

# Uprootedness as an Ethnic Marker and the Introduction of Asia Minor as an Imaginary Topos in Greek Films

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The 'Asia Minor Catastrophe' followed by the influx of Anatolian refugees is a seminal moment in modern Greek history that reshaped to a great extent Greek national identity. In the analysis that follows I will try to trace how the Ottoman past, the 'uprooting experience' and the refugees' effort to integrate into Greek society are represented in some Greek films of the 1960s and 1970s. These films bear testimony to the acculturation process that led to the development of an Asia Minor and Pontic ethnic identity. Moreover, they reflect the construction of divergent collective memories, which accommodated the refugee experience in the framework of twentieth-century Greek history.

As various scholars have pointed out, ethnic identity is the result of a group's interaction with the taxonomies imposed on it by state agents and broader society and the fluctuation of the accepted boundaries of difference in a modern national state. Besides, Fredrik Barth noted that 'the nature of continuity of ethnic units depends on the maintenance of a boundary whose cultural features may change and yet the continuing dichotomization between members and outsiders allows us to specify the nature of continuity, and investigate the changing cultural form and content'.<sup>1</sup> The Greek Orthodox inhabitants of Anatolia did not form a culturally homogeneous group although they participated in the common Ottoman culture.<sup>2</sup> Even among Greek-speaking Christians, customs and dialect varied considerably from place to place and Turkish-speaking Christians often had more in common with their Muslim co-villagers than with the Christians from another village or region. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the twentieth century, thanks to the contribution of various networks and identity entrepreneurs, at least the Greek-speaking Orthodox Christians of western Anatolia, where Greek state influence was more firmly established, had accepted that they belonged to a broader 'imaginary community' relative to the Kingdom of Greece.<sup>3</sup> After their resettlement in Greece

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<sup>1</sup> Fredrik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969), 14.

<sup>2</sup> On the importance of regional identifications and stereotypes among Anatolian Greeks, see Renée Hirschon, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: The Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 23-24.

<sup>3</sup> For the development of Anatolian Greeks' identity from Greek Orthodox (Rum) to Greek during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Sia Anagnostopoulou, *Μικρά Ασία, 19ος αι-1919, Οι Ελληνορθόδοξες Κοινότητες, Από το Μιλλέτ των Ρωμιών στο Ελληνικό Έθνος* (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 1997).

after 1922, the common identifiers of the refugees were their Christian faith and their uprootedness, their refugee status. The over-encompassing identity of Asia Minor Greek (Mikrasiatis) developed over time only and as a result of their changing status in their host society, Greece, and the relations with the 'Other' that helped delimit the boundaries of the group. In the case of refugees we may conclude that initially the indigenous Greeks served as the 'adjacent and familiar "Other"' for the shaping of the ethnic group.<sup>4</sup> Since in Greece they no longer constituted a religious or national minority, the most important identifier for refugees was the experience of displacement and the social borders that separated them from indigenous Greeks. Therefore, the features of an over-encompassing Asia Minor Greek identity were 'situational and not primordial'.<sup>5</sup> Asia Minor as a common place of origin appeared officially during the interwar years when the state and municipal authorities started to replace in their records the city or village of origin of the refugees with the general terms Turkey or Asia Minor.<sup>6</sup> The question is, therefore, when and how refugees claimed their distinctiveness in Greek society under the positive over-encompassing identity of Asia Minor or Pontic Greek and developed a form of ethnic pride, but also which were subsequently the elements that served as identifiers of the group. More specifically, we have to trace the procedure from the pariah refugee status (*prosfygas*) to that of the respectable Asia Minor Greek (*mikrasiatis*). I consider the films under examination as an 'event' that demonstrates the contribution of the various forces to this process.

### **The refugee status as a stigma in Greek society**

As a result of the Greco-Turkish war of 1919-1922 and the population exchange that followed, 1,221,849 Greek Orthodox refugees settled in Greece.<sup>7</sup> The number of the refugees amounted to roughly one-fifth of the pre-war population of Greece. This massive population influx was bound to produce political cleavage. Understanding the reasons requires briefly referring to the political situation in Greece during World War I. In 1915 a civil strife, called the National Schism (Dichasmos), erupted in Greece between the pro-German King Constantine and the liberal prime minister Eleutherios Venizelos, who favoured Greek

<sup>4</sup> Fredrik Barth, 'Enduring and Emerging Issues in the Analysis of Ethnicity', in *The Anthropology of Ethnicity: Beyond 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries'*, ed. Hans Vermeulen and Cora Govers (Antwerpen: Het Spinhuis, 1994), 13, for the importance of co-residents or 'familiar others' in the formation of ethnicity.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>6</sup> Michalis Varlas, 'Η διαμόρφωση της προσφυγικής μνήμης', in *Πέρα από την Καταστροφή, Μικρασιάτες Πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου* (Athens: Foundation for the Hellenic World, 2003), 153.

<sup>7</sup> This is the number of the refugees given by the official 1928 census in Greece. See Nikos Andriotis, 'Οι Πρόσφυγες, η άφιξη και τα πρώτα μέτρα περίθαλψης', in *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού*, vol. 7 (Athens: Ellinika Grammata, 2003), 80.

participation in World War I on the side of the Entente powers.<sup>8</sup> Venizelos had to resign after the Allied landing in Macedonia in September 1915, and in August 1916 he formed in Salonica a provisional government challenging the authority of the government appointed by the king. In June 1917, with the help of the Entente troops, he returned to Athens and forced King Constantine to cede the throne to his second son Alexander. Nevertheless, after the death of Alexander and the elections of November 1920, Constantine returned to Greece and Venizelos had to leave the country.

