid II and Kâmil pasha as Grand Vizier, see *ibid.*, p. 140-160.

74. FO 195/2300, Bernham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 116, 19 September 1908.

75. After Mehmed Ali, who was deposed as a result of the Young Turk Revolution, Faik, Raouf, Ferid, Kâzım, Mahmud Muhtar and Nâzım successively held the office of the *vali* of Aydın in a period of three years.

76. Aykut, *The Revolution...*, p. 63.

of the capital's discontent, a total stranger was unable to take advantage of those networks under similar conditions. The networks were even more visible on a micro level. During the election riots, for instance, the Hellenic Vice Consul in nearby Vourla, pointed out that 'the *kaymakam* (local governor) and the Ottomans (i.e. Muslims) here worked honestly together with our own people, they expressed their sorrow and disapproval against the Committee. The *kaymakam* reported that officially to Smyrna'.<sup>77</sup> In Smyrna, it was also the *kaymakam* who, at the crucial moment, arranged that a delegation could address the *vali*, since the troops prohibited any demonstration beyond the Metropolitan Palace area.<sup>78</sup>

A year later, the local authorities would hold the Boycott Committee responsible for any damage and in certain cases, they would intervene against the boycotters.<sup>79</sup> It was clear that they disapproved of any kind of turmoil, since they perceived it as a threat to the peace and order of the city, especially, since the Greek merchant activity was so interrelated with British, French, and Austrian interests. Moreover, the boycott was also used as a pretext for actions of personal revenge, selectively addressed towards certain individuals. In the outskirts of the city, for instance, foreign subjects doing business with Greeks protested that their properties had been harassed by groups directed by the Boycott Committee, whereas some Greek-Orthodox or Hellenic subjects lived in peace.<sup>80</sup> In addition to this, the boycott unleashed social discontent that

77. AMFA, Α, 'Illegal activities...', 6689, Zanetos (Vourla) to Baltatzis (Athens), 1 November 1908.

78. AMFA, Α, 'Illegal activities...', 6694, Evgeniadis (Smyrna) to Baltatzis (Athens), 1 November 1908.

79. As the British Consul informs us, 'The Government is keeping clear of the movement, as it did during the Austrian boycott, and disclaiming all responsibility whenever violence is used. The boycotters protest loudly that they mean it to be a peaceful movement. As, however, they have the turbulent element of the Cretans among them, it may easily degenerate into brawls and worse. This morning, Greek shops were shut by the boycotters but re-opened by the police. Foreigners employing Greeks have not so far been troubled'; FO 195/2331, Bernham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 73, 2 August 1909. A point of contention, however, regards the relevant statistics, since according to the Hellenic Consul, some 50,000 Smyrniot Greeks were Hellenic subjects, while the Ottoman authorities claimed that there were only 26,000.

80. FO 195/2383, Heathercot-Smith (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 80, 31 October 1911.

was widespread already before this period. It is partly on those grounds that local authorities reacted to what they considered to be a group of trouble-makers, a threat to public order. The British Consul referred to the Cretan dockers who had found the opportunity to hold a strike against the shipping agents and owners of lighters. They demanded from the government a new agreement in order to replace the one signed in 1909 on their behalf. According to that old agreement, only one third of the porters employed were to be Muslims. The same day a group of Muslim Cretans visited the offices of the Hellenic 'Pantaleon' shipping company, which dominated maritime transportation on the littoral of Western Asia Minor, and informed them that they had launched a boycott against the Hellenic subjects and therefore no cargo would be allowed to be loaded on the ships of the company.<sup>81</sup> The local authorities were prompt in persecuting the culprits.

However, the way some of the incidents are reported in the local press from 1910 onwards, leaves no doubt that the more the turmoil around the Cretan Question escalates, the more local authorities turned a blind eye to the complaints.<sup>82</sup> The Greek newspaper *Ἀμάλθεια*, however, still maintained that the violence that took place in the market 'upset and distressed all the rightly-thinking [ὀρθοφρονοῦντας] citizens and particularly the authorities'.<sup>83</sup> It is not a coincidence, however, that the newspaper provides for the first time a definition of the boycott in order to prove that what actually happens does not fall within the definition. Thus, it is argued that 'the boycott is a means of fighting against commercial interests which are opposing those of a nation which has come into being in freedom. But exactly due to that, [such an action]

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81. 'Κήρυξις μποϊκοτάζ' ['Proclamation of the boycott'], *Ἀμάλθεια*, 27 May 1910.

