

The Making of a Homogeneous Hellenic Republic:  
Explaining Variation in State Assimilation Strategies towards Ethnic Groups

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**Project Summary:** The Greek State has varied its policies both across groups and towards the same group over time. The main question that motivates my inquiry is: What accounts for the observed variation in policies planned and enforced towards those groups? In order to address this question one needs to take into account the whole process of nation-building and not just the instances of selection of different policies.

Understanding how the process of national assimilation unfolds is crucial to our understanding of "nation-building". Moreover, the current influx in Greece of refugees and economic immigrants after the collapse of the Soviet Union has resurfaced debates about population treatment policies. My project explores the logic of assimilation strategies, analytically considers the various forms they may take, and draws out the implications that follow from each of them.

On another level my topic has obvious implications regarding respect of basic human rights and the contemporary debates concerning the treatment of minorities within the European Union. As Greece implements EU regulations concerning immigrants/minorities/refugees it is likely that traditional assimilation models will be challenged with consequences for Greek national identity.

In order to address this question I decided to look at the variation in policies during the interwar period as well as in the post-1989 period in Greece. By looking at these specific points in time I believe that I can understand the process in a more comprehensive way and generate hypotheses that I can later test in a large-N context.

**Project Description:** With the generous support of the *Stavros S. Niarchos Foundation* I conducted research in Greece from late May to late August. I identified the relevant groups in both periods and then I surveyed the existing Literature on the process of national assimilation. I found a lot of interesting monographs and articles on specific groups (the repatriated Greeks of the 1920s, the Pontic Greeks, the Vorioiplotes, the Vlachs, the Slavomacedonians, the Arvanites, the Pomaks, the Albanians, the Roma, the Chams, the Muslim minority in Western Thrace, the Armenians, the Greek Catholics, the Jews and so forth). The latter body of work could indeed function as a source for theory building and to a lesser extent hypotheses testing. A caveat to the systematic study of the phenomenon is that most of the work either focuses on a specific historical period or on a specific locality. We lack systematic accounts that cover long periods of time and wider regions.

I have also collected surveys conducted in relation to the recent economic immigrants (Albanians, Vorioepiotes, etc.) by the Institute for Migration Policy (IMEPO), reports and publications on human rights, the treatment of minorities, and so forth written by domestic and international non-governmental organizations (e.g. Amnesty International, the US embassy, Helsinki monitor, the European Commission, etc). In terms of archives I found that the General National Archives (□ □) are very useful. Venizelos's archive as well as the archive of the League of Nations is useful for the study of the settlement of 1920s. The diplomatic archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must have useful reports of diplomats and so forth but I did not have access this year. Hopefully I will be able to visit them next summer. Genaddius Library has personal archives of people that had been instrumental in the incorporation of the "new territories" (Northern Greece). Additional written sources that I consulted were the parliamentary debates (the past 5 years are online), relevant legislation, and newspaper articles.

In terms of Datasets I was granted access to the National Census data (2001). At the moment I am still negotiating with Professor Constantine Priporas (the nephew of the former General Secretary of Repatriated Greeks) who has the only electronic file of an almost complete census of the repatriated Greeks from the former Soviet Union. I have the full dataset of a survey that was conducted by *Opinion* in eight different neighborhoods in Athens between December 2001 and February 2002. These eight neighborhoods were selected in order to represent different socioeconomic backgrounds and processes of urbanization and construction. 2.117 households were surveyed. My goal is to actually re-analyze the above-mentioned dataset testing hypotheses at the individual level.

I interviewed people from the following broad categories: academics and journalists working on relevant topics (immigration, refugees, minorities and their integration), representatives of non-governmental organizations dealing with immigrants and minorities (both domestic and supranational, e.g. European Union, United Nations, etc.), representatives of political parties, middle level and high rank public officials working for relevant Ministries and Secretariats, presidents of associations/elites and members of the non-core groups, and members of the host community (surveys might become useful here). The interaction of these actors produces the various political outcomes and accounts for the variation in the strategies of integration/assimilation.

This preliminary research was very crucial for my dissertation and could not have been conducted without the support of the *Stavros S. Niarchos Foundation*.