The National Schism stirred great passions among Greek citizens leading to violent street clashes and attacks on political adversaries. The royalist Greek government tried to prevent the arrival of refugees before the evacuation of Izmir (Smyrna) since it considered that the majority of Greeks from Anatolia were supporters of Venizelos, who had taken the initiative to occupy western Anatolia. The refugees supported the military coup that overthrew the royalist government and executed, after a trial, the six politicians and members of the military considered as responsible for the 'Catastrophe'. Hence, from the beginning of their obligatory coexistence in Greece the two groups, the indigenous Greeks and the refugees, although they shared a common religion and for the most part a common language, did not necessarily share common political visions.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the presence of refugees led to a fierce antagonism with local inhabitants for jobs and mainly for the lands that were abandoned by the exchanged Muslims who had left for Turkey. Therefore, 'resource competition' and the allocation by state agents of resources contributed to the consolidation of refugee identity.<sup>10</sup> To this contributed also the claims for compensation that 'made them a vested interest group'.<sup>11</sup> The rivalry sometimes led to violent clashes, especially in times of major political crises, and the social and economic antagonism combined with the political rift created a tense climate.<sup>12</sup> The royalist politicians and newspapers not only took advantage of local Greeks' fears but deliberately cultivated hatred against the refugees. For example, the newspaper *Atlantis*, printed in New York, published in the beginning of 1923 an article featuring the ancient statesman Pericles, considered the father of the Athenian democracy, visiting contemporary Athens and being shocked by the presence of a violent Turkish-speaking mob that welcomes him with cries of '*biz dromokratia istiyoruz*' ('We want the reign

<sup>8</sup> John S. Koliopoulos and Thanos M. Veremis, *Greece, the Modern Sequel: From 1821 to the Present* (London: Hurst, 2002), 284-285.

<sup>9</sup> Spyros Karavas, 'Η προσφυγική ψήφος στο πολεοδομικό συγκρότημα της Αθήνας την περίοδο του Μεσοπολέμου', *Δελτίο Κέντρου Μικρασιατιών Σπουδών* 9 (1992); Kostas Katsapis, 'Αντιπαράθεσεις ανάμεσα σε γηγενείς και πρόσφυγες στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου', in *Πέρα από την Καταστροφή*, (2003), 104-106.

<sup>10</sup> For the term 'resource competition', see Barth, *Analysis of Ethnicity*, 18-19.

<sup>11</sup> Hirschon, Heirs, 4.

<sup>12</sup> Yiorgos Giannakopoulos, 'Η Ελλάδα με τους πρόσφυγες, η δύσκολη προσαρμογή στις νέες συνθήκες', in *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού*, vol. 7 (2003), 91.

of terror').<sup>13</sup> This hatred on the part of the local population took the form of a social racism that often led to physical attacks on refugees.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, refugees, mainly in Macedonia, often under the instigation of local Venizelist politicians also developed a racist attitude towards the Slav Macedonians and especially the Jews of Salonica.<sup>15</sup>

Under these circumstances the adjective 'refugee' had negative connotations and the local Greeks used a variety of insults such as '*tourkosporoi*' (Turkish offspring), '*giaourtovaftismeni*' (baptized in yogurt) and especially for Pontic Greeks '*aoutides*' (from the way they pronounced the demonstrative pronoun 'autos').<sup>16</sup> As these terms demonstrate, even the notion of the Greekness of refugees was not evident. Many refugees had to translate their Turkish family names into Greek ones or at least replace the ending *-oğlu* ('son of') with the Greek equivalent *-idis*. At the same time, the Greek press often criticized the lax morality and promiscuous behaviour of refugee women.<sup>17</sup> For their part, the refugees, especially those of an urban background, despised 'native Greeks' as provincial and backward, and called them locals (*dopioi*), yokels (*vlachoi*), not with an ethnic but with a pejorative connotation,<sup>18</sup> and simply Greeks (*Ellines*), expressing a feeling of cultural superiority towards them.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, they criticized indigenous Greeks for their lack of piety and disrespect towards religion.<sup>20</sup> As Yiorgos Giannakopoulos pointed out, 'the refugees' seclusion in specific villages or suburbs in major cities contributed to the retention of the specific cultural and social characteristics that compose refugee specificity. The trauma of the uprooting, the fear for their survival and the dream for an eventual return to the lost paradise impeded their integration into Greek society'.<sup>21</sup>

As mentioned above, from the arrival of the refugees the royalists in Greece considered them as agents of subversion. Although initially connected with Venizelos' Liberal Party, gradually a considerable part of the refugees was

<sup>13</sup> *Atlantis*, 11 July 1924. "Athens belongs to us now. Long live Venizelos!" The author sees the policies of Venizelos as having resulted in these Turkish-speakers coming to Greece and contributing in the overthrow of the monarchy. Moreover he presents the Turkish-speakers as having confused the Greek words *dimokratia* (democracy/republic) and *tromokratia* (reign of terror), which sound alike (they both consist of one syllable plus *-mokratia*; besides, Turkish-speakers are likely to pronounce the Greek delta of *dimokratia* as *d*, which brings it closer to the *t* of *tromokratia*, since both *t* and *d* are dental stops and can easily be confused). I am grateful to professor Peter Mackridge for his valuable comments.

<sup>14</sup> Giannakopoulos, *Η Ελλάδα με τους πρόσφυγες*, 91.

<sup>15</sup> See Rena Molho, *Οι Εβραίοι της Θεσσαλονίκης 1856-1919, Μια Ιδιαίτερη Κοινότητα* (Athens: Themelio, 2001); Yiorgos Margaritis, *Ανεπιθύμητοι Συμπατριώτες. Στοιχεία για την Καταστροφή των Μειονοτήτων της Ελλάδας* (Athens: Vivliorama, 2005), 39-41.

<sup>16</sup> Elsa Kontogiorgi, 'Η Αποκατάσταση, 1922-1930', in *Ιστορία του Νέου Ελληνισμού*, vol. 7 (2003), 102.

<sup>17</sup> Katsapis, *Αντιπαραθέσεις*, 114.

<sup>18</sup> *Vlachoi* (Vlachs) is a general term describing the population of Southeastern Europe speaking eastern Romance languages. The term in colloquial Greek denotes the uncivilized provincials.

<sup>19</sup> Hirschon, Heirs, 4, 31.

<sup>20</sup> Katsapis, *Αντιπαραθέσεις*, 116.