82. We are informed, for instance, that a group of Muslim Cretans visited the baker's shop owned by Vasilis Manousos and threatened him. The shopowner complained to a police officer who was passing by, but the latter refused to arrest them. Three days later, Manousos was visited by other police officers who asked him to indicate the culprits. He was, however, unable to do so since he did not know their names. Then, a few days later, two police officers appeared and arrested both Manousos and his secretary for spreading revolutionary ideas and jeopardising public order; 'Παράδοξος σύλληψις' ['An awkward arrest'], *Ἀμάλθεια*, 27 May 1910.

83. "Ἐκτροπα διαθήματα" ['Incidents of harassment'], *Ἀμάλθεια*, 28 May 1910.

should respect individual freedom. Boycott does not mean violence, ochlocracy and arbitrary attacks'.<sup>84</sup>

Still, until early spring months of 1910, the Hellenic interests seemed to withstand the harassments. Moreover, the boycotters were initially restricted to the Muslim areas and did not dare to appear in entirely Christian quarters, such as Fasoula. The practise they followed was to ask from the shop owners their municipality certificates and then they would urge them to close the shop down so as to prevent the consequences. Many Greeks complied, since they did not want to risk their properties. As a matter of fact, most of the violent incidents between Greeks and the boycotters were avoided due to the intervention of Tevfik bey, the director of education, who was temporarily replacing the *vali* and who gave orders to all police stations to safeguard the property of all citizens. This made the city look as being 'military occupied'.<sup>85</sup> The Hellenic Consul protested to Tevfik bey and, after he received the reassurance that riots would be prevented, he himself crossed the market calling the Hellenic subjects to reopen their shops. Moreover, the *vilayet* administration issued an announcement where it is claimed that 'any individual can apply the boycott over every product, however they should keep in mind that boycott does not mean invasion into shops and restriction of the freedom of merchants since this is against individual freedom'.<sup>86</sup> In other words, it is verbatim the definition of the boycott provided by *Ἀμάλθεια*. We do not know who copied whom in this case. Moreover, the *vilayet* administration launched instructions to the Turkish newspapers 'to enlighten the mob, which, as they say, is a barm easy to handle and can receive any form when led by the most developed'.<sup>87</sup>

Eventually, the boycott did divide the communities and caused an open conflict between Anatolian Greeks and Muslims. The Austrian boycott, which had preceded the Greek one, had already triggered tensions within the Ottoman society.<sup>88</sup> The Christians, in order to protect

84. Ibid.

85. 'Τὸ μποϊκοτάζ' ['The boycott'], *Ἀμάλθεια*, 28 May 1910.

86. Ibid.

87. 'Σμυρναϊκὴ ἠχώ' ['Smyrniot Echo'], *Ἀμάλθεια*, 29 May 1910.

88. Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, *1908 Osmanlı boykotu: bir toplumsal hareketin analizi* [The Ottoman Boycott of 1908: The Analysis of a Social Movement], İstanbul: İletişim, 2004.

their short-term economic interests, did not participate and occasionally opposed anti-Austrian activities. This resulted in accusations of unpatriotic behavior. Nevertheless, the Boycott Committee, which undertook the activities in Smyrna, had foreseen, in early 1909, that action against one of the communities would harm all of them. Quataert correctly implies that the leadership had a choice. And it is not accidental that the first members of the local Committee resigned after clashing with the local authorities.<sup>89</sup> Quataert concludes that if the CUP had not insisted on a boycott against Greece, the 'calamitous civil war among its own subjects' would have been prevented. It was, however, the pressure from the Cretan immigrants that left no alternative.<sup>90</sup>

### *Gâvur İzmir*

The flexibility of civic identities is an indication of a multi-layered self-identification. The boycott, for instance, had initially clearly targeted Hellenic subjects and not Ottoman Greeks.<sup>91</sup> In the course of events,

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89. As the British Consul points out, the fact that the Boycott Committee resigned made it clear that the authorities had brought the boycott under some control. *Köylü*, a Turkish newspaper, commented upon this announcement that 'others will be found to carry out the will of the Central Committee'; FO 195/2360, Barnham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 33, 17 April 1910.

90. Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908. Reactions to European Economic Penetration*, New York: New York University Press, 1983, p. 144.

91. According to the consular report: 'The Committee's manifesto states that the Greek reayas were entirely dissociated from the Hellenes and will be treated with the utmost friendliness. I saw several of the ringleaders of the boycott yesterday. They declare that it is no longer possible for them to live side by side with the Hellenes who, they say, have for a long time been steadily poisoning the minds of the reayas so as to excite them against the Turks. They point to the report of twelve Greek officers having been found in disguise in different parts of this province as conclusive proof of this'; FO 195/2360, Barnham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 77, 30 August 1910. Indicative of the difficulty to distinguish between the two is that in this report, the terms 'Greek' and 'Hellene' are used interchangeably. Barnham himself pointed out that most probably Ottoman Greeks would sympathize with the Hellenes and join them. There were rumors even of a counter boycott against Muslims; FO 195/2331, Barnham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 73, 2 August 1909.



though, as the boycott was applied to everybody, Ottoman Greeks and Hellenic subjects managed to alleviate some of its consequences either with the help of foreign protection or by reorienting their networks. The British Consul's account in 1910, after the boycott's temporary suspension, pointed out that although shipping had received a severe blow, most of the maritime companies that had been boycotted simply shifted their interests elsewhere. Moreover, Greek merchants either went on trading through others or shifted to Austrian or Italian nationality. The Greek tonnage itself increased during that year, and though the boycott had been severe for certain individuals, it is said to be clearly the Ottoman rather than the Hellenic commerce that suffered on the whole.<sup>92</sup> Certainly, the British account is optimistic. However, we do know that Hellenic subjects carried on business by using the British flag. The Ambassador pointed out to the Consul that if the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies suspected that a shipping company was not genuinely British, that company was to be refused registration. The Registrar was instructed to report to the Board of Trade, which demanded any information available, since it was known that certain companies were used as go-betweens for shifting to the British flag while those vessels actually remained under the authority of their Hellenic owners.<sup>93</sup>

Accordingly, the institutional distinction between Ottoman and Hellenic subjects does not seem to substantially describe the wide range of *personae*. In this context, people could be identified as *protégés* or even subjects of a foreign power, if needed, and frequently switched from one to another.<sup>94</sup>

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92. FO 195/2360, Barnham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 98, 28 November 1910.

93. FO 195/2383, Lowther (Constantinople) to Barnham (Smyrna), No 29, 9 May 1911.

94. FO 195/2383, Barnham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 42, 11 May 1911. According to a small survey undertaken by the consulate, the number of UK natives in the district on the 2nd of April 1911 was: 99 males and 80 females born within the UK and 280 males and 384 females born abroad, making a total of 843. A number among them were of Greek origin. Moreover, if we go through the list of companies of British interests claiming compensation in Turkish Liras for boycott damage, we can easily trace down those of Greek origin: T. B. Rees & Co 330, C&G Constantinides 1800, C. J. Protopazzi 110, P. Bonello 45, A. C. Sanson 75, J. Caritopoulo 200, C. Scudamore 725, G. Taylor 350, S. Stassinopoulo 4, Papapetro & Vedova 200, A. Scudamore 400, Mand. F. Clonarides & Co 2,162, Anglo-Hellenic

Moreover, individuals belonging both to the elite social groups but also to the middle strata of the population created ties outside the community. Families such as the Baltatzis, which could profit from the opportunities for social mobility that urban life provided, followed patterns of mixed marriages with members of the European communities, obviously in order to consolidate their social status.<sup>95</sup> Thus, these populations, living within an environment where so many ethnicities co-existed, developed a different kind of Hellenic identity. The term 'levantine' has been usually employed in this context, referring to ethno-religious bonds as well as to social and cultural characteristics. As Steven Rosenthal puts it: 'in the eyes of the Western Europeans, Levantines were the non-Muslim Ottomans whom they resented and despised'. In a recent study of the trajectory of the Levantine communities in the 19th century, Oliver Schmitt argues that throughout early modern times, the term was used vaguely for all the inhabitants of the Eastern Mediterranean. Up to 1800, it referred to all indigenous non-Muslim inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire, and this meaning never totally disappeared. Finally, after the turn of the 19th century, the majority shifted towards using it for indigenous Catholics of European descent, in opposition to both 'European' and 'Oriental'. Schmitt defines, himself, the group he studies as Catholics of European origin, descendants of European immigrants into the Ottoman Empire, who had often performed mixed marriages with Orthodox Christian women. He also includes families of Protestant descent, which had migrated before 1900 and Ottoman subjects who had converted to Catholicism; both groups are included on the grounds that they merged into a community which also included the original Catholics.<sup>96</sup> However, the same can be true for