<sup>21</sup> Giannakopoulos, *Η Ελλάδα με τους πρόσφυγες*, 91.

radicalized and participated in the Communist Party. In 1926 two of the ten members of the parliament elected with the Communist Party were refugees, while the rest were elected in electoral districts where the majority of the refugees had settled.<sup>22</sup> The appeal of the Communist Party among refugees grew especially after 1930 when it ceased to support the secession of Greek Macedonia. Subsequently a considerable part of its cadres were refugees.<sup>23</sup> Its secretary-general Nikos Zachariadis was born in Edirne (Adrianople) in 1903 and participated in socialist groups before he came to Greece, whereas the leader of the Democratic Army Markos Vafiadis was born in Tossia (Theodosia) near Kastamonu in 1906 and participated in the labour movement as a worker in a tobacco factory in Kavala.<sup>24</sup> During the German occupation the refugee suburbs of Athens were the main hubs of resistance, and in the Battle of Athens at the beginning of the Civil War they were the strongholds of the communist militias. On the other hand, a considerable number of the refugees supported the government forces during the Civil War.<sup>25</sup> Eventually, thanks to the catalyst of the double experience of World War II and the Civil War, the line between local Greeks and refugees began to fade out.<sup>26</sup> The division that prevailed until 1974 was that between 'nationally minded' (*ethnikofrones*) and communists, who replaced refugees as the 'internal enemy' of right-wing governments. Furthermore, the members of the 'second generation of refugees' were assimilated in Greece and did not bear the outsider stigma of their parents. As a result of the social ascendancy and the change in their social status the members of the second generation, especially after 1960, were pioneers in founding associations that aimed to safeguard and display their distinct culture.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, the development of ethnic pride and the claim for visibility aimed at the inclusion of the refugee experience as an important part of modern Greek history. Thus during this period Asia Minor and Pontic Greeks started to demand the recognition by the Greek society of their contribution to Greek culture and to claim retrospectively their acceptance as an integral part of Hellenism with a continuous existence from the proto-historical times in an ancestral homeland. This is an indication not only of the shift, first, in Asia Minor and Pontic Greeks' self-perception but also of the change in their status in Greek society.

Although during the military dictatorship (1967-1974) the majority of local associations were shut down as potential cells of seditious activities, this did not

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>23</sup> Aggelos Elefantis, *Η επαγγελία της Αδύνατης Επανάστασης. ΚΚΕ και Αστισμός το Μεσοπόλεμο* (Athens: Themelio, 1979), 368.

<sup>24</sup> Markos Vafeiadis, *Απομνημονεύματα* (Athens: Difros, 1984).

<sup>25</sup> On this subject, see Nikos Marantzidis, *Γιασασίν Μιλλέτ, Ζήτω το Έθνος. Προσφυγιά, Κατοχή και Εμφύλιος: Εθνοτική Ταυτότητα και Πολιτική Συμπεριφορά στους Τουρκόφωνους Ελληνορθόδοξους του Δυτικού Πόντου* (Heracleion: University of Crete Press, 2001), 211-250.

<sup>26</sup> Giannakopoulos, *Η Ελλάδα με τους πρόσφυγες*, 91.

<sup>27</sup> Maria K. Vergeti, *Από τον Πόντο στην Ελλάδα, Διαδικασίες Διαμόρφωσης μιας Εθνοτοπικής Ταυτότητας* (Thessaloniki: Ekdotikos Oikos Adelfon Kyriakidi, 1994), 238.

have an impact on the growing interest in Asia Minor as a 'lost homeland'. As the refugee generation died out, the remembrance of life in the Ottoman Empire gave way to reconstructions of the past that served different agendas of political forces and state actors.

### **Asia Minor in Greek Cinema**

During the Greco-Turkish war of 1919-1922 the Greek Foreign Ministry financed a fiction film, *The Greek Miracle (To Ellinikon Thavma)*. The film, which remained unfinished because of the defeat of the Greek army, was supposed to underline the 'Greek values' while convincing the Greek public about the necessity of the war and the certainty of the victory under the leadership of the enlightened middle class.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, during the years following the 'Catastrophe', Greek film directors avoided the subject of Asia Minor and it was during the 1960s that they started to treat the subject of refugees.<sup>29</sup> Personal grief is a central element of the films, but through the plot at least some directors proposed interpretations of the Ottoman past. A common theme in the four films of the period from 1964 to 1969 dealing with the experiences of the refugees, which will be examined, is the effort of the central hero to locate members of his family who were lost at the end of the Greco-Turkish War, while the fifth film that appeared in 1978 deals solely with the torments inflicted on Anatolian Greeks after the departure of the Greek army in 1922. In the 1964 film *Persecution (Diogmos)* by Grigoris Grigoriou (script by Panos Kontellis), during the German occupation of Greece a refugee woman returns to Anatolia and traces her lost child who is the officer of the Turkish army in charge of the refugee camp where she is held. The 1968 film *Uprooted Generation (Xerizomeni Genia)* by Apostolos Tegopoulos follows the life of refugee Vasilis Karacoğlu, a singer of traditional songs from Anatolia, from his arrival in Greece until the 1960s and his efforts to reunite with his mother and sister. In *The Odyssey of an Uprooted (I Odysia enos xerizomenou)*, a sequel to the previous film (script by Panos Kontellis), Karacoğlu, following a Greek American professor also from Anatolia, visits most cities in Turkey and finally locates his father in a fictitious Christian village near Amasya, inhabited by orphans who remained in Turkey after 1922. The 1969 film *The Refugee (O Prosfigas)* by Nikos Kyriakopoulos (script by Nikos Foskolos) portrays a refugee singer as well, who had lost his memory after a Turkish soldier hit him in the head in Izmir (Smyrna) and who with the help of a girlfriend of his childhood manages to find his twin brother and mother in Athens. In the same year appeared *The Persecuted*

<sup>28</sup> Fotos Lambrinos, *Ισχύς μου η Αγάπη του Φακού. Τα κινηματογραφικά επίκαιρα ως τεκμήρια της Ιστορίας (1895-1940)* (Athens: Kastaniotis, 2005), 216.

<sup>29</sup> For a general discussion of the subject of the 'Asia Minor Catastrophe' in Greek cinema, see Kostoula S. Kaloudi, *Η Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή στον Ελληνικό Κινηματογράφο* (Athens-Yannina: Dodoni, 2001).

*Refugee Girl (I kinigimeni prosfygopoula)* by Antonis Katsimitsoulis and the comedy *The Woman from Smyrna (I Smyrnia)* by Nikos Avrameas, both of which are not within the scope of this chapter. Finally, the 1978 film *1922* by Nikos Koundouros (script by the director and by Stratis Karras) narrates the experiences of a merchant's wife, a teacher and a seventeen-year-old youth, who struggle to survive among the prisoners that the Turks led to the interior of Anatolia.