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Steamship 2,023. FO 195/2360, Barnham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 95, 19 November 1910.

95. Marie-Carmen Smyrnellis, 'Coexistences et réseaux de relations à Smyrne aux XVIIIe et XIX siècles', in the special issue *Du cosmopolitisme en Méditerranée*, Sous la direction de Robert Escallier et Yvan Gastaut, *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 67 (2003), <http://cdlm.revues.org/index169.html>

96. Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Levantiner. Lebenswelten und Identitäten einer ethnokonfessionellen Gruppe im osmanischen Reich im 'langen 19. Jahrhundert'*, München: Oldenbourg, 2005, p. 53-61.

families of Orthodox descent or those who, even if Orthodox, they occupy a social space next and in close ties to the Catholics and Protestants.

Although 'levantinism' can have 'orientalist' connotations, the term becomes helpful when we refer to the simultaneous presence of Western education, urban culture, imperial discourse, polyglot life-style and local origin. We could also add to that a sense of belonging in a specific social group, and the frequent transgression of the boundaries of ethno-religious communities. Moreover, another way to describe 'levantinism' would be as an encounter of modernity with pre-modern values. Daniel Goffman, referring to the 17th century, suggested that: 'Izmir was formed in the midst of an upheaval, as European companies and merchants in search of goods and markets centered at the port a commercial network ... The town quickly became a cosmopolitan city acting like a magnet upon commercially sensitive communities and establishing itself as a rival to Istanbul for the people and products of its expanding hinterland'.<sup>97</sup> Goffman evokes Braudel's vision of the early modern European city. Braudel talks about 'autonomous worlds' of 'unparalleled freedom that had outwitted the territorial state' and pursued 'an economic policy of their own'. He attributes to them the capacity of 'breaking down obstacles and creating or recreating protective privileges'.<sup>98</sup> At the turn of the 20th century, however, and in view of the antagonism among the Great Powers and newly born nation-states, 'territoriality' and 'central authority' are challenged not by a libertarian social vision but by rival authorities which form a system of modern power balance.

The term 'cosmopolitanism' has also often been employed in order to describe this specific urban phenomenon. However, as it has been suggested for Alexandria and Istanbul, but also for Smyrna,<sup>99</sup> it is important

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97. Daniel Goffman, *Izmir and the Levantine World, 1550-1650*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990, p. 145-146.

98. Fernand Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life 1400-1800*, translated from French by Miriam Kochan, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973, p. 396.

99. Robert Ilbert, 'Alexandrie cosmopolite?', in P. Dumont et F. Georgeon (eds), *Villes Ottomans à la fin de l'Empire*, Paris: Harmattan, 1992, p. 171-185; Aleka Karadimou-Gerolympou, 'Αναζητώντας τὸν χαμένο αἰώνα τῆς Σμύρνης' ['Searching for the lost century of Smyrna'], in 'Ὁ Ἐξω Ἑλληνισμός: Κωνσταντινούπολη καὶ Σμύρνη [The Outside-Hellenism: Istanbul and Smyrna], Athens: Ἐταιρεία Σπουδῶν

to bear in mind that the term has been invested with diverse meanings. It could simply refer to a 'plural city' where communities live side by side but not really together or to the articulation of 'communities of interests', which create a common denominator for all the inhabitants.<sup>100</sup> One way or another, it is definitely more productive to seek for these social practices that bring together the Muslims and the Greek-Orthodox, the Armenians and the Jews, the Ottomans and the Europeans. Mixed marriages were part of these practices that created new solidarities, the shift from segregated neighborhoods to areas open to all communities according to their social status being another. The same applies to the public spaces where the Smyrniot Greeks would meet and socialize. They would mostly be defined by their social origin rather than their communal ties. As a matter of fact, whether they conduct their professional and social relations largely among their coreligionists or not, the multiple identities of the Smyrniot Greeks were eventually the outcome of these different relations, which create possibilities and restrictions not at all fixed in time.<sup>101</sup> This is still important but it does not entail the infusion of different cultures into one, in the way of a 'melting pot'. Each community retains certain autonomy both in administration and in culture. In the long run, what is at stake for the Smyrniot Greeks is not whether they were 'cosmopolitan' or not. The relations described above could make many of them look 'cosmopolitan', but at the same time did not prevent them from becoming fervent nationalists.

The Hellenic Professor Carolidis, discussing the issue in his own terms and with the bitterness of what he considered an election fraud, gave a different view: 'Definitely, if Smyrna was the capital of the Ottoman state or at least if in the Ottoman state there was a strong national public opinion holding together the people of the cities in a society who were morally and politically brought up and educated in institutions

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Νεοελληνικού Πολιτισμού και Γενικής Παιδείας [Association of Neo-Hellenic Civilization Studies and General Culture], 2000, p. 15-36; Ethem Eldem, Daniel Goffman and Bruce Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

100. Ilbert, *op. cit.*

101. Smyrnelis, *op. cit.*

and laws of a free political life, [I would have been elected]'.<sup>102</sup> This is definitely an outsider's view. Carolidis came from a background that was heavily marked by the political culture of the nation-state. The political atmosphere he encountered in Smyrna seemed incomprehensible to him. Thus, he chose to stress one of its elements, which was the lack of a 'national public opinion'. The negotiation of identities that took place on the local level, among the Hellenic officials and the Ottoman authorities, was to a large extent the product of similar discrepancies. It should be pointed out that the power relations with both the Hellenic and the Ottoman authorities contributed not only to the formation of the specific political culture but also to the way the community perceived itself. In the long run, those power relations also contributed to the disintegration of the whole system. The events I tackled describe the way that the symbolic images and the urban experience of a semi-autonomous community seemed to have been consolidated, exactly at the point that new circumstances inferred its dissolution and marked the sunset of a whole era.

### *Form as the content of diplomacy*

The language engaged in the sources, in this case British, French, and Greek consular reports, dominates and organizes the information to an extent that we need to unlock several formulas, either of 'diplomatic' or 'Western' discourse. In the British and French reports, the alternative use of the terms Greek/Hellenic subjects, or Greek-Orthodox/Greeks or Greeks/Christians is a good example. The alternative use may frequently indicate the similar political and cultural weight of the terms rather than a simple confusion. However, when the diplomat himself is involved in the identification, the metonymical use becomes obvious. Christians can be identified as, occasionally, the Greeks, or the Greeks and the Armenians, or the Greeks, the Armenians and all the foreign communities. When Christians are threatened by Muslims, the latter identification is more probable, bringing all kinds of connotations about a broader 'we' clearly distinctive from a fearful 'they', the 'civilized' from the 'barbarian'. When the aggression turns the other way around, the 'we' becomes

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102. Carolidis, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

much stricter and there are two 'they' now, fighting each other. In those cases, the term 'reaya' looks more appropriate.

Similar points could be made concerning the Hellenic consular reports. What we see in this case is the unanimous use of the term 'Hellenes' (*Ἕλληνες*) for both Hellenic subjects and Greek-Orthodox Ottoman subjects. At the same time, the term 'Ottoman' (*Ὀθωμανός*) is used only in reference to the Muslims, the rest being Armenians, Jews, etc. It is not difficult to figure out how the 'imaginary boundaries' set by the Hellenic authorities would include the entire Greek population under the same collective identification, thus undermining the perception of Ottomanism as a coercive element of the local society. What we cannot assess, of course, is the response of the population itself to such a language. However, even if there had been alternative views before, from 1908 onwards and through the conflicts that made the need for collective identification more precipitating, any other option gradually faded away.