The first three films are representative of the popular musical genre that flourished significantly during the 1960s. The last film, Koundouros' *1922*, differs from the previous ones since it is a product of the post-dictatorship era. The theme remains the same, namely the 'Asia Minor Catastrophe', but the director's intention was to create an artistic film without paying attention to its prospective appeal to the general public. The films do not depict life in Anatolia before the exchange of populations but the memory of a blissful past in Anatolia; the paradise-lost motif is present as a memory in the script of every film. Thus the films represent the memory of an idealized life in Anatolia as a reaction to the difficulties encountered during the resettlement of refugees in Greece. Moreover, these films express two different approaches to the 'archaeology' of Anatolian Greeks, the former praising the cohabitation of Christians and Muslims during the late Ottoman period and the common suffering caused by the war, the latter stressing only the destruction of the prosperous Greek communities in Anatolia by the Turks. These two perspectives also express two different approaches to the Ottoman past and the Greeks of Anatolia, followed respectively by antinationalist and nationalist authors and historians in the years to come.

### **Reconstructing a 'virtual' Greek Anatolia**

As many scholars have remarked, it is a commonplace that nationalism delimits a space, which is considered to be national, and which subsequently acquires significance through values and symbols that refer to the national community but also to the landscape it shapes.<sup>30</sup> At the beginning of the film *The Odyssey of an Uprooted*, Anatolia is referred to as 'our holy land' and when the central hero arrives in Philadelphia (Alaşehir) the viewers are reminded that his steps lead him to 'the same mountains, the same places, the same roads that saw the happiness of the Greeks but also their catastrophe'. This opposition between the pre-war happiness and the Catastrophe is a commonplace in refugee discourse, and it is present in all four films. Nevertheless as Peter Mackridge pointed out the idea that Asia Minor constitutes a 'land blessed by God' appears in Greek literature only after 1922 when the Greeks were expelled. Thus, Anatolia refers at the same time

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<sup>30</sup> Mark Bassin and Vincent Berdoulay, 'Historical Geography: Locating Time in the Space of Modernity', in *Human Geography: A History for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, ed. Georges Benko and Ulf Strohmayer (London, 2004), 74. Cited in Yiorgos Kritikos, *Έθνος και Χώρος, Προσεγγίσεις στην Ιστορική Γεωγραφία της Σύγχρονης Ευρώπης* (Athens: Metaichmio, 2007), 27.

to the biblical motifs of the 'Promised Land' and the expulsion from the 'Garden of Eden'.<sup>31</sup> In *The Persecution* and *The Odyssey of an Uprooted*, the main characters return to their native place, but only in the latter film does Anatolia become the real protagonist; hence we will focus our analysis on this film.

A novelty of the film is the use of a virtual map for tracing the main character's itinerary. Thus as Tom Conley has pointed out:

by comparing the one to the other, space in and space off, spectators constantly 'plot' or 'locate' their relations with the areas the film is mapping. Likewise, wherever a film fashions a sense of place or location by inserting maps into its image-field, the veracity or realism (no matter whether brute or magic) of the image is at the same time underscored and called into question. The intimate rapport of cinematography and mapping becomes a site of critical reflection, not only about film and place but also of cognition and the delicate and vital aspects of subjectivity in general.<sup>32</sup>

In the case of *The Odyssey of an Uprooted* we should also note that the map 'supports the documentary claim of the film by linking it to real places, it reinforces the dramatic tension of the narration and contributes to the dissemination of a political discourse'.<sup>33</sup> The map that presents every stage of the itinerary unites the separate dots connected to the refugees' different places of origin thus creating a collective imaginary space of Asia Minor as a common space of reference, and at the same time appropriates this space as a historic homeland of Hellenism. It was not the first time that a map in a film was used to disseminate a nationalist discourse and to reinforce viewers' relationship to the national territory. The 1923 film *La Tour de France par deux enfants*, based on the famous schoolbook that marked the Third Republic, used a virtual map to contemplate French national space and construct a nationalistic discourse.<sup>34</sup> Whereas in this film the main characters symbolizing Alsace-Lorraine, the provinces ceded to Germany after the 1870 defeat, cross France, their national homeland, the main character of *The Odyssey of an Uprooted* leaves the security of the narrow Greek state and returns to the potentially dangerous lost homeland in order to remind viewers of Hellenism's broad horizon. As he points out to his mother who tries to dissuade him, 'the place where I go is not foreign; it is our land that we had to leave'. Moreover, at a dinner with the Karacoglu family, the Greek American professor

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<sup>31</sup> Peter Mackridge, 'The Myth of Asia Minor in Greek Fiction', in *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey*, ed. Renée Hirschon (Oxford: Berghahn, 2003), 238.

<sup>32</sup> Tom Conley, 'Locations of Film Noir', *The Cartographic Journal*, Special Issue, Cinematic Cartography, 46, 1 (February 2009): 16.

<sup>33</sup> Sébastien Caquard, 'Foreshadowing Contemporary Digital Cartography: A Historical Review of Cinematic Maps in Films', *The Cartographic Journal*, Special Issue, Cinematic Cartography 46, 1 (February 2009): 47-48.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.



Tom Anderson, whom the protagonist accompanies, offers a brief explanation of the importance of Asia Minor Greeks for Greek history:

We Asia Minors Greeks [*Mikrasiates*] are one of the most ancient Greek tribes. The first Greek colonies were founded there even more than 1400 years BC. Some of the brightest spirits of ancient Greece were born in Asia Minor. Later for a thousand years Anatolia was the bulwark of the Byzantine Empire. The Turks appeared late in the picture. Only after the eleventh century Hellenism starts to retreat facing Turkish pressure. Notwithstanding the pressures, the persecutions and the wars, the Greeks remained a dynamic, a lively element. Then came the catastrophe and the Asia Minor Hellenism was uprooted.

This historical approach is contrasted to the approach of the central hero's mother, who replies to this analysis: 'you know all that from books; you left too young to remember'. This reply provokes a lively dialogue where both Professor Anderson and Karacoğlu's mother compete in giving details about everyday life in Izmir (Smyrna) before 1922, 'the city that all Asia Minor Greeks considered as their homeland.' Professor Anderson concludes the dialogue with the statement: 'Those were the days; we had a wonderful life'. But the 'paradise lost' trope that still prevails in common discourse and popular literature about Ottoman Anatolia, as many historians have pointed out, fails to acknowledge the social realities of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>35</sup> There is no mention in this discourse of social inequalities among Greeks in Anatolia. The overall image is that of a 'corporatist' utopia where the Greek communities, run by the wealthier, took care of the common affairs and supported the less fortunate coreligionists.<sup>36</sup>

At the same time, the films under examination allude to themes known from Greek myths. Thus in *Odyssey of an Uprooted*, the central hero's quest for traces of his father is presented as a repetition of Telemachos' search for Odysseus in various courts of Homeric Greece, thus connecting himself to the epic and identifying him as an archetypal Greek hero. Through him, thus, Anatolia is presented as a homeland of the Greek nation, of equal importance to mainland Greece.