On the other hand, in the way the Consuls describe tension and conflict, the individual and their experience become extremely relevant. The role of those diplomats was much more significant and gave them more liberties than they have today. Moreover, we witness the same people changing places within the Empire, which means that they are fairly accustomed to the circumstances.<sup>103</sup> They allow themselves comments on every aspect of life, describing the reaction of different communities or individuals as part of long-standing patterns or even rituals, and thus attributing to any deviation from these norms the character of 'abnormal'. This does not mean that they lack knowledge of the society or that they do not perceive changes, but they still deal with them as undesirable. They can show high respect for members of the Ottoman administration, as long as the latter share their views. The rest

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103. Akarlı describes the crucial role the Consuls played within the new circumstances, in Akarlı, *op. cit.*, p. 90. Consulates were established everywhere for protecting the interests of the European businessmen and their local agents according to the signed treaties. The Consuls' interventions could significantly influence the power of the *valis*. They could easily manage to bring, if necessary, local disputes to the ambassadors in Istanbul and thus violate the local networks in case they did not conform with their interests.

of the population could also attract their attention, sometimes even with admiration, as long as it remains silent. These accounts become more interesting, when, in certain cases, two diplomats contradict each other, thus revealing their personal involvement in the political and social developments. Moreover, in their description of violence, we need to know the person in order to speculate about the degree of truthfulness in his accounts. For someone like Cumberbatch who had experienced harsher circumstances in Macedonia, an incident that resulted in only one death, obviously could not be described as a massacre.

A few months before the particular event, in 1905, British troops had occupied the Customs Houses at Mytilini (*Midilli adası*) and Lemnos (*Limni adası*). The British Consul describes his fear regarding the effect that this occupation would have on the temper of the Muslim subjects. He points out, though, that in Smyrna, Turks had taken things 'quietly and philosophically' and, as he believes, if they were allowed to speak freely, they would probably express their satisfaction at the event considered as a lesson given to the Palace clique, held responsible for all bad advice to the Sultan.

And he resumes his views as follows: 'The Christians in the interior and at a distance from the sea board always get nervous whenever there is any political difficulty in the air and they are quite ready to be "scared" but, unless the "mot d'ordre" is issued from high quarters, I doubt very much whether there is any fear of any troubles of an antichristian nature. Anyhow, at present there are no indications of a disposition on the part of the Mussulmans to revenge the indignity imposed on their Caliph by the European Powers of Christianity'.<sup>104</sup>

The amount of fear prevailing among Christians made any event look like an organized massacre. A Greek Priest at Axar, near Magnisia, sent a telegram to the Metropolitan of Ephesus informing him that the Turks were 'massacring' the Christians and appealing for help. The news triggered a wave of panic as they reached Smyrna a day or two after the arrival of the warships in Mytilini. Thus, everybody was ready to believe that it was a planned onslaught against the Christians. What had

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104. FO 195/2209, Cumberbatch (Smyrna) to O'Connor (Cosntantinople), No 60, 12 December 1905.

actually happened was that two soldiers during the *Bayram* holiday had got drunk, killed a Christian and injured one more.

The Hellenic Consuls, on the other hand, either out of the need to attract the attention of their superiors or sincerely identifying themselves with the fear and suffering of the community, do not abstain themselves from conveying high tension. In one of the accounts, Consul Evgeniadis describes how the CUP, in order to accelerate the disturbances, urged the *softas* (preachers) in the mosques and the fanatics in the local clubs to propagate the persecution of the Hellenic subjects by all means and the destruction of their fortunes. At the same time, the Muslim press, through flamboyant articles, is said to have incited the Ottomans to abide by the instructions provided by the Boycott Committee. Placards describing those instructions had been placed in the central streets of Smyrna. The Consul concludes: 'In one word, it's not the boycott, it's the systematic persecution, above all, that prevails'.<sup>105</sup>

Obviously, the political interests of local 'inspectors' who reported to their central authorities determine to a great extent the rhetoric of the accounts. The involvement of the Hellenic state in the protection and preservation of the Greek-Orthodox community should be taken for granted. On the other hand, it is well known that the British authorities followed a policy that favored the integrity of the Ottoman Empire against any nationalistic separatist movement.<sup>106</sup> Thus, they would seek to support and protect the image of the Ottoman authorities and the Muslim population. The choices in terminology, information input and evaluation of the events we come across in the sources, should be read within this framework.

### *Concluding remarks*

Among the historians of the period, Kansu has depicted a strict dichotomy between the progressive and the reactionary powers of that period, while at the same time accusing his colleagues of not avoiding the pitfall

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105. FO 195/2383, the report is attached in Barnham (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 33, 20 April 1911.

106. Marian Kent (ed.), *The Great Powers and the Ottoman Empire*, London: Frank Cass, 1996.



of the modernization scheme.<sup>107</sup> However, terms such as 'progressive' or 'reactionary' bear different meanings than today, much as the terms 'Turk' or 'Greek' or 'Ottoman' need a lot of elaboration in order to be framed within the particular historical context.<sup>108</sup> His argument, though, that the Young Turk Revolution, by releasing previously suppressed social and ethnic tensions, brought about a new ideological repertoire and a new political culture (mobilization of social groups, participation in decision-making, etc) is definitely a valid one. The eventual orientation of the political culture to national rather than supra-national identification was partly due to the incapacity of the imperial centre to implement its own will in a context that turned increasingly 'modern'. Deringil has suggested that the Ottoman Empire, like all other monarchies of the 19th century, found itself increasingly in the need to legitimate its existence both towards its own subjects and to the outside world.<sup>109</sup> It seems, though, that the state was unable to construct a self-image that was equally respected by both sides. Instead, at least in the case of Smyrna, different civic or cultural self-images were constructed and to some extent were preserved amidst all turbulence.

However, there are two major issues that could be better comprehended if placed in their historical context. The first concerns the political practices initiated by the New Regime. The Old Regime had also tried to promote a centralization policy, to rationalize finances, and to escape the fatal embracing of Capitulations. The example of the *temettü* tax, among others, is typical, since it had long existed but had never previously been demanded as it was in 1904. It was not so much the difference in political choices that distinguished the Young Turks from the Old Regime. It is the new meaning the 'public sphere' was invested with, which paved the ground for new agents. The elections were one example, the use of urban space as a stage for public demonstration and participation was another, and the boycott was probably the most

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107. Kansu, *Politics...*, p. 3-21.

108. Vangelis Kechriotis, 'Greek-Orthodox, Ottoman Greeks or just Greeks? Theories of ethnic coexistence in the aftermath of the Young Turk Revolution', *Études Balkaniques* 1 (Bulgaria 2005), p. 51-72.

109. Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909*, London: I. B. Tauris, 1998, p. 44.

impressive of all. In any case, even if the Consuls or the local authorities had managed to channel and control, one way or another, the discontent of the Greek-Orthodox and the Muslim communities, after 1908 this was no longer possible. Discontent and mistrust had poured out and even those who believed they were going to profit, such as the Hellenic authorities, soon found out they were wrong. They were accustomed to the old rules of the game, and the new ones were yet to be discovered.

The second issue concerns the description of the increasing tension after 1908, culminating during the First World War. Despite the fact that the persecution of the Greek-Orthodox populations in 1914-1918 was of an unprecedented scale, tension as well as peaceful coexistence existed both before and after the events. It is important to study structures of violence deriving from the Hamidian Period as well as modes of resolution in the very turbulent Second Constitutional Period, especially on an everyday life level. Among electoral riots, boycott and wars, it is possible to witness the resistance of local networks and also examine the way they were consolidated throughout the years. In September 1914, after the outbreak of the Great War and the involvement of the Empire, urban life in Smyrna was on the verge of disintegration. The local authorities gathered all male citizens between 20 and 45 for conscription. Houses were confiscated and many had to flee. However, under those circumstances, when the British Consul was accused of criticizing the Ottoman government, certain Muslim and Greek-Orthodox Smyrniots addressed the *vali* with a request to protect their honor as Ottoman subjects.<sup>110</sup> After two Balkan Wars and the persecutions on the part of the central administration, the Greek-Orthodox community was unable to resist the course of events. However, it still retained bits and pieces of the self-identification that had permitted it to flourish in the past.

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110. FO 195/2460, Heathercot-Smith (Smyrna) to Lowther (Constantinople), No 121, 11 September 1914; and No 127, 14 October 1914.