### **Contemporary Turkey as an Orientalist fantasy**

Edward Said has pointed out that 'this universal practice of designating in one's mind a familiar space which is "ours" and an unfamiliar space beyond "ours"

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<sup>35</sup> Tropes are, "recurrent themes and repeated memories" that are important in the "construction of life history narratives and subsequently identities". See Loring M. Danforth and Riki Van Boeschoten, *Children of the Greek Civil War: Refugees and the Politics of Memory*, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 230 ff.

<sup>36</sup> For the charitable activities in Constantinople and its importance in the discourse of *millet-i Rum* notables, see Effie Kanner, *Φτώχεια και Φιλανθρωπία στην Ορθόδοξη κοινότητα της Κωνσταντινούπολης, 1753-1912* (Athens: Katarti, 2004).

which is "theirs" is a way of making geographical distinctions that can be entirely arbitrary'.<sup>37</sup> In our case this distinction is blurred by the fact that this space was considered once as 'ours' and now is inhabited by the 'Other'. It is important to underline that the term used often in Greek to define eastern Thrace and Anatolia is 'our nearby Orient' (*i kath'imas Anatoli*).

The central hero describes Istanbul as 'full of reminiscences of *Romiosyni*, of monuments of a different world which took the place of that of the emperors, and which silently contemplate the Bosphorus'. The script presents the Ottoman past, although unnamed (a different world), as a continuation of Byzantium and contemporary Turkey as part of the immutable East. The landscape of Istanbul testifies to the continuity of Greek presence at a time when a considerable part of the Greek Orthodox minority had abandoned the city after September 1955 or had been expelled after 1964. Eviatar Zerubavel notes that constancy of place is a formidable basis for establishing a strong sense of sameness. Even as we ourselves undergo dramatic changes, our physical surroundings usually remain relatively stable. As a result they constitute a reliable locus of memories and often serve as major foci of personal as well as group nostalgia. In providing us with some sense of *permanence*, they help promote the highly reassuring conservative illusion that nothing fundamental has really changed.<sup>38</sup>

When Vassilis Karacoğlu calls his mother from Izmir (Smyrna), he has to hide the fact that their house in Burnabat (Burnova) had been demolished and in its place now stands a modern warehouse. Instead of describing modern Izmir (Smyrna) to her, he describes the house as unchanged from the day she left it, with the woman who currently lives there taking care of the roses that she had once planted. Karacoğlu comments to the professor's secretary that the house 'died like a man', thus assessing that the contemporary Izmir (Smyrna) is now a foreign place. On the contrary, his mother who ignores the truth also compares the house to a man and subsequently expresses her happiness because the house, contrary to its inhabitants, survived untouched by the 'Catastrophe'.

One might consider that the author of the script, as the central hero, did not want to confront the audience from Anatolia with an image of Turkey that would shatter their idealized view of the past. As Edward Said pointed out, 'it is perfectly natural for the human mind to resist the assault on it of untreated strangeness; therefore cultures have always been inclined to impose complete transformations on other cultures, receiving the other cultures not as they are but as for the benefit of the receiver they ought to be'.<sup>39</sup> It is reasonable nevertheless to question the lack of knowledge about contemporary Turkey since Turkish films were often

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<sup>37</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Penguin, 1995), 54.

<sup>38</sup> Eviatar Zerubavel, *Time Maps, Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 41.

<sup>39</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, 67.

shown in theatres in refugee suburbs.<sup>40</sup> We may assume that the film aims to be more faithful to the supposed 'topos of memory' than to reality, or use the more picturesque image of an Orientalist Turkey. The unchanged environment is evident in the representation of both spaces and inhabitants. Old photographs introduce every city the hero visits. These photographs do not necessarily depict the given city but are views of various Ottoman cities. Nevertheless, they strengthen the view of Anatolia as an immutable space. Concerning contemporary Turks, apart from a doctor in Izmir (Smyrna) who appears in modern clothing, all other male Turks wear what are considered to be appropriate 'Oriental clothes'. The only female character who appears, the young granddaughter of an *ağa* in Philadelphia (Alaşehir), is dressed like a belly dancer with the addition of a *yaşmak*. She thus combines the ideal of puberty with the stereotypical Oriental woman who tempts the Occidental man by offering him a rose from her garden. On the other hand, contrary to many traditional Orientalist representations Islam in the film is perceived neither as a peril nor as an identifier of the 'Other'. In several cases the central hero as well as the Turks whom he encounters point out that they believe in the same God, who has sanctified a set of common values that everyone should respect. Vassilis Karacoğlu's mother reminds him that his father was a 'man of God who helped anyone who needed his medical skills without ever considering if his patient was a Rum [Romios] or a Turk'. A Greek doctor whom he meets in Istanbul repeats the same view: 'every doctor is tribe-blind, and for him there are only men who need his help'.

In this context Turks are not presented as the archetypal enemy as one would expect. With the exception of policemen, '*zaptıye*' as they are referred to in the film who are represented either as persecuting Christians in 1922 or not trusting the Greeks who still lived in the fictional Pontic village near Amasya, all other Turks appear as essentially friendly towards the Greeks. The *ağa* Hamki Efendi, who had Greek prisoners of war work in his estate after the Greek army left Anatolia, underlines that he took them for humanitarian reasons. He points out that in the 'Prisoners of War camp they had nowhere to sleep, nothing to eat. On the contrary he treated them well because he felt pity for them and Allah created all men'. This representation of the Turks reproduces the refugees' idea of peaceful coexistence between Muslims and Christians until the Great Powers and the politicians stirred enmity among them.<sup>41</sup> Probably because of the censorship imposed by the colonels, the strategic interests of the Western powers as a cause of the Greco-Turkish War are not mentioned in the film. The war of 1919-1922 is interpreted as a curse from God, a product of the '*kismet*' that led to a common

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<sup>40</sup> It is nevertheless interesting that even in the 2003 film *Politiki Kouzina (A Touch of Spice)* by Tasos Boulmetis, everyday life in Turkey during the 1960s as presented in the introductory scene reminds the viewer rather of an Orientalist fantasy.

<sup>41</sup> Hirschon, Heirs, 30.

suffering. And according to a Turk, a refugee himself from an Aegean island, there is no point in blaming either the Turks or the Greeks for the war; we should rather understand the common fate that unites the two peoples. Contrary to traditional nationalist Greek discourse, the film underlines the sufferings of the non-combatant Muslim population in Anatolia, even hinting at the atrocities of the Greek army. The same Hamki Efendi praises Vassilis Karacoğlu for trying to find his father and, repeating the lines of an older Anatolian, Herodotus, he contemplates the greater grief that a father encounters when he finds his son dead, as he did during the last days of the war. In another scene of the same film the Turk from the Aegean island, who overhears the discourse of Professor Anderson on Pontic Greeks who had to leave their ancestral homelands in Anatolia and resettle in unfamiliar (for them) Greece, emphasizes the suffering of Muslims who left Greece:

I learned Greek in my homeland, yes my homeland. There are things that tie you to the place where you were born, where you grew up, where you made a fortune, where you first loved, aren't there.... My homeland is the Aegean island where I was born. We were not persecuted, as you were, but we also felt it as an uprooting. We also left unharvested fields and vineyards before the vintage near the graves of our ancestors. We fought you, you fought us, we killed, you killed, and our fortunes are tied to these lands and these seas.<sup>42</sup>

That the Aegean Turk speaks Greek as a mother tongue may also allude to the fact that many refugees from Anatolia spoke Turkish as a mother tongue, thus perhaps commenting on the common difficulty of integrating in the 'national homeland'.

In the earlier film *The Persecution*, the same script-author Panos Kontellis again stressed his dislike of Turkish state authorities and his belief in the benevolence of common people. In the film the resistance fighters who have escaped from German-occupied Greece to Turkey react with silent contempt to the declaration by the representative of the Turkish Foreign Ministry that 'they should acknowledge that although they entered the country illegally the Turkish state treated them as friends, risking its relations with the Axis powers; therefore they should proclaim that Turkey is worthy of her glorious past'. Already in another dialogue, prisoners in the camp agreed that 'Turkey played a double game selling the prisoners to whoever would pay more and that it would profit by having good relations with everybody after the end of the war'. On the other hand, the Muslim bandits (*çeteler*) save the abandoned child of the main heroine although they know that he is a local Greek Orthodox (Rum), and when his mother returns to

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<sup>42</sup> This character is reminiscent of the sympathetic old Turkish policeman, a refugee from Thessaly himself in Cosmas Politis novel *At Hadzifrangou*. See Mackridge, *Myth of Asia Minor*, 243.

her village of origin in Anatolia she counts on the help of her Turkish neighbours to find information about her lost son.

*The Persecution* received the best-film award in the 1964 Thessaloniki Film Festival and therefore, contrary to the other films produced during the same period, attracted the interest of some significant commentators.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, the critics approached the movie from different perspectives. For example, Tonia Marketaki, a film director herself, noted that 'history served just as the background' for the melodramatic plot,<sup>44</sup> while Pavlos Zannas, a film critic and author, assumed that the choice of the film's theme was related to the then-reigning Greek-Turkish tension over Cyprus and thus criticized the director for 'resorting to easy, opportune anti-Turkish rhetoric that aims to satisfy the public'.<sup>45</sup>

Contrary to the two previous films, *The Refugee* (1969) represents the Turks as bloodthirsty soldiers who massacre innocent Christians. The central hero of the film tries to overcome his amnesia concerning his life previous to the entry of the Turkish army to Izmir (Smyrna) in August 1922. The film begins with the mother of the hero who went mad after the 'Catastrophe', screaming in the square of a refugee district of Athens that Pehlivan's *çeteler* (bands of irregular soldiers) are arriving and are going to massacre the population. The scenes of *çeteler* massacring the Christians of Izmir (Smyrna) are a leitmotif in the film. The hero suffers from amnesia due to a blow inflicted on him by a Turkish soldier in his childhood. At the same time, the script also insists on a Greek presence in Anatolia from prehistoric times. In the second scene of *The Refugee*, the lawyer who adopted the central hero announces to him that he had written in his history of Asia Minor the chapter on the colonization of the Aeolians by Cyme a thousand years before Christ. We have to take into account that the author of the script, Nikos Foskolos, was a protégé of the military regime and that his TV series about the struggle of an officer during the German occupation, glorifying the Greek army's contribution to the nation, was enormously successful at the time.

Nevertheless, until the fall of the military regime in 1974 following the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the archenemies of the Greeks, in accordance with the Cold War climate, were the Bulgarians and by extension the Soviets. The public discourse insisted on the 'danger from the north' as reflected in the Bulgarian-communist policy encouraging the secession of Greek Macedonia. This changed after 1974, and Koundouros' film *1922* expresses the shift in public discourse.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Yannis Soldatos, *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Κινηματογράφου* (Athens: Aigokeros, 2002), vol. 1, 1900-1967, 312.

<sup>44</sup> Προοδευτική Αλλαγή, 4 April 1964. Cited in Soldatos, *Ιστορία*, vol. 4, Ντοκουμέντα 1900-1970, 512.

<sup>45</sup> Το Βήμα, 14 April 1964. Cited in Soldatos, *Ιστορία*, vol. 4, 512.

<sup>46</sup> Allegedly, after protests by the Turkish embassy in Athens, the Greek government tried to ban the film, which, nevertheless, won many awards at the Thessaloniki Film Festival. Also, even during Andreas Papandreu's premiership, the Greek ambassador in Hungary allegedly prevented the showing of the film at the 1982 Budapest Cinema Festival.

The director made a free adaptation of the novel *Number 31328 (To noumero 31328)* that describes the author's, Ilias Venezis', experience in a prisoner-of-war camp after the Turkish army entered his native city of Ayvalık (Kydonies), focusing rather on Turkish atrocities. In one of the first scenes of the film, which does not exist in the book, the young protagonist participates in a theatrical performance denouncing the Allies' treason against Greece. In another scene a young girl slaps her maid who reads her fortune in the coffee cup because she speaks in Turkish. To the protests of her mother she replies, 'She should not speak Turkish in our house'. A journalist in an extreme-right newspaper noted that 'the left-wing director did not share Venezis' sympathy towards the Turks'. The same journalist considered as the climax of the film the scene where a Turkish soldier castrates a Greek and cries 'Turkey for the Turks'.<sup>47</sup> Yannis Soldatos, a historian of Greek cinema, stressed that 'for Koundouros the Turk is not the poor guy, the "Memet" but the symbol of evil'.<sup>48</sup> The film thus expresses what might be termed 'left-wing nationalism' that focused on perennial Turkish expansionism under the support of Western powers. Moreover, according to the historian Kostoula Kaloudi, the film criticizes 'hate' as a driving force that leads people to crimes and atrocities.<sup>49</sup>

The ideological divergence expressed in these films reflects two different 'archaeologies' of Asia Minor and Pontic ethnic identity. *The Odyssey of an Uprooted*, while stressing the roots of Anatolian Greeks from the ancient colonizers and the persecutions during the Greco-Turkish War, stresses, at the same time, the existence of a culture shared by both Christians and Muslims who lived more or less peacefully until the first quarter of the twentieth century. This idea is present in all the lectures that Professor Anderson gives to the audience. On the contrary, in *The Refugee* and *1922* the focus is on the flames of Izmir (Smyrna), the destruction of a flourishing Greek city by the Turks and the purity of Asia Minor Greek culture. The films therefore propose two different historical narratives: one focusing on Greeks in Anatolia, the other on Greek Anatolia.

This is evident in the choice of songs that accompany the two films. Such songs already constituted a strong element of Asia Minor Greek identity and served to mark the boundaries between refugees and indigenous Greeks. As the anthropologist Yiorgos Tsimouris noted, refugees' songs tied together fragments of narration and contributed in shaping the group.<sup>50</sup> At the same time, folksongs

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<sup>47</sup> Yiorgos Pissalidis, '30 χρόνια από το απαγορευμένο «1922» του Νίκου Κούνδουρου', *Ελεύθερος Κόσμος*, 17 May 2008.

<sup>48</sup> Soldatos, *Ιστορία*, vol. 2, 1967-1990, 166.

<sup>49</sup> Kaloudi, *Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή*, 97-98.

<sup>50</sup> Yiorgos Tsimouris, 'Τραγούδια μνήμης, διαμαρτυρίας και κοινωνικής ταυτότητας: Η περίπτωση των Ρεισιντεριανών Μικρασιατών προσφύγων', in *Διαδρομές και Τόποι της Μνήμης, Ιστορικές και Ανθρωπολογικές Προσεγγίσεις*, ed. Rika Benveniste and Theodoros Paradellis (Athens: Alexandria, 1999), 219.

were the only marker of identity acceptable to the colonels' regime.

Folksongs from Anatolia play an important role in *Odyssey of an Uprooted*, comprising almost half of the film's time.<sup>51</sup> The song that reminds Vassilis Karacoğlu of his childhood and his father is 'Though I was waiting you did not come' (*'bekledim de gelmedin'*), an Ottoman waltz whose verses he sings alternatively in Turkish and in Greek. The protagonist, Nikos Xanthopoulos, himself translated the verses into Greek. It is this song that accompanies the virtual map of Anatolia with the projection of old postcards from Ottoman cities, thus underlining this shared past. At the same time, another Pontic song that Karacoğlu sings is also bilingual.

On the other hand, at the beginning of *The Refugee* the central hero Yiorgos Daoutis sings a contemporary song, explicitly written for the film, about the tears that flow at the memory of Constantinople, the city of kings, with the Cathedral of Saint Sophia, the symbol of the Great Idea, as well as the fire of Izmir (Smyrna) and the suffering of refugees. He sings 'for our past glory and grandeur', and in the background are scenes from the massacres perpetrated after the entrance of the Turkish army into Izmir (Smyrna).

### **The films in their socio-political context**

The father of the protagonist of *The Odyssey of an Uprooted*, Nikos Xanthopoulos, was a member of the left-wing resistance group EAM during World War II and as a child he had to spend eight months in jail when his mother was arrested.<sup>52</sup> Although he did not participate in political activities, the security police considered him suspicious because he held a wreath in the funeral of Grigoris Lamprakis, the leftist parliamentary deputy who was murdered in 1966 by two extreme-right thugs.<sup>53</sup> *The Odyssey of an Uprooted* appeared in a period when the colonels' regime had closed down many Asia Minor associations.<sup>54</sup> The film, like its prequel, met instant success. Although it was shown in just one theatre, the first week it sold thirty-two thousand tickets and overall it reached four hundred thousand tickets.<sup>55</sup> The great success of the film should be attributed to the fact that it touches the refugees' sensibilities and in particular their sense of persecution by the Greek state. Since Xanthopoulos himself was a Pontic Greek, it was easier for the refugee audience to identify with the central hero's odyssey. According to Xanthopoulos, in Pontic Greek villages of northern Greece, even after midnight, shows of his films were full.<sup>56</sup> It is probably thanks to the actor's popularity among

<sup>51</sup> Soldatos, *Ιστορία*, vol. 1, 204.

<sup>52</sup> Nikos Xanthopoulos, *Όσα θυμάμαι κι όσα αγάπησα* (Athens: Livanis, 2005), 32-34.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

<sup>54</sup> Vergeti, *Από τον Πόντο στην Ελλάδα*, 307.

<sup>55</sup> Soldatos, *Ιστορία*, vol. 2, 34-35. See also Yiorgos Lazaridis, *Φλας Μπακ, μια Ζωή Σινεμά* (Athens: Livanis, 1999).

<sup>56</sup> Xanthopoulos, *Όσα θυμάμαι*, 101.

Pontic Greeks that Professor Anderson in the film gives a detailed overview of Pontus history:

Pontus the land with the ancient cities, still known with their Greek names: Trapezounta (Trabzon), Kerasounta (Giresun), Samsun. Greeks inhabited this region from the time of myths such as the expedition of the Argonauts. They became Christians during the life of Apostle Paul. The Turks arrived at some point. The majority of the Greeks did not leave. Some became Muslims. But even certain of those kept their Christian faith in secret, although the occupiers believed that those were Muslims. Then started the persecutions, the Catastrophe and the uprooting. Today only Muslims live here, not just Turks but also Laz, Circassians and even Tatars. The refugees from Pontus dispersed all over Greece do not forget their historic homelands that they had to abandon.

This historical overview includes the principal subjects that were included in the official Pontic narrative ever since. Even with the passing of the first generation of refugees, the film continued to be popular among their descendants. It is interesting, though, that in recent years the film has been mentioned as proof of the continued existence of the 'crypto-Christians' in the region of Pontus. Fanis Malkidis, a nationalist-minded professor at the University of Thrace, underlines that the film introduced the Greek audience to the presence of the Pontic-speaking populations currently living in Turkey.<sup>57</sup> Thus a subordinate subject in a fiction film, the presence of a village inhabited by orphans left behind by their Christian parents, used as part of the plot in order to justify the reunion of the hero with his lost father, is used as a testimony for the existence of hidden Greeks in Turkey. Malkidis thus uses this element introduced by the author of the script and reinterprets it in the spirit of the late 1980s in order to claim the existence of more archaic Hellenic elements among 'lost tribes' all over the world.<sup>58</sup>

The films under examination manifest the will of a previously 'subaltern' group to claim its distinct presence in the public space at the time characterized as the 'age of respectability'. The attitudes of Anatolian Greeks appear comparable to those of ethnic Americans in the United States during the same period. As Herbert Gans argued, although white ethnics gradually abandoned ethnic characteristics they retained a form of 'symbolic ethnicity'. The African-American Civil Rights Movement gave both Greek and Jewish Americans the chance to reclaim a

<sup>57</sup> Fanis Malkidis, 'Το ποινιακό ζήτημα σήμερα', [http://www.hellotia.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=100&Itemid=96](http://www.hellotia.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=100&Itemid=96) (accessed 15 October 2009).

<sup>58</sup> The Turkish Cretans who live in Hamidiye village in Syria and the Kalash tribe in Afghanistan, supposedly descendants of soldiers of Alexander the Great, are two more examples of lost Greek tribes. See Lambros Baltiotis, 'The Discovery of the New Greeks in between the Political and the Ludicrous: From Pontics of Turkey to Kalash', conference on 'Interdisciplinary Approaches of the Minority and Migration Phenomena: The Greek Experience since the End of the Cold War', Panteion University, Athens, 15-17 December 2006.



public presence as 'unmeltable ethnics'. During this period ethnic institutions in both communities were strengthened and ethnic pride was asserted in the public sphere. Thus it is debatable whether second-generation ethnics lacked interest in their ancestral culture. In 1964 the films *Zorba the Greek* and the musical *Fiddler on the Roof* were supposed to serve as showcases of Greek and Jewish tradition, respectively, although they deviated from the original novels to express values shared by an American public. The films I presented retrace the progression of Anatolian Greeks in Greece after 1922, underlining their collective trauma but also their success in integrating into Greek society and even in achieving prosperity. The films do not conceal the fact that a considerable part of the refugees still live in shantytowns, but they underline the possibility of success. The scripts of the films do not demonstrate a revanchist attitude and a will to reclaim the 'unforgettable homelands', to cite the late archbishop of Athens. The heroes of the films reclaim the lost homeland as a 'topos of memory' and an element of pride in their current life in Greece.

In this respect the elements that serve as diacritics of an Asia Minor Greek identity in the 1960s films are selected because of their compatibility with the prevailing values of a conservative political climate. Thus traditional music and urban songs from Izmir (Smyrna) were an element of ethnicity acceptable to the colonels' regime, while rembetika, the songs connected to the underworld, are not mentioned in the films. Obviously there is no mention of political mobilization and the impoverished refugee districts are represented as home to law-abiding, hardworking subjects and not as hubs of seditious activity. The films represent refugees as supporters of the proverbial colonels' regime's values of 'fatherland, religion, family'. Tegopoulos' films were promoted as 'films for the whole family', a designation that was justified since 'the films eulogize the triumphant Greek family as an institution, since the characters of the films entrust their hopes to God and praise the fatherland'.<sup>59</sup> Kostoula Kaloudi claims that, in Tegopoulos' films, melodramatic elements are used deliberately so as to exclude any political connotations.<sup>60</sup>

## 6. Conclusion

The message of the films produced from 1964 to 1969 is that suffering belongs to the past and those who survived should bury the past and continue their lives. The central hero of *The Refugee*, Yorgos Skutaris, tells his mother that 'after all those years we have to forget and get on with our lives', while Vassilis Karacoğlu in the last scene of *The Odyssey of an Uprooted* describes his experience as a 'sad fairytale from Asia Minor with a happy ending'. The films thus underline the suffering that the refugees endured both during the Greco-Turkish War and

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<sup>59</sup> Soldatos, *Ιστορία*, vol. 1, 203.

<sup>60</sup> Kaloudi, *Μικρασιατική Καταστροφή*, 92-93.

their resettlement, but also their success in Greece. According to the main heroes, after half a century, life in Anatolia and the 'Catastrophe' should be viewed in a different perspective. Remembrance should not hinder refugees from taking pride in their achievements and enjoying the fruits of success. Thus the films that date from the 1960s end by underlining the newly gained social status that marked the transformation of despised refugees into respectable Asia Minor and Pontic Greeks in the fifty years that followed the 'Catastrophe'.

On the contrary, Koundouros' film *1922* expresses a current which appeared in Greece after the restoration of democratic government in 1974 and which denounces the supposed idealization of the Ottoman past by cosmopolitan Greeks who favour Greco-Turkish rapprochement under the instigation of Western powers. This current is overrepresented among third-generation Pontic Greeks who consider that it is the duty of a patriot, irrespective of political affiliation, to fight against the obliteration of the memory of Turkish atrocities.<sup>61</sup> The experiences of cohabitation in Anatolia as well as the difficulties encountered during the 'transplanting' in Greece are downplayed as an ethnic marker for the majority of young Asia Minor and Pontic Greeks. The 'Other' who helps the consolidation of ethnic identity is no longer the indigenous Greek but the Turk who proceeded to the 'genocide of Asia Minor and Pontic Greeks'. Thus the films in question prove that, although the cultural content of ethnicity may change and different generations may reconstruct group genealogy according to the shifting collective ideas in the host society, this does not lead to the dissolution of ethnic identity which, depending on circumstances, may retain or even strengthen its importance.

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<sup>61</sup> Vergeti, *Από τον Πόντο στην Ελλάδα*, 313.